

# Cycle Bedford

Riverside North  
cycleways  
now open

Issue 78  
June 2017

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



**Riverside North Reflections**

# CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

*Founded 1992*

## *Committee*

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@cyclebedford



cycle\_bedford

## **Campaigning Representation**

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group

Bedford Hospital Bicycle Users Group

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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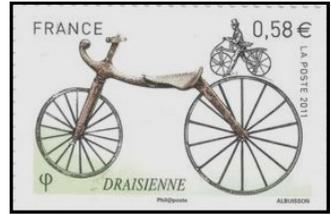
## Correction

Your Editor apologises for an error In the last newsletter (Issue 77 February 2017). It was reported on page 10 that Bromham Village Hall had acquired new cycle stands. The photograph showed Biddenham Village Hall which was the actual recipient of the stands donated by Bedford railway station.

# Editorial

This year is the 200th anniversary of the forerunner of the bicycle, the Laufmaschine - Draisienne - running machine (page 23).

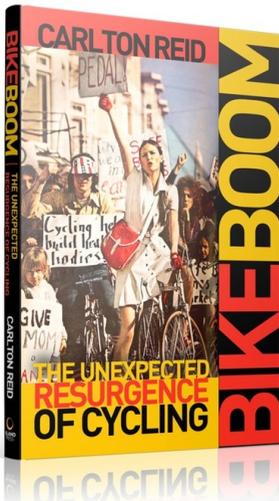
A short history of the bicycle, including the running machine, was the subject of a presentation given by your editor at CCNB's AGM in April 2017 (page 18).



The big news of the year to date for cycling in Bedford was the opening this month of the Riverside North public areas to pedestrians and cyclists including the controversial bridge across the river from the development to St Mary's Gardens although some slight concerns have emerged (page 5).

As part of the development cycle parking stands have been provided for 102 bicycles.

The borough has also seen a number of additional cycle parking stands installed as the result of council members' generosity (page 8) and the opening of a number of retail premises and a new leisure facility (page 10).



Carlton Reid in his new book 'Bike Boom' published this month is of the opinion that cycle use in Bedford after the Second World War was approaching Dutch levels (page 32).

In the 1970s the old County Council was still known to be one of the most progressive authorities in the country for cycling. Bedford's position has slipped over the last two decades but is still '**A Town of Cyclists**' with levels of cycling at least three times the average level of other towns and cities. Over the last 10 years cycling has increased by nearly 80%.

The Government finally published its Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) in April 2017 together with a financial package of £1.2 billion (page 31).

How much of this will be destined for Bedford?

We are now entering a new phase in the history of the planet, called the '**Anthropocene**', the epoch in which mankind is now in control driving global warming and ecological destruction. Cycling (or walking) that short distance will not stop it but can however play its small part.

**Let us see as many cyclists out and about this summer.**

# Riverside North Development Paths Open

Friday 2 June 2017 was an exciting day for cyclists when most of the barriers on the Riverside North development site together with those blocking the bridge were finally removed allowing cyclists and pedestrians to use all the new cycle/pedestrian paths.

The following day (Saturday) saw dozens of cyclists using the new bridge to cross the river instead of having to use Town Bridge or Prebend Bridge.



*One of the first cyclists to use the new bridge*

How impressed with the bridge were these early cyclists?

Most thought that it was excellent allowing cyclists to safely cross the river away from the busy traffic on Town Bridge and Prebend Street Bridge. They liked the two approaches leading to the bridge in St Mary's Gardens on the south side but had some concerns relating to the position of the three bollards at the end of the bridge on the north side and the sharp turn necessary if cycling towards the Star Rowing Club. Many believed that this could be a point of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians with the adjacent steps creating a potential safety hazard.



Cyclists from the west have to cross over a 'Y' triangle area. This is no problem while the kerb and tarmac are flush but with possible differential settlement over time it could become a potential trip or slip hazard for all users which will have to be closely monitored.



The site has cycle parking spaces for 102 bicycles; eight Sheffield stands adjacent to the old Magistrates Court, eight elongated stands around the base of a tree to the north of the bridge, eight Sheffield stands just south of the archway to Horne Lane adjacent to the cinema entrance, eight Sheffield stands in the middle of the cinema square and a further eight stands around a tree near the riverside.

Included in the total is a bank of eleven Sheffield stands installed on the south side of Horne Lane next to the cinema.



# Cycle Stands - Castle Rd/Midland Rd (West)

New cycle stands have been installed in Midland Road and Castle Road courtesy of Cllrs Reale & Fletcher, Borough members for Castle Ward.

In Midland Road (west) eight Sheffield stands have been installed at six locations along the road to give secure parking spaces for up to 16 bicycles.

The popular shopping/café area of Castle Road has been devoid of stands for sometime due to lack of adequate highway space for the installation of Sheffield stands. At CCNB's suggestion Cyclehoops have been installed to existing upright posts instead at three locations to give secure parking for an additional six bicycles.

Cyclehoop is a design that converts existing structures into bicycle stands and at the same time saves councils both time and money. London's Camden Council in 2009 was one of the first boroughs in the country to trial Cyclehoops on existing sign posts and following its success became the first council in the country to install Cyclehoops onto lamp posts.

The main benefits of placing Cyclehoops on lamp posts and other structures include:

- Saving of both time and money
- Opportunity for cycle parking at regular intervals on a street
- Reduction of street clutter
- Helps prevent bicycles from rotating or falling over and blocking the pavement, causing a trip hazard to pedestrians
- Protects the lamp column from being damaged by bicycle locks and chains.

## Castle Road



*Outside Cool & Classic*



*Adjacent to Coral*

*All photographs on this and the next page thanks to Patrick Lingwood*

## Midland Road (West)



*Between Maitland St & Costin St*



*Battison St junction buildout*



*Costin St junction*



*Maitland St junction buildout*



*Between Priory St & Greyfriars*



*Between Alexandria Rd & Rutland Rd*

# New Sports Facility - Clapham Road

A new sports facility was completed in March 2017 in Clapham Road - Towers Health and Rackets Club. The facilities include high-end gym, group exercise classes, swimming, spa, tennis and squash facilities as well as a café/bar. The official launch was Saturday 20 May 2017.

The current dual use path from Manton Lane to the toucan crossing in Clapham Road (opposite the old Anglers Rest public house) has been extended as far as the entrance opposite Franklins cottages.



To the right of the entrance (below) is a bank of eight Sheffield stands.



## New Aldi Store - Amphill Road

A new Aldi store opened on 23 March 2017 at the Amphill Road/Westville Road junction opposite the Morrison's store.

Five Sheffield stands have been provided next to the store entrance.



## New Co-op Store - Queens Drive

A new Co-op store has emerged from the Queen's Tavern public house in Putnoe which closed in April 2016.

The store which opened its doors on 1 June 2017 has two Sheffield stands next to the entrance for the convenience of cycling customers.



# Cycle Network Briefing Paper

At Bedford Borough's Environmental and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Thursday 30 March 2017 a long awaited briefing paper on the town's cycle network was given to members by the Assistant Director of Highways and Transport (ADHT). The paper had been written by the Walking and Cycling Officer and focussed on the outstanding physical barriers in the cycle network.

The paper reported that there were 274 identified barriers although many of these were of a minor nature such as the lack of a dropped kerb on a cycling route. The 12 most significant barriers were quoted and were listed as:

1. Tunnel under mainline railway at Progress Park and bridge over Marston Vale line at Interchange Park to link Kempston with Business Parks and connections to the Wixams and Fenlake area
2. Elstow Road widened tunnel to provide off-road cycle track
3. Cycle route across A421/A6 junction
4. Old Harrowden Lane to Shortstown link
5. A600/A421 junction link via disused railway line to New Cardington
6. Bridge over River Great Ouse from Hillsground to Great Denham
7. Great Denham to Biddenham link via FP5 or FP4/13
8. Bridge with cycle path over railway linking Queens Park to Town Centre
9. Bromham Road railway bridge
10. Bromham Road river bridge
11. Bridge over River Great Ouse at Clapham Ford
12. Clapham Road to Manton Lane Business Park link

An additional barrier example given by ADHT was that it was possible for pedestrians to travel either way along the High Street whereas there was the lack of a south to north route for cyclists which meant that they had to adhere to the one-way traffic system and if travelling from St Pauls Square (the market) to Tavistock Street/Broadway had to make a long detour [alongside heavy and sometimes fast traffic].

ADHT also noted that Section 106 money from planning applications had been used in the past for cycling facilities but its replacement the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) had not been used for this purpose to date. [Why?]

It was also mentioned that a 20mph limit may not be appropriate for the town centre. [Why?]

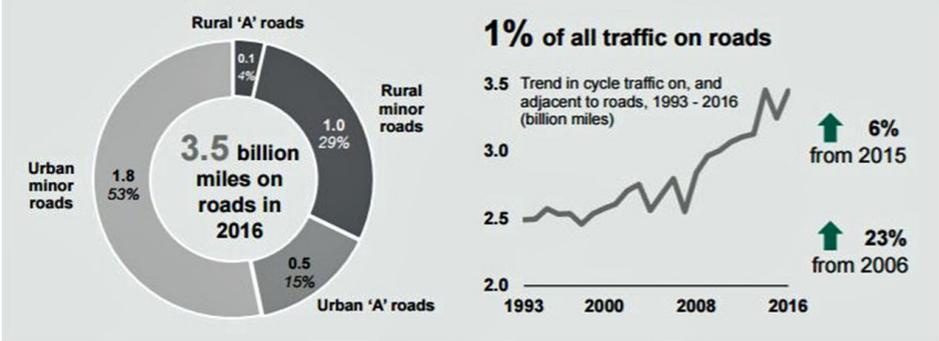
The meeting resolved that Officers be encouraged to continue to eliminate barriers in the cycle network where possible and were thanked for their continued work in this area despite a lack of Government funding.

# Bedford Station Cycle Usage

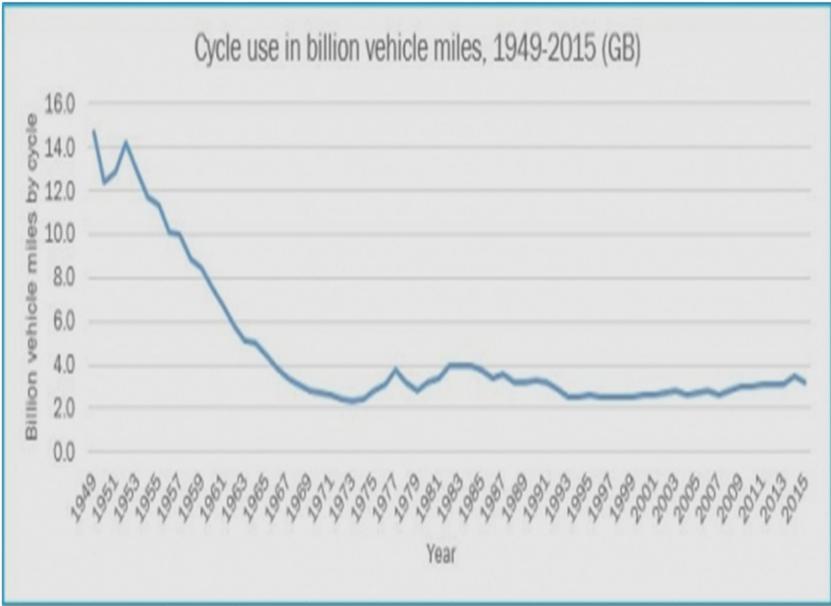
CCNB counts of cyclists at Bedford station are continuing to see a progressive increase with levels since 1 April 2017 to the end of June showing a 6.9% increase over the same period last year.

# UK 2016 Cycle Usage

The latest cycle usage report published by the Department for Transport in April 2017 has shown that in 2016 cycling at 3.5 billion miles cycled was 6% higher than in 2015 and 23% higher than 10 years ago (2006).



There is however still a long way to go to reach the level of 14.7 billion miles cycled in 1949 (13% of traffic versus 1% today).



# 20mph Scheme

The latest scheme is:

## Felmersham

The High Road has been added in May 2017 to the roads proposed in December 2016.



## Speeding

### Brake Survey

Brake, the road safety and sustainable transport charity, and Churchill Car Insurance have carried out a survey of 2,000 UK drivers and in a report published in May 2017 have revealed that more than half (52%) admitted to driving at 25mpg in a 20mph speed limit.

This is in contrast to 78% thinking that traffic is too fast in their neighbourhood for the safety of children on foot or bicycle.

It has been established for sometime that children cannot judge the speed of approaching vehicles travelling faster than 20mph so may believe it is safe to cross when it is not. More than five children are seriously hurt or killed every day in the UK, with the majority (80%) being on foot or bicycle.

The report can be seen on:

<http://www.brake.org.uk/media-centre/1728-more-than-half-of-uk-drivers-admit-to-speeding-in-20mph-areas>

### North Rural Community Team Meeting

Bedfordshire Police's North Rural Community team held a meeting in May at the Woburn Road Kempston Police Headquarters for parish council representatives from across the north of the county.

The issue of greatest concern of the local priorities discussed and agreed was speeding. (This has been a main concern of rural communities and the urban area for a number of years and the reason for the borough's speed reduction programme which has seen speed limits reductions in many villages and urban areas over recent years).

During the meeting a problem solving process called SARA (**Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Evaluation**) was explained and how it could be used to address speeding as well as identifying and solving repeat crime and community problems.

**Speed Watch** and **Neighbourhood Watch**, two schemes in which communities can get involved were also explained and promoted.

# Air Quality - Government's Draft Plan

The Government on 5 May 2017 published its draft plan for consultation on **Improving Air Quality: reducing nitrogen dioxide in our towns and cities**. The consultation closed on 15 June 2017 and the results are expected on 31 July 2017.

The plan can be seen on:

[https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/air-quality-plan-for-tackling-nitrogen-dioxide/supporting\\_documents/Draft%20Revised%20AQ%20Plan.pdf](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/air-quality-plan-for-tackling-nitrogen-dioxide/supporting_documents/Draft%20Revised%20AQ%20Plan.pdf)

A number of supplementary documents together with the plan can be downloaded from:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/air-quality-plan-for-tackling-nitrogen-dioxide/>

## Air Quality - Bedford High Street

The air quality in Bedford High Street has been below the EU limit of  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  since 9 April 2017. The last high value of  $109\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  was recorded at 2100 on 8 April 2017.

The fun day on Saturday 3 June 2017 which closed the High Street to all traffic gave an average of  $9\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .



# Local Plan 2035

The latest Bedford Borough's Local Plan 2035 will set out how much growth and development will be needed in the Borough until 2035, to meet local needs.

It will plan for the additional houses and facilities required to support new communities and provide jobs and services such as schools, transport and shops.

Three consultations have already taken place to establish the scope of the plan and collect evidence on options for where future sustainable growth should be located.

A fourth consultation ran from 24 April to 9 June 2017, primarily focused on the development of housing across Bedford Borough. Previous consultations had already identified land for strategic employment and other aspects of growth. The consultation document was accompanied by 20 supplementary documents.

The calculation of Bedford Borough's future housing needs is set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and shows that an additional 19,000 homes are required by 2035. Over half of the housing required is covered by existing planning permissions or allocations. The Local Plan 2035 therefore needs to allocate land for around an additional 8,103 new homes.

The preferred strategy produced from a detailed examination of 640 sites put forward over the last two years has allocated the additional houses to New settlements 27% (2,200), Stewartby brickworks 12% (1,000), within and adjoining the urban area 26% (1,988), Group 1 villages 32% (2,600) and Group 2 villages 3% (225).

## New Settlements

The Borough has said in its assessment document that they will need to provide for a step change in sustainable transport provision, minimise use of the private car and be fully integrated into the local public transport network. This could include rapid transit to connect new settlements to existing centres of activity, such as utilising rail corridors, the possibility of capitalising on East West Rail and/or segregated mass rapid transit corridors along existing highways. Proposals must provide convenient and viable bus/rail services. Good provision must be made internally for pedestrians and cyclists with the potential for good walking and cycling linkages to and from the site to the nearest villages/towns.

Four submissions have been selected as possible free standing new settlements; Wyboston Garden Village, Land at Twinwoods near Milton Ernest, Thurlleigh Airfield and Lee Farm, near Sharnbrook.

CCNB has examined the sustainability aspects of each of the proposed sites particularly for cycling.

The best site with potential for good internal and external facilities for cyclists is believed to be Wyboston Garden Village with easy cycle access to Eaton Socon, Eynesbury and St Neots including the railway station. It should also be possible to extend the existing local bus services to reduce car travel. The latter however will also have good links to the A1 and east and west along the A421.

The Twinwoods site offers again good internal cycling infrastructure with the offer to construct a high quality cycle route to Bedford. Although a Milton Earnest/Bletsoe bypass is promised this could increase traffic congestion problems within the Bedford urban area.

The other two sites offer no significant cycling facilities and again could cause severe traffic problems on the outskirts of Bedford.

### **Stewartby Brickworks**

This is a redundant brown field site and is ideally placed for cycling with it being adjacent to National Cycle Network Route 51 to Bedford in one direction and Milton Keynes in the other as well as being next to the Bedford to Bletchley Marston Vale railway line.

### **Urban Area**

All the opportunity sites in the urban area and preferred sites on the edge of the urban sites are either on or within easy reach of the existing urban cycle network.

### **Group 1 Villages**

Sites in five Group 1 Villages are proposed in the plan; Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford, Sharnbrook and Wilstead. Only Sharnbrook is not connected to or near the current cycle network. Great Barford is near Route 12/51 and could be more connected to Bedford when Footpath 4 to Willington Lock is converted to a cycleway as planned several years ago.

### **Group 2 Villages**

The six sites in Group 2 Villages; Carlton, Harrold, Milton Ernest, Oakley, Roxton and Turvey all offer local cycling with Oakley and Milton Ernest the best connected by bicycle to Bedford.

The full consultation document together with all the supplementary documents can be downloaded from:

[https://www.bedford.gov.uk/  
environment\\_and\\_planning/  
planning\\_town\\_and\\_country/  
planning\\_policy\\_its\\_purpose/  
local\\_plan\\_2035.aspx](https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose/local_plan_2035.aspx)



# Brief History of the Bicycle - CCNB AGM

At CCNB's 24th AGM held on Friday 28 April 2017 your editor gave a presentation with videos on the brief history of the origins of the bicycle together with the state of cycling nationally and in Bedford up to the present time.

## The Laufmaschine (Running Machine)

It started with the forerunner of the bicycle developed by Baron Karl von Drais 200 years ago in 1817 known as the Laufmaschine (running machine) (see page 23 for this year's anniversary).

It consisted of two in-line wooden carriage wheels held together by a wooden bench on which the rider straddled. It had a very basic steering mechanism and was ridden by paddling with the feet along the ground.



The machine was also known as the **Draisine** in England and **Draisienne** in French and the common names 'Dandy Horse' and 'Hobby Horse'.

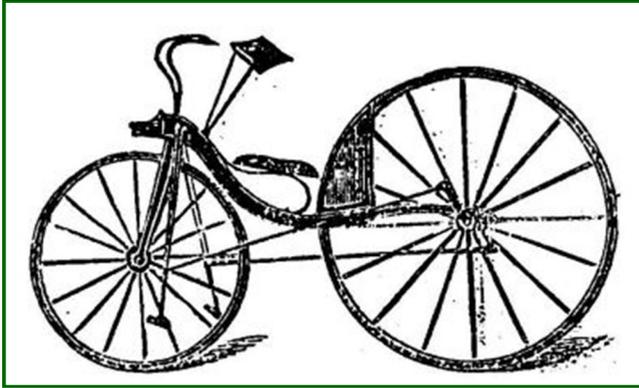
It was capable of travelling at a speed of 16 kph (the maximum speed of a stagecoach at the time) and achieved some remarkable feats, amongst others, beating a stagecoach from London to Brighton by more than half an hour.

Today it has been revived as the ideal type of bike on which children can learn to balance (see right).



## World's First Bicycle

The first pedal cycle was invented in 1839 by Scottish blacksmith, Kirkpatrick Macmillan.



A short animation about his eventful journey In 1842, via a Gorbals jail on the outskirts of Glasgow can be seen on the video:

<https://vimeo.com/158607566>

## Velocipede or 'Boneshaker'

During the 1860s, pedals and cranks were fitted to the front wheel of an old hobby horse and the 'velocipede' was born, the first bicycle to have pedals. The inventors were two French brothers, Ernest and Pierre Michaux. They called it the **Velocipede**. This made the machine faster and less strenuous to ride but the ride itself was rather uncomfortable and is the reason for its alternative name, the **Boneshaker**.



## The Ordinary

Around 1870, English inventor James Starley, described as the father of the bicycle industry, and others, began producing bicycles based on the French boneshaker but with front wheels of increasing size, because larger front wheels, up to 1.5 m (60 in) in diameter, enabled higher speeds on bicycles limited to direct drive.

As well as the name **ordinary**, it was also known as a **high wheel** and **high wheeler** although the name **penny-farthing** is now more common, the name derived from the British coinage. This type of bike was extremely popular for two decades after the boneshaker until the development of the safety bicycle in the 1880s.



## Rover Safety Bike

The bicycle that we know today started in the UK with the diamond shaped frame called the '**Rover Safety**' designed by John Kemp Starley, a nephew of James Starley, in 1885.

The bicycle manufactured in Coventry, featured two wheels of the same size and a chain drive to the rear wheel.

With the rider's centre of gravity over the centre of the frame it was possible to touch the ground with both feet making it extremely safe to ride.



## Dan Albone

Dan Albone, a Biggleswade inventor, copied John Kemp Starley's idea and produced the Ivel Safety cycle in April 1886 and was one of the first to make a ladies version by replacing the straight front tube with a curve.



## Pneumatic Tyre

In 1888 a Scots man, John Boyd Dunlop, patented the pneumatic tyre and the bicycle as we know it today was complete.

# Le vélocipède des origines à nos jours



History of the bicycle in French stamps

# Bicycle Forerunner - 200 Year Anniversary

The town of Mannheim in Germany celebrated the 200 year anniversary on 12 June 2017 of the forerunner of the bicycle, Baron Karl von Drais' Laufmaschine (running machine) or Draisienne, a two wheeled horseless vehicle propelled by its rider.

An excellent article on his life by Cycling UKs historian, Dr Sheila Hanlon, can be seen under:

<http://www.cyclinguk.org/cycle/draisienne-1817-2017-200-years-cycling-innovation-design>

Fifty years later (see page 18-21) it started to morph into the bike as we know it today.

*Germany celebrated the bicentenary with the issuing of a twenty Euro*



*coin featuring the Laufmaschine*

## School Travel Plan Analysis

Based on hands-up cycle to school counts from recent Travel Plans for 32 schools, 18 in the urban area (13 lower/primary and 5 middle/secondary), middle/secondary pupils cycle (at 9.4%) around 2.5 times more than lower/primary school pupils (at 3.8%). However in corresponding hands-up counts of those that would prefer to cycle to school for lower/primary pupils more than 7 times the number that currently cycle would like to do so if it was safer and if their parents allowed it.

# 1930s Cycle Tracks (Cycleways)

Over the last few years there has been much talk in cycling circles that to increase the level of cycling to those found on the continent the UK has to start to build protected cycling infrastructure as found in the Netherlands and elsewhere, that is, to **'Go Dutch'**.

It is not readily known that in the 1930s the UK did **'Go Dutch'**.

In 1934, the Ministry of Transport consulted with its Dutch equivalent before starting work on its cycleway programme. The MoT's chief engineer was provided with cycleway plans and advice by the director of the Rijkswaterstaat.

Between 1934 and 1940 the Ministry of Transport only gave grants to local authorities for arterial road schemes if they included 9-ft-wide cycleways on both sides of the road. More than 300 miles of these innovative cycleways were actually built. Some of these cycleways still exist (but are believed, wrongly, to be "service roads"); others have been grassed over (but their concrete surfaces probably remain). Many are not marked on maps as cycleways (or considered to be such by local authorities).

Carlton Reid, author of two recent books in which they are mentioned, *'Roads Were Not Built for Cars'* and *'Bike Boom'*, has initiated a Kickstarter project with John Dale to see how many of these still exist and whether or not they can be meshed into modern networks.

Your Editor has pledged support for this project.

Some 90 separate protected cycleways schemes around the UK have been identified to date and include in Bedfordshire the A1 Biggleswade bypass, the A6 Clophill bypass and the A6 New Bedford Road north of Luton.

## A1 Biggleswade Bypass

The current Biggleswade 0.81km dual carriageway was built in the late 1950s and opened in the early 1960s as a bypass for the A1 which had previously gone through the centre of the town.

There are no obvious signs of any cycleways having been built along the route.

## A6 Clophill Bypass

Dual carriageways were built in 1937/38 to the north and south of Clophill for the A6. These were west of the previous route which had gone through the area known as The Green.

Again there are no obvious signs of cycleways along the route although there are footpaths for a short distance on both north and south sections from the junction with the A507.

## New Bedford Road Luton.

New Bedford Road was built as a single carriageway in 1936/7 for the A6 to replace what became known then as Old Bedford Road. The road started in High Town just west of Luton railway station and continued northwards for around 3km to the then outskirts of the town.

There is today still a cycleway along most of the east side of the route using at the north end several service roads which could have been the original 3 metre cycle tracks.



*North end  
looking south -  
Service Rd near  
Hillview Cr*



*South end  
looking north -  
Stockingstone  
Road  
roundabout*

*Half way  
looking south*



# Kick Scooter - Eva Konupcikova

My Kick Scooter is a Kostka Tour Max made in the Czech Republic. The company's slogan says: "Throw away chains".

It has become my favourite means of transport ever since I had the opportunity to try one out.

What I like about these fun wheels is the simplicity of riding without the need for a special gear and the advantage of minimal maintenance. Just hop on and push kick yourself forward. Considering that the chainset and gear mechanism are not part of the product, you are left with maintaining the brakes and tyres at the most.

While it took me a couple of hours and a few bruises to learn to ride a bicycle, mastering the art of scooting took minutes. I would recommend it to any sport novice who is reluctant to take up roller blading, cycling and any other balance demanding activity. Scooting is dead easy! Based on my experience, I would place the strenuousness of scooting somewhere between cycling and running. It is not as laid back as sitting and pedalling along like you do on a classic bicycle but likewise it will not knacker you out as running/jogging would.

Even with moderate effort it still generates a reasonably fast pace so I decided to use it for commuting without any concern of arriving to work sweaty plus I save a parking space in our overcrowded company car park.

One of the reasons I bought a kick scooter was that many articles on the internet promote scooting as an excellent way to strengthen core muscles and to balance a sedentary job. There is really nothing better after long hours in the office than to jump on my scooter and stretch all my muscles. Because the scooter is fitted with mudguards I can ride in the rain too and happily.

If I want to increase the level of exercise and get a good workout I just scoot faster. My scooter is good for long distances and off road riding.





However it takes longer than cycling and uneven terrain (we are talking about ditches and potholes) would scratch the bottom of the footboard. I intentionally chose a lower footboard model because it increases riding comfort as I do not have to bend knees too low.

I cannot help to notice that while kick scooters have become very popular in countries all over Europe and USA, UK has been somewhat left behind. Consequently I get a lot of astonished looks and comments while I am scooting the streets of Bedford.

As a matter of fact the traffic rules for scooting are the same as for a bicycle so it is completely legal to scoot on a cycle path and the road as long as lights are installed.

If you are thinking about getting a scooter and need help with choosing a suitable model I would recommend visiting the link below:

<http://www.kostkafootbike.com/en/info/5-advisor>

My kick scooter has a 26" front wheel and 20" back wheel both with Schwalbe Marathon Racer tyres and Shimano brakes. It is light (9.5 Kg with mudguards), compact, manoeuvrable, low maintenance, healthy, eco and fun.

I have been riding my scooter for nine months now and I love it.

# Cycling in New York City

When your Editor was in New York in the 1960s and 70s a cyclist was rarely seen. By the 1980s a few residents had found that it was a quick and easy way to get around the central area, although it was uncool and slightly dangerous. Car drivers at the time were not expecting to share the road with cyclists and tended to cut you off or squeeze you into parked cars. Even today a few irresponsible drivers occasionally try to do it but nowhere to the same extent.

Over the years since this time New York has progressively become more cycle friendly and in England it is not appreciated that New York, a congested American city, is now a great cycling city.

There has been a 350% increase in daily cycling between 1990 and 2015 with 80% between 2010 and 2015. Manhattan saw the largest growth at 98% followed by Brooklyn at 83%. This is twice the growth rate of other major cities in the USA.

Three quarters of a million New Yorkers (778,000) today now ride a bicycle at least several times per month and on a typical day some 450,000 cycling trips are made.



*E 106 Street Manhattan New York*

## *Brooklyn Bridge New York*

Of the four East River Bridges, Manhattan Bridge followed by Brooklyn Bridge have seen the largest increase of cyclists.



## *Brooklyn Bridge New York*



## *Queens Boulevard Queens New York*



*Photos by  
Paul Penman  
on a snowy day  
in March 2017  
in and near Prospect Park  
New York*

# Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Strategy

Under the Infrastructure Act 2015, the government is required to set a 'Cycling and walking investment strategy' for England. This is the first of a series of shorter term, 5 year strategies to support the long-term ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys by 2040.

On 21 April 2017 the government finally published its long awaited Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Strategy with an announcement that £1.2 billion had been made available for its long term plan to make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys.

The government wants cycling and walking to become the norm by 2040 and will target funding at innovative ways to encourage people onto a bike or to use their own two feet for shorter journeys.

Plans include specific objectives to double cycling, reduce cycling accidents and increase the proportion of 5 to 10 year-olds walking to school to 55% by 2025.

The £1.2 billion is to be allocated as follows:

- £50 million to provide cycling proficiency training for further 1.3 million children
- £101 million to improve cycling infrastructure and expand cycle routes between the city centres, local communities, and key employment and retail sites
- £85 million to make improvements to 200 sections of roads for cyclists
- £80 million for safety and awareness training for cyclists, extra secure cycle storage, bike repair, maintenance courses and road safety measures
- £389.5 million for councils to invest in walking and cycling schemes
- £476.4 million from local growth funding to support walking and cycling

In addition, the government is investing an extra:

- £5 million on improving cycle facilities at railway stations
- £1 million on Living Streets' outreach programmes to encourage children to walk to school
- £1 million on Cycling UKs 'Big Bike Revival' scheme which provides free bike maintenance and cycling classes.

The strategy can be downloaded from:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/603527/cycling-walking-investment-strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603527/cycling-walking-investment-strategy.pdf)

CCNB has asked the borough if it can apply for any of the above grants.

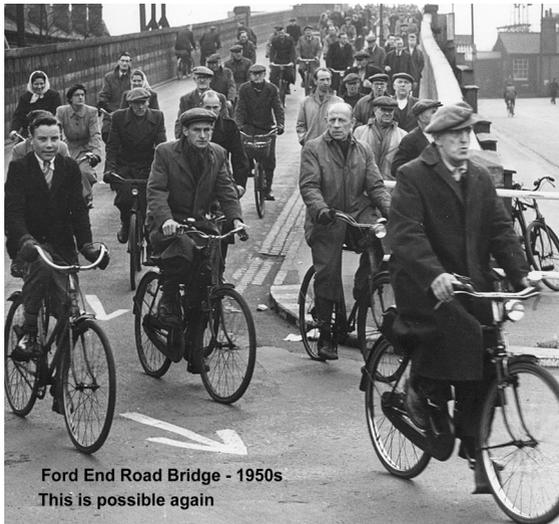
# Bike Boom Book Published

June 2017 has seen the publication of Carlton Reid's new book '**Bike Boom**' telling the stories of the major battles over bikes in Europe and the US from the 1930s through to the 1970s.

Chapter 4 on Cycling in Britain - From Swarms to Sustrans (1942-1979) has two paragraphs on cycling in Bedford and how in 1945 it approached Dutch levels:

*"Some local authorities [in the 1970s] were willing to spend on cycling. Bedford, sixty miles north of London, is one of the few British cities [towns] to have invested in cycling, if somewhat sporadically. With the construction of four crosstown cycle tracks in 1953, it has done so for as long as Stevenage. The key reason for these tracks was that cycle use in Bedford was high - in fact, far higher than most other English towns - and was approaching Dutch levels of use. A 1945 traffic census found that 'for ten minutes in one midday period cyclists passed the census-takers at the rate of three thousand an hour'. There were some improvements to the town's 'network' in the 1960s, and then there was a slightly more ambitious expansion in the 1970s. Not that this was welcomed by all. 'Don't waste cash on racetrack' say angry residents,' screamed a 1977 headline in the Bedfordshire Times.*

*This was in response to plans put forward in the Bedford Urban Transportation Study of 1976. Bedford's council planned to install a number of stripe protected and off-carriageway routes from suburban areas into town, mostly away from arterial roads. Two reasonably good routes were installed, but the rest were spiked because of protests from residents."*



# Bedford - Town of Cyclists

Bedford has always been a 'Town of Cyclists'.

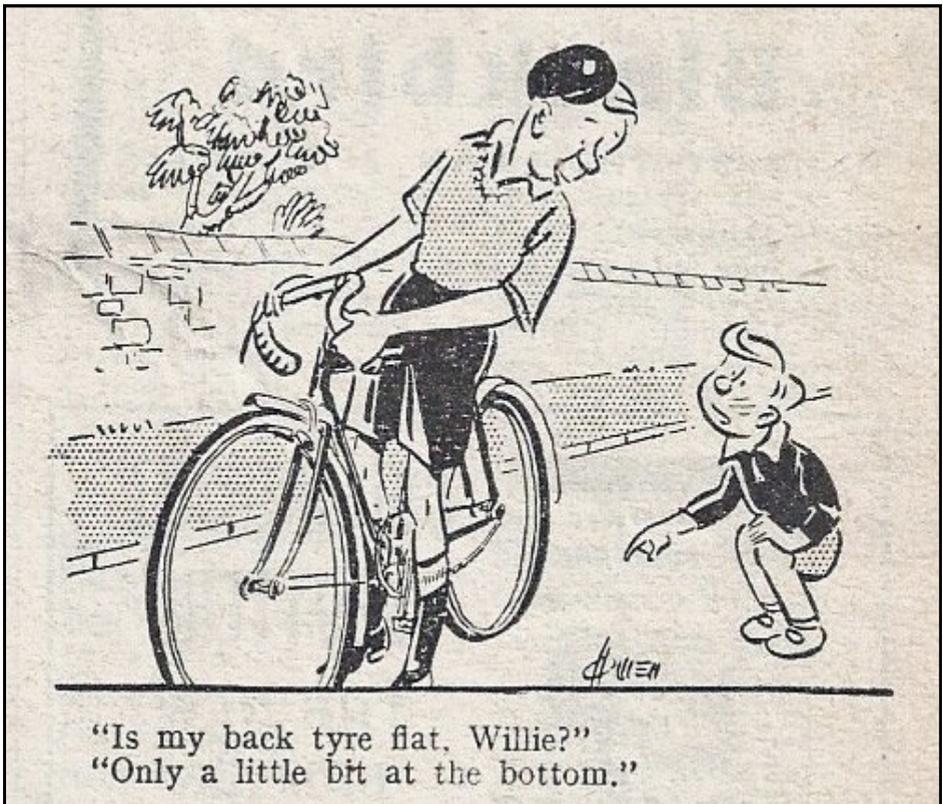
In 1935, cyclists accounted for 80 percent of the total daily traffic in Bedford and at one undisclosed point the average number of cyclists was 264 per hour.

The Bedfordshire Times reported in 1945 that census takers found it difficult to gauge the number of cyclists passing several counting points due to their sheer number.

By 1967 with the expansion of the use of cars this had reduced to 12.4% with a study quoting 16,000 cycle movement into the town centre out of a total of 126,310 movements. Some 9% of commuters cycled to the railway station. This level to the station is the same today.

## Cartoon

Cartoon from Meccano Magazine of 1949.



# Cycling and the Justice System

Following on from British Cycling and Cycling Weekly's campaign of August 2012 (see Newsletter No 64 of October 2012) the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's (APPCG's) has taken up earlier this year one of their **Get Britain Cycling** 2013 report recommendations by conducting an inquiry on **Cycling and the Justice System**.

In summary it found that:

*the justice system is failing to protect cyclists, both by allowing dangerous and inconsiderate driving to go unchecked, and by letting down the victims of road crashes.*

*Cyclists are too often the victims, but in a few cases they are also the perpetrators of road crime. Stronger legal grounding for a hierarchy of road users, in which children, pedestrians and people with disabilities take the highest priority, followed by cyclists, and finally drivers of vehicles, would help make the roads safer for everyone.*

The report published in May 2017 set out fourteen recommendations for how the justice system can be improved.

They found that one of the recommendations stood out as a priority: there has been a collapse in the number of drivers disqualified from driving. **The licence to drive is a privilege, not a right.**

In addition, the adoption of the West Midlands Police **'Be Safe, Give Space'** campaign has led to widespread support amongst the cycling community, and now needs to be rolled out nationwide.

The justice system serves two roles: upholding the law and redressing wrongs. Stable, well enforced laws enable people to lead the lives they wish. When it comes to cycling, this means:

- creating conditions in which both non-cyclists and cyclists feel confident that they are not endangered or threatened, and;
- ensuring that offenders are brought to justice and that cyclists who are victims of traffic collisions are satisfied and compensated adequately.

The 14 recommendations made were:

- 1 The Highway Code should be revised
- 2 The driving test must be changed to help improve driver behaviour towards cyclists
- 3 Professional drivers should be retested more frequently
- 4 Roads policing should be given a higher priority
- 5 The Government and other local authorities should adopt similar partnerships to the ones in London in other parts of the country, to counter the risk posed by illegal freight operations

- 6 The Department for Transport and Ministry of Justice should research the growing discrepancy between road casualty figures
- 7 More police forces should adopt close passing enforcement practice on a wider scale
- 8 The police must ensure that a higher standard of investigation is maintained in all cases where serious injury has resulted
- 9 All police forces should ensure that evidence of common offences submitted by cyclists, or other witnesses, using bike or person mounted cameras or smart phones is put to use, and not ignored
- 10 The length of time required by the Police to serve a Notice of Intended Prosecution for a road traffic offence is currently just 14 days and must be extended
- 11 Confusion and overlap between 'careless' and 'dangerous' driving means that often bad driving does not receive the level of punishment that the public feel it should, the MoJ should investigate how these offences are being used
- 12 The police and CPS should ensure that victims and bereaved families are always kept adequately informed throughout the process of deciding charges
- 13 The Ministry of Justice should examine the reasons behind the decline in the use of the penalty of disqualification
- 14 The Soft Tissue Injury Reforms – the 'whiplash reforms' – should not include injuries to cyclists or pedestrians.

The full report can be downloaded from:

<https://allpartycycling.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/appcg-justice-report-2017.pdf>

It is important that we all tackle the two current health crisis caused by inactivity and air pollution. Increasing the number of journeys taken by foot or bike is the solution, but for lots of people, concerns about safety is *the* major barrier to getting on a bike.

Putting all the recommendations of the report into practice will improve things for pedestrians and people who already cycle, and will create the conditions that enable more people to cycle.

## Government Changes

In a mini-reshuffle of the Government as a result of the 8 June 2017 election The Right Honourable Michael Gove MP has replaced Andrea Leadsom MP as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (see page 15 for draft Air Quality Plan).

The Right Honourable Chris Grayling MP retains his position as Secretary of State for Transport with Andrew Jones MP as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport with responsibility for cycling.

# Ageing Well Exhibition

*Wednesday 19 July 2017*

CCNB in conjunction with Cycling UK will once again be having a stand at this event in the Corn Exchange from 10am to 3pm.

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)