

Cycle Bedford

**Climate
Emergency**
(pages 4, 5 & 6)

Issue 86
March 2020

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



2020 Bedford Riverside Flood

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

Committee

Chair	Peter Blakeman
Secretary	Carole Blakeman
Treasurer	Neville Hobday
Other members	Colin Last vacant
Newsletter Editor	Peter Blakeman

E-mail: ccnb@ccnb.org.uk

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

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



@cyclebedford



cycle_bedford

Campaigning Representation

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group (disbanded July 2018)

Bedford Stations Travel Plan Steering Group

Bedford Hospital Bicycle Users Group

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

Bedford Green Wheel

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

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

Bedford Borough Council Contacts:

Cycling and Walking:

Transport Policy Manager - (01234) 228607/e-mail
melanie.macleod@bedford.gov.uk

Bikeability (Cycle Training) - (01234) 228336

Highways Helpdesk - (01234) 718003/e-mail
highways.helpdesk@bedford.gov.uk

Contents

2	Committee
2	Campaigning Representation
2	Bedford Borough Council Contacts
3	Contents
4	Editorial
5	Climate Emergency Committee
6	What is an Electric Bike (E-bike)
6	Car-Free Towns/Cities
7	Bedford Station Counts Up
8	Bromham Road Bridge Update
9	Cycle Bridge
9	Bromham Road/Ashburnham Road/Shakespeare Road Junction
10	Wildlife Artwork to Mark Cycle Routes
11	Local Plan 2030
12	Neighbourhood Plans
12	Bromham Neighbourhood Plan
13	Bromham River Bridge
14	Fairhill Cycle Track and Crossing
16	Eastcotts Green Cycle Crossings
18	Is Bedford an Inclusive Town?
19	The Use of a Bike as a Mobility Aid
19	Blue Badge for Disabled Cyclists
19	Bedford Town Centre
21	Parking Warning
21	New Government Funds for Cycling
23	Sewage to Cycle Paths
24	Wooden Bikes
25	Zoov Electric Bikes
26	Hydrogen Powered Bikes
28	Cycling in Aveiro Portugal
31	Parisian E-Bikes
32	Airless Tyres
33	New Tyre for E-Bikes
34	Stephenson and Stevenson on Route 51
36	Diary
36	Local Cycle Rides - Contact
36	CCNB Vision and Objectives

Cover

Cover photograph (and also on page 4) of the River Great Ouse flooding near Longholme Café in January 2020 taken by Janet Hobday.

Editorial

Over the last few months we have seen the destruction of communities in South East Australia due to fires and the repeated flooding of many areas in the UK following Storms Ciara and Dennis (including the Embankment in Bedford - see cover and below) . There can be little doubt that we are experiencing a **Climate Emergency**.

As a result more and more towns and cities are bringing forward plans to make their centres car free (page 6).

Government and local authorities including Bedford could do more but in the end it is up to residents to take some of the initiative and in the case of transport to try and curb the use of motor vehicles for short journeys wherever possible and use sustainable modes instead - walking, cycling and/or public transport.

Curbing traffic within the urban area will also reduce the air pollution responsible for numerous health problems and the premature deaths of many residents each year. With safer roads residents will have no excuse not to become more active.

Is Bedford an inclusive town? Many disabled residents who used to cycle to town to do their shopping don't think so since being fined under the Public Spaces Protection Order (page 19).



Climate Emergency Committee

Third Meeting

The Borough had its third meeting of its Climate Emergency Committee on 3 February 2020. Again there was very little mention of sustainable transport and virtually nothing on cycling to help reduce climate change.

The meeting approved a report presented on the best ways to report on climate change to business and residents. This can be seen on :

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Environmental%20Issues/Sustainability/Strategies/SDEES%20Strategy.pdf>

Actions on 10 proposed objectives to assist the Council in reaching Carbon Neutral by 2030 were also put forward and approved. One objective mentioned sustainable transport:

No 7 - Replace Borough Council owned vehicles with suitable electric or hydrogen models where appropriate to do so as well as promote sustainable transport alternatives.

The report can be seen on:

http://www.councillorsupport.bedford.gov.uk/documents/s48328/Item%208_200203_CCC_Carbon%20Neutral_10%20proposed%20objectives%20to%20assist%20the%20Council.pdf

Second Meeting

At the second meeting held on 18 November 2019 it was noted in a reply to a CCNB member that transport issues including cycling were on the work programme for future consideration.

In relation to planning issues the Chief Officer for Planning and Highways cited a number of policies in the Local Plan 2030 which were related to climate change. It was noted that three of them, Policy 1S - Healthy Communities, Policy 2S - Spatial Strategy and Policy 54 - Development Layout and Accessibility mentioned sustainability modes of transport.

The Chief Officer for Transport gave a presentation on bicycle rental schemes around the country and concluded that a scheme for Bedford would not be economically viable at the present time.

He went on to say that the Borough already had a number of initiatives to encourage cycling such as bike hire for staff for work journeys and loans to purchase bikes and had grants from the government for cycle training for school children.

The mention of continued improvements to cycle infrastructure was not considered by CCNB to have been a very accurate statement. There have been many lost opportunities over the last few years including the current plans for the High Street.

Car-Free Towns/Cities

Is the design of a town or city around the motor car now coming to an end?

Air pollution, dangerous roads, physical inactivity, community severance and congestion are all high priority issues facing cities and towns.

On top of this is the need to reduce emissions from greenhouse gases to prevent the temperature of the planet rising out of control to alter our whole way of life. This has become one of the major crisis's of our time and more and more local authorities including Bedford have now declared a '**climate emergency**'. As a result many towns and cities are now taking action over the next few years (or continuing to take action) to reduce car use and make their centres car-free.

Examples are: Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, North Tyneside, Nottingham and Oxford,

What is **Bedford** doing?

Last Autumn there was a consultation on a Town Centre Plan with a draft plan due to be published shortly for further consultation.

In the meantime, as part of Bedford Borough's Transporting Bedford 2020 project to ease congestion at a number of junctions around the town, a plan was released towards the end of last year outlining the scheme due to start in July 2020, after the Town's Riverside Festival, to reduce the two lane carriageway along the High Street to a single carriageway and widen the pavements.

Disappointedly no improvements are planned to improve the safety of cyclists or introducing a south-north contraflow to avoid illegal pavement cycling. The legal alternative is to cycle around the busy town centre periphery via Horne Lane, River Street and Greyfriars.

In the January 2020 adopted Local Plan 2030 the introduction of improved facilities for cyclists along the High Street is still one of the stated targets and has been the recommendation following the de-trunking of the A6 through the town when The Great Ouse Way bypass was opened in April 2017. Recommendations to improve the connectivity of the town for cyclists have been made in a number of consultants reports going back nearly 20 years.

The release of the plan came with an accompanying video

<https://youtu.be/dGFyaRk9QZk>

which showed two artist's impression of the High Street (see right), one with a young cyclist and her father riding confidently along the High Street adjacent to St Paul's Square with the exception of one motor vehicle completely devoid of any other traffic. If only this is what it will be like!



High Street near its junction with Mill Street



High Street adjacent to St Paul's Square

Bedford Station Counts Up

After seeing a 3% drop in 2019 for commuters cycling to Bedford station CCNB is pleased to report a 7% increase during January and February compared to the same months in 2019.

Bromham Road Bridge Update

The original bridge was partially demolished over the period from Monday 21 October to 22 December 2019 and the new bridge rebuilt. During this time nearly 300 car parking spaces were unavailable.

The blockade disappointingly had no effect on the number of commuters cycling to the station with the numbers using a bicycle remaining nearly the same.

A two minute time lapse video of the operation can be seen at:

https://youtu.be/_fcfB9q6UY

For a six week period in January/February 2020 the utilities which had been carried across the lines on the temporary bridge were moved back to the new bridge and work started on the re-establishment of the embankments.

The completed bridge is on schedule to be fully opened during April 2020.



Upgraded bridge as of November 2019

In the meantime the outcome of last February's public inquiry into CCNB's objection to the absence of cycle infrastructure across the bridge is still outstanding.

A written parliamentary question on behalf of CCNB was put to the Secretary of State for Transport by Bedford and Kempston MP Mohammad Yasin.

A written response was received on 7 February 2020 from Chris Heaton-Harris, the minister responsible for trains, cycling and walking.

“The decision by the Secretary of State on the Transport and Works Act Order application by Network Rail for the London To Corby (land acquisition and bridge works) Order will be made in the near future”.

Cycle Bridge

A budget of £2.75 million is in the borough’s Capital Programme for spending in the next financial year (2020/21) with £0.25m having been spent this year.

The design of the separate cycle bridge, promised by the end of 2019, is still outstanding with three options being considered:

1. North side with east ramp along a closed Spenser Road.
2. North side with east ramp in place of London Planes
3. South side

In all three cases the bridge should be 4 metre wide as recommended in the Government’s design guide.

CCNB’s preferred option is No 1.

Bromham Road/Ashburnham Road/Shakespeare Road Junction

The junction is currently being modified as part of the Transporting Bedford 2020 project.

Both mini-roundabouts are being retained but will shortly have cycling zebras and off-road cycle lanes on each arm.

The Bromham Road west arm is the first section to be modified while the road is still closed to traffic pending the completion of the new bridge.

The cycling improvements are designed to link the quiet route along Spenser Road as an alternative to the narrow, heavily congested one along Shakespeare Road for commuters cycling from the Manton Lane and Clapham areas to Bedford railway station. This was first proposed in 1999. The route uses a short off-road section of new dual use path on the west side of Shakespeare Road from Clapham Road to Byron Crescent to be created as part of the Northern Gateway scheme.

At the south end of Spenser Road it had been originally proposed that there would be an underpass of Bromham Road to enable cyclists to proceed directly into the station via the station car park. This was rejected by Network Rail as part of the new bridge scheme although the route through the car park is still programmed for the future as part of the One State development of the area for a multi-storey car park.

Wildlife Artwork to Mark Cycle Routes

With the support of Sustrans, two attractive bespoke pieces of artwork have been installed recently on national cycling routes in locations close to Dunstable and Luton Airport.

The artwork is made from laser-cut steel, and has been designed to highlight the routes and provide attractive and prominent formal entrances which will encourage more walkers and cyclists to use the routes.

In creating the unique designs, the artist, Stephen Pardue from interpretation specialists Differentia, took inspiration from local landscapes, wildlife and the history of the sites.



The Totternhoe Green Lanes artwork is close to Dunstable on Sustrans National Cycle Route 574, at the start of the green lanes on Tring Road.

These ancient green lanes allow residents fantastic access to the local countryside. The gateway is designed to attract and welcome residents, while also discouraging vehicles from parking across the path entrance.

The Upper Lea Valley Way route artwork is alongside Sustrans National Cycle Route 6, close to Luton Parkway Station and airport. The gateway has been designed to encourage more people to use the cycle route, and make it more visible.

Local Plan 2030

The Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030, work on which started way back in May 2013, was finally adopted by Full Council on 15 January 2020. The plan sets out how much growth (housing, jobs and associated infrastructure) there should be in the borough and where it should take place.

Most of the policies in the 2013 adopted Allocations and Designations (A&D) Local Plan document which was part of the previous plan are still relevant and have not been replaced in the new plan. This includes the A&Ds Bedford Cycle Network and Green Wheel.

The Bedford Cycle Network paper contains a list of 54 items which require improvements. Since the list was compiled in 2012, only 12 (22%) have been completed over the last eight years with two in progress. The opportunity to improve several items has been missed over this time.

Some of the completed items have been:

- Riverside bridge
- Riverside route from The Slipe to Great Denham
- Norse Road route from cemetery entrance to Asgard Drive
- Cambridge Road route from Priory Park to Wallis Way
- Union Street roundabout to continental style
- Goldington Road gyratory cycle lanes
- St Neots Road cycle route signing to Renhold Turn
- Woburn Road cycle contraflow

The adopted Local Plan 2030 can be downloaded from:

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Planning%20and%20Building/local-plan-2030/Local%20Plan%202030%20ADOPTED%20VERSION.pdf>

The still valid Allocations and Designations Local Plan: (2013)

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=20ZDDprsHXZ1W7QI5noNVw%3d%3d&name=Allocations%20and%20Designations%20Local%20Plan%202013%20INTERACTIVE.pdf>

and its background papers - Bedford Cycle Network (2012):

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=AiDA8e1UQHvElaKPwRtceQ%3d%3d&name=Cycle%20Network%20Background%20Paper.pdf>

and Green Wheel (2009)

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=SShDsYYQhtTO%2bOxGWI0D2q%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Green%20Wheel%20Masterplan%20Draft%20Report%20December%202009.pdf>

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Government in 2011 with the aim to involve people in decisions about their own neighbourhood.

A Neighbourhood Plan sets out how a community would like local land and buildings to be used – what kind of development there should be and where it should be located.

They must fit within the wider planning framework, that is, the Neighbourhood Plan must conform to Bedford Borough’s assessments of housing and infrastructure needs. Most plans are developed by a Parish Council and volunteers but must reflect the views of the community.

A draft Neighbourhood Plan then needs to be approved by an independent examiner and endorsed or rejected by community referendum. If endorsed, the Plan would have statutory authority and Bedford Borough Council would be required to take account of it in planning decisions affecting the appropriate parish.

Neighbourhood Plans for Carlton & Chellington, Oakley and Bletsoe have been submitted to Bedford Borough Council over the last year.

Bromham Neighbourhood Plan

The latest draft Neighbourhood Plan submitted to the Council is one from Bromham. A consultation on the document opened on the end of January and closed on 9 March 2020.

In public consultations and questionnaires carried out over the last few years the following cycling requests were put forward by many residents:

- Safe cycle/pedestrian path across Bromham bridge or the installation of a separate bridge
- Cycle/pedestrian bridge across Clapham Ford from Lower Farm Road
- More cycle paths throughout the village

Some of these requests have been taken on board in the draft document. The Parish Council has said that one of its priorities for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money arising from the proposed new developments in the village should be to contribute to a safe pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Great Ouse to create a safe and sustainable route between Bromham and Bedford.

To enhance cyclists safety cycle lanes will be installed in both directions on Stagsden Road on a temporary basis. If they prove effective in increasing cycle use, and to enhance sustainability, they will be made permanent and consideration given to the suitability of introducing cycle lanes on other roads in the village to improve safe cycling (Policy GA3).

Bromham River Bridge

In 2008 the then Bedfordshire County Council carried out trials in which the bridge was closed firstly, for traffic in one direction for a number of weeks and then totally closed. The results showed how much latent demand there was for a safe crossing by both cyclists and pedestrians not only for leisure purposes but also by people wanting to cycle to work and school. The number of people walking and cycling across the bridge during the trials was found to double and triple respectively,

At Bedfordshire County Council's Development Control meeting held on 28 January 2009 prior to the Council's demise in March 2009, the Committee supported the principle of closing the Bridge to eastbound traffic to enable half of the width of the bridge to be devoted to pedestrians and cyclists but agreed to leave the matter to the new Bedford Unitary Authority for a final decision.

Bedford Borough Council, due to strong lobbying by a number of Bromham residents took the decision to leave the bridge as it was.



Clapham Ford

In 2007 Sustran's Connect2 project scooped the People's Lottery with £50m awarded for the construction of new cycling facilities. A pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Great Ouse at Clapham Ford was one of the schemes put forward to link Clapham with Bromham along Lower Farm Road. Unfortunately it was not successful.

Fairhill Cycle Track and Crossing

The site between Sainsburys/Aldi, the railway line and The Great Ouse Way with access from Fairhill (previously called Cut Throat Lane) is currently under development.



The first development due to be opened in July 2020 is Brewpoint, the new flagship Bedford brewery, venue and home of Wells & Co.

The state-of-the-art building will incorporate Wells & Co's head office as well as the brewery, shop and entertainment space. Visitors will be able to roast their own coffee at the on-site roastery, and brew their own beer – with the guidance of the Brewpoint experts – at the on-site micro-brewery.

Fairhill, since the construction of the roundabout and the opening of The Great Ouse Way in April 2016 cyclists and pedestrians have found crossing the road extremely dangerous to cross due to almost continuous traffic around the roundabout and not knowing whether by accident or design a vehicle is turning into the road or The Great Ouse Way. With the addition of the new Aldi store and this application the situation will become even more serious.

As a result of CCNB's response to the planning application for Brewpoint a

condition was imposed on the developer to construct prior to the development being brought into use:

1. A continuous 3.5m footway cycleway on the west side of Fairhill to connect to/from the existing provision on the north west corner to/from all pedestrian/cycle access points and
2. A controlled crossing at the northern end of Fairhill, located between the Aldi access junction and the A6 roundabout junction.

Item 1 has been completed in the last two months but not item 2.

CCNB has contacted the planning officer who said the developer was not obliged to provide the crossing at this point but they will be done later which seems strange to a layman as it will cost extra money to dig up the new path to install dropped kerbs and tactile surfaces in the future.



New dual use path to Brewpoint and other future facilities minus proposed toucan crossing near sign

Existing dangerous crossing



Eastcotts Green Cycle Crossings

Eastcotts Green is phase 3 of the development at RAF Cardington (New Cardington), and lies between Harrowden Lane, Paul Waller Avenue, the Driving Vehicle Standard Agency (DVSA) premises and the old Bedford to Hitchin railway line.

Construction of the site has been well underway for sometime and when completed will consist of 250 dwellings to a variety of types with a large 'Clock Park' formal sports area and a 'Eastcotts Green' village green.

Paul Waller Avenue is a privately owned road under the control of the DVSA. Vehicular access to Eastcotts Green is therefore only via two signalled controlled crossings, in the south, Condor Boulevard, and in the north, Green End Road. Both crossing have toucan control for cyclists and pedestrians on the adjacent three metre wide paths.

The old railway line will be kept as an ecological corridor with a cycle/pedestrian path installed along its length to Harrowden Lane with links to the development.

It has been suggested that in the future the ecological corridor may be extended along the old railway line as far as the A600/A421 junction.



Cycle crossing of Paul Waller Avenue at Condor Boulevard



Paul Waller Avenue looking north from Condor Boulevard



*Paul Waller Avenue looking north from Green End Road
with gates to Harrowden Lane closed*

Is Bedford an Inclusive Town?

Last year an Inclusive town group was set up to develop an **Inclusive Town Charter** to create better accessibility and inclusiveness across Bedford for disabled people.

The charter was launched on **Purple Tuesday**, Tuesday 12 November 2019, in the Harpur Centre.

Purple Tuesday is an international call for action, focused on changing the customer experience for disabled people. It involves organisations of all sizes and from all sectors taking decisive, practical actions to meet the needs of disabled customers.

The launch was accompanied by a survey with questions that appeared to indicate that the proposed charter was mainly about the issues and barriers of accessing and dealing with businesses.

What was not covered was how easy it was for people with disabilities to get to the town's businesses in the first place. In terms of those who cycle or would like to cycle, Bedford, and in particular the town centre, cannot be described as a completely Inclusive Town.

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities.

Disability covers a whole range of conditions and it not always obvious whether a person has one or not.

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), **one in five** people in England and Wales currently have a disability.

For disabled people with impaired mobility there are adapted cars, mobility scooters, wheelchairs, including a range of different types of equipment to enable some to continue to walk and use public transport but many prefer to continue to use a bike.

The Use of a Bike as a Mobility Aid

It is a common myth that disabled people don't or can't cycle.

Transport for London (TfL) research has shown that in London 78% of **disabled** people are able to cycle, although only 12 to 15% regularly use a bike to get around. In Cambridge, a cycling city, it is significantly higher with more than a quarter of disabled people commutes made by bike.

The level in Bedford of those who cycle or would like to cycle is not known but is believed to be significant.

Studies have shown that 75% of disabled cyclists find cycling easier than walking, with the same proportion using their bike as a mobility aid. Often this is because cycling is non-weight bearing, reduces pressure on

joints, aids balance and relieves breathing difficulties. For anyone with impaired mobility, cycling can also save significant energy and time.

The rapidly growing electrical assistance of bikes, E-bikes, helps disabled and older people to cycle longer distances and in greater comfort, by reducing the amount of physical effort required.

However, under existing legislation bikes are not listed as a mobility aid (unlike wheelchairs and mobility scooters), meaning disabled cyclists may be asked to dismount in places where 'cyclists dismount' signs are displayed (despite the fact that walking or wheeling a mobility aid, such as a handcycle, might be physically impossible for some). In areas such as Bedford town centre's Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) cycling ban area many disabled cyclists have been heavily fined.

In 2018 the Department for Transport published a document '**Inclusive Transport Strategy - achieving equal access for disabled people**'. Under paragraph 4.26 it states:

Local authorities are responsible for the design of their streets. It is for them to ensure any pedestrian environment scheme, including a shared space, is inclusive and that they meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

and under paragraph 4.28:

This Strategy should help ensure that disabled people are able to move around freely through the pedestrian environment, and use it to access other modes of transport. If using a cycle, whether as a mobility aid or not, they will be able to use inclusive cycle infrastructure to support their journey.

In the strategy's actions to deliver its objectives under 8.48 Cycling it states:

By 2020, explore the feasibility of amending legislation to recognise the use of cycles as a mobility aid in order to increase the number of disabled people cycling.

Blue Badge for Disabled Cyclists

Wheels for Wellbeing, UK's leading campaign organisation for disabled cyclists, in the meantime has put forward to government and local authorities the possibility of developing a '**Disabled Cyclists Blue Badge**' or similar scheme.

Bedford Town Centre

Bedford town centre at the present time is not easy for cyclists to visit safely let alone ones with disabilities and cannot be described as inclusive.

This is due to:

- (1) a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which bans all cyclists from riding in the town centre's pedestrianised area between 9am and 6pm. A private company has vigorously enforced the ban since January 2018 and more than 2000 cyclists have been fined including many elderly and disabled residents. This has resulted in a high proportion no longer visiting the town centre with a subsequent loss of business.
- (2) A hazardous one way cycle ride along a polluted High Street resulting from a continuous flow of vehicles including HGVs and car transporters. The High Street is due to be improved for pedestrians in July 2020 by reducing the road to a single carriageway. Unfortunately this will not include a safe two way cycle route.

Studies in other towns and cities have shown that people walking and cycling visit high streets more frequently and spend more money there compared to people in cars. This attracts more shops and makes them more economically viable and vibrant.

Borough Statement

The Mayor in a statement prior to the Inclusive Town Charter launch said:

"We are committed to improving accessibility and inclusiveness across the town." "We support the vision (of the Bedford - an inclusive town forum) to see disability as an opportunity and to be part of addressing the inequality that exists for disabled people through increasing accessibility for everything they do."

Over the last two decades there have also been a number of consultants reports recommending that the connectivity of the town for cyclists and pedestrians should be improved with one report stating that the town is behind in providing for cyclists compared to a number of towns of a similar size.

References

Department of Transport - Inclusive Transport Strategy -
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728547/inclusive-transport-strategy.pdf

Wheels for Wellbeing - A Guide to Inclusive Cycling -
<https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FINAL-v3.pdf>

Arup/Sustrans - Inclusive Cycling in Cities and Towns (Stage 1 Report June 2019)
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/1029/1029.pdf>

Parking - Warning

Do not park for any length of time under a tree used by pigeons.



Seen in Stevenage town centre (February 2020)

New Government Funds for Cycling!

Following the December election which gave the Tory's under Boris Johnson a huge majority and the cabinet reshuffle on 11 February 2020 Chris Heaton-Harris MP retained his position as a Minister of State in the Department for Transport and his responsibility for cycling and walking.

On 7 February 2020 he announced that there would be a significant expansion of the Bikeability cycle training scheme to enable every child in the UK to be offered training.

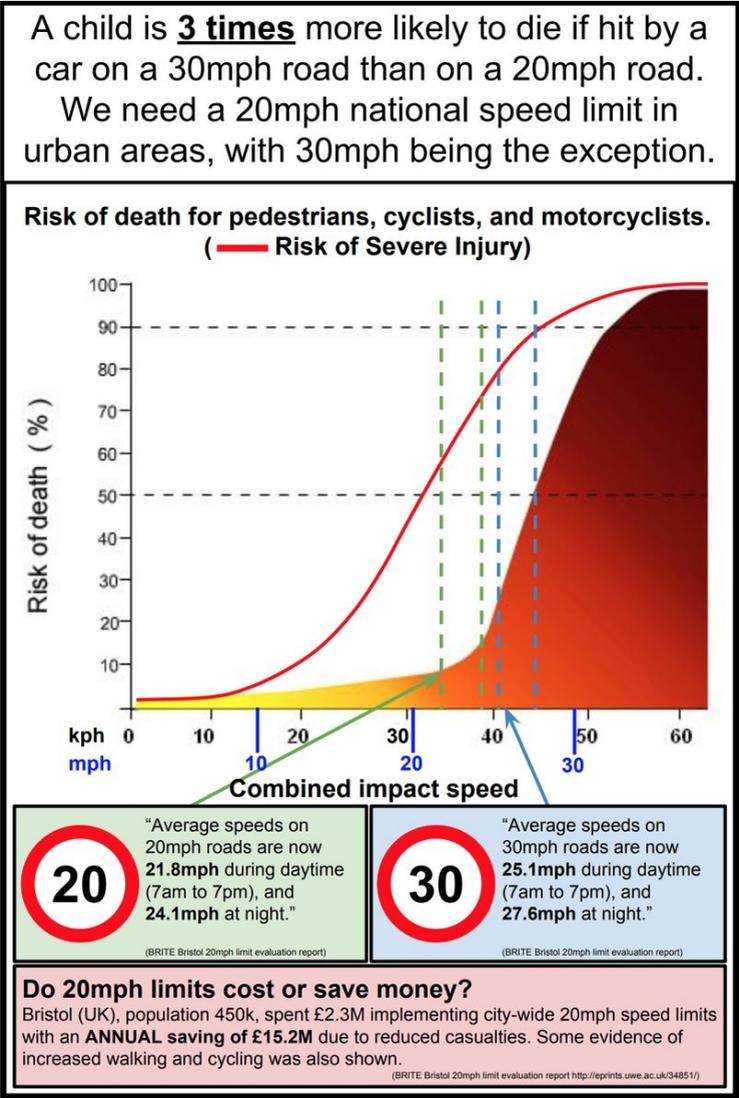
On 11 February 2020 the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced five billion pounds of new funding to overhaul bus and cycle links in every region in the UK outside London. When pressed this was said to be £350m for cycling over five years. This equates to an amount for each local authority sufficient to construct just 0.54 km of a new route.

In their first budget on 11 March £1bn was announced for 'Green Transport Solutions' but none committed for cycling and walking.

20mph

The Borough has to continue to introduce 20mph speed limits in all residential area and the whole of the town centre area.

The results of work carried out in Bristol (see poster below) show how lives can be saved as well as money.



Sewage to Cycle Paths

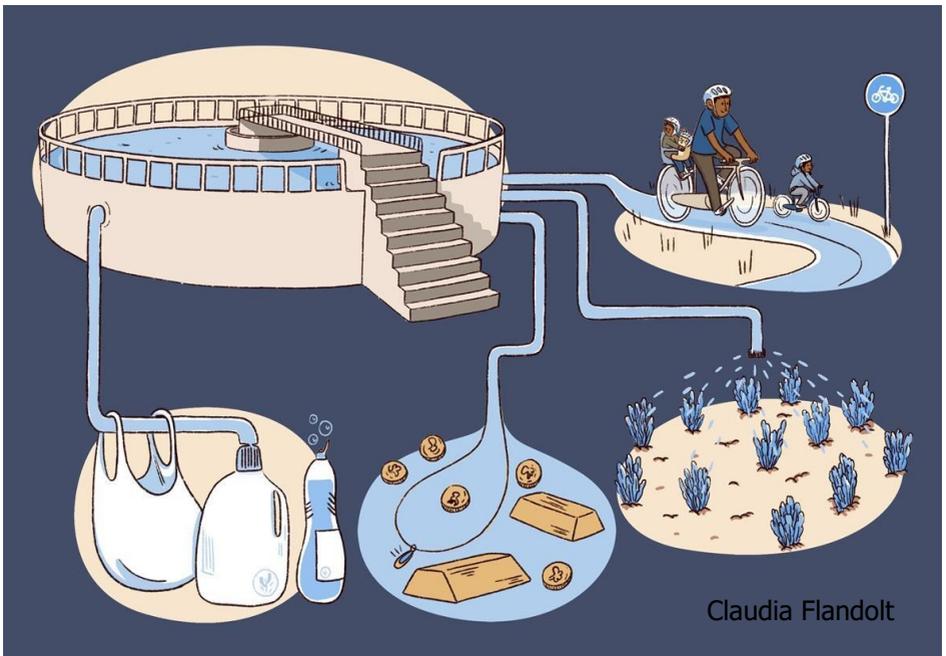
In 2017 a Dutch company opened the world's first sewage to cellulose facility. Screened material, much of it from toilet paper contains up to 70% cellulose. The final product comes as fluff or pellets.

The use of cellulose is a growing global market worth £17 billion due to demand from the textile industry but the first commercial application for the product was as an asphalt additive to surface one kilometre of a new Dutch cycle path connecting the Frisian capital of Leeuwarden to the town of Stiens.

Severn Trent Water Board is currently carrying out trials on a number of different technologies at its Sernal Wastewater Treatment Plant near Reddich to turn human waste into cellulose, biodegradable plastics and even proteins as part of a plan to turn sewage treatment plants into 'recourse recovery factories'.

Meanwhile Cranfield University has a pilot plant to recover phosphorus, as calcium phosphate from its sewage while a pilot study by Wolverhampton University has looked into the recovery of precious metals.

When you flush the loo in a few years time the toilet paper used could be extracted by your local sewage treatment and used in the resurfacing of your local cycle path.



Wooden Bikes

In Newsletter No 67 (October 2013) we had an article on Bamboo Bikes. Bikes do not have to be made from this material, they may also be made from ordinary solid wood such as ash.

It all started in 2011 when a Dutchman and his son cycled on their standard metal bikes from the Netherlands to Greece. They had a number of problems on their way and decided that the next time they made such a trip it would be on bikes made from all natural materials.

During 2013/14 under the name COCO-MAT.bike they made various bikes shaped out of solid wood and in 2016 opened a factory in Athens Greece.



In 2017 they opened a COCO-MAT.bike store in Athens and in 2018 a further ONE in Antwerp, Belgium. From these two stores they rent out their wooden bikes, organise customised tours of the areas, organise events as well selling to customers.

For every bike sold a new tree is planted in a Greek tree park tagged with the customer's name.

For the full storey see the website -

<https://coco-mat.bike/story/>

Zoov Electric Bikes

To create minimal intrusion on streets and footpaths a new French company, Zoov, has worked with a Parisian design office to develop an electric bike sharing system that lock together at the handlebars and rear wheels for parking instead of sliding into a dock as with traditional bike hire schemes such as Santander Bikes.



The aim of Zoov was to address one of the complaints about dockless share bikes such as Mobike, which users park virtually anywhere when they have finished riding, which then tends to create litter in the urban environment.

The Zoov docks can store 20 bikes in the space typically occupied by one car and has been designed to respect the urban environment and integrate seamlessly into city life.

The bikes are distinguished by a sky-blue curved line that runs the length of the bike frame and highlights its simplicity.

The bike was launched early last year in the south of the Greater Paris area and Bordeaux areas.

For further information see:

<https://www.zoov.eu/en/>

Hydrogen Powered Bikes

Many car companies have been developing hydrogen fuelled cars for a number of years while, particularly in France, the number of hydrogen based buses used by local authorities has been steadily increasing yet no major companies have considered bicycles as suitable for the fuel.



A few years ago a Biarritz based company, Pragma Industries, which has made hydrogen fuel cells for military use since 2004 thought differently and developed a hydrogen powered bike which was given the name 'Alpha'.

The original bikes were able to travel 100km without rider assistance, much further than an electric bike using lithium-ion batteries, which can only clock around 50km. The bike weighed 29kg, with its hydrogen system approaching 7kg, the same weight as an electric battery of equivalent capacity.

Pierre Forté, founder and CEO of Pragma, has said:

“The advantage of the hydrogen technology is that it is possible to increase the available energy by 30% by adding only 600 grams to the system whereas, for the same power on an electric bike the additional battery required would add 2kg.”

Forté sees his product having a strong environmental impact as 'proximity trips' by car, such as to work or school, represent almost a

quarter of fuel emissions in France. The Pragma Industries founder says hydrogen can have a more beneficial impact on electromobility than lithium-ion storage because its carbon footprint is lower. From construction to dismantling, the hydrogen system could even have zero impact on CO₂ emissions in four or five years.

The hydrogen used in the bicycles is 'green' as it is obtained by electrolysis fueled by renewable energy. Although the fuel cell requires metals whose extraction has a strong toxicological impact on the environment. A lithium battery of 7kg, represents five or 6kg of different metals. A fuel cell is only 0.3g of platinum which, in addition, is not mixed with other metals and can be recycled to 90%.

The fuel cell would still be usable after 15-20 years and the tank has no life limit. After 15 years the fuel cell would not perform as well but could have other applications, such as in the construction of generators which it supplies to Bangladesh.

The main disadvantage is the high cost roughly 7,500 EUR for a bike and some 30,000 EUR for the recharging station, too high for the average consumer although the company hopes to cut the costs to the level of a premium e-bike in the future.

For this reason the company's initial commercial strategy has been to rent them for long periods rather than to sell them. They have already delivered sixty to municipal fleets of the French cities like Cherbourg, Chambéry, Saint Lo, and Bayonne.

This is changing as they have received large orders from developing countries where electricity from grids are either not available or unstable due to power cuts.

In 2018 100 bikes were sold to owners from France, Germany, Norway, the United States or Italy.

One of their advantages is that they can be fully recharged in two minutes versus 3-4 hours for lithium batteries. The company offers to build power stations that supply users with hydrogen produced through the electrolysis of water. One kilo of hydrogen is a source of 600 times more energy than a lithium battery of the same weight.

A higher powered version was introduced in 2019 using a 300 bar carbon composite cylinder instead of the 200 bar original which has increased its range from 100 to 150km, a 50% increase.

The new upgraded version was unveiled at the 45th G7 summit in Biarritz between 24 and 26 August 2019 where a fleet of 200 of the bikes were made available to enable journalists attending the event to travel easily between the G7 press centre and the city itself.

After the summit the bikes were offered to the city of Biarritz for long term rental.

Cycling in Aveiro Portugal

Aveiro is the second most populous city (2011 population 78,480), after Coimbra, in the Centro Region of Portugal. The city is famed for its canals, nouveau architecture and colourfully painted Moliceiros boats and is said to be called the Venice of Portugal.

The city lies on the edge of the Ria de Aveiro, an expansive saltwater lagoon that was historically farmed for its seaweed, salt and bountiful fish. Today it is a bustling university city with an authentic fishermen's district, ornate Art Nouveau houses and numerous religious buildings



There are 3 ways to explore the city: on foot, by boat (the typical 'moliceiro' boat, used in the past to collect sea-weed to fertilize the agricultural fields) or by bike.

Aveiro is one of the coolest cities to ride a bike due to its flatness. There is also the unique ecosystem of the Aveiro Lagoon stretching from Ovar in the north to Mira in the south.

It is claimed that the Region of Aveiro has 868 cycle routes that you can explore.

To make it accessible to visitors the municipality has made available 350 BUCAs - Free Bikes of Aveiro - that can be picked up everyday of the week from 10:00 to 19:00. To access a bike it is necessary to go to one of 20 parks located in strategic places around the city including the bus

and railway stations, leave your identity (passport or driving licence) and pick up a portable lock with a code. You can then use a bike, stop and leave it and explore each tourist destination without any concern and with total freedom as long as you return the bike to one of the parks by 7pm.





Knitted bike seen outside a shop in Aveiro, Portugal (Paul Penman)



Start the Revolution - back to bike' logo seen on a shop window in Aveiro, Portugal (Paul Penman)

Parisian E-Bikes

The Paris region last September launched a large fleet of electric bicycles in a state-funded scheme aimed at getting commuters to cycle to work and reducing congestion and pollution.

The regional transport agency Ile-de-France Mobilités (IDFM) has provided up to 10,000 e-bikes for long-term rental, with a view to expanding the scheme to 20,000, which would make it the world's largest e-bike rental program.

The aim of the "**Veligo**" service is to encourage bicycle commuting, which at the moment accounts for only 1.6 percent of daily trips in the Ile-de-France area.

While Velib mainly serves the two million residents of central Paris, Veligo is aimed at the capital's wider region, home to 10 million people and a third of national output.

Velib already offers some e-bikes and in recent months several firms, including California's Lime and Bird, have launched electric scooters that have taken Paris by storm.

Veligo will be run by a joint venture including the postal service and transport firm Transdev under a six-year contract. It will have a budget of up 111 million euros (\$127 million).

It will complement Paris' Velib scheme, which has served as a model for bike-sharing worldwide but which has struggled since a new operator took over in 2019. Only half the promised 20,000 new Velibs are currently in operation.

Unlike Velib bikes, which are rented on an hourly basis and must be docked in roadside stations after use, Veligo bikes will stay with users, who can rent them for 40 euros a month, half of which can be subsidized by their employers.



The initiative is a major move for Valerie Pecresse, the head of the Ile-de-France region. "Electric bicycles have an enormous potential. They are an efficient and ecological way to get to the railway station for short commutes that can replace the car".

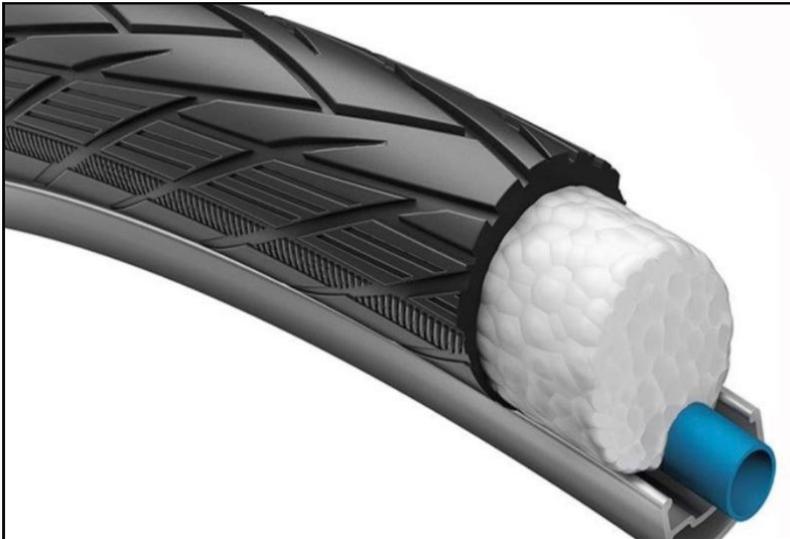
Airless Tyres

The Netherlands largest bicycle tyre manufacturer, Schwalbe, announced in March 2018 that it was taking airless to the next level.

Schwalbe's new Airless System consists of an outer tyre combined with an airless inner one and claims that it offers puncture free riding and is also suitable for high speed riding as well as the heavier weights of e-bikes.

The tyres are claimed to offer a lifetime without maintenance of more than 10,000 kilometres in regular use with the system giving an intuitive feel of an air pressure of around 3.5 bar making the riding characteristics comparable to those of an inner tube.

Solid inner tube systems have been available for sometime but Schwalbe say their new system of mini air cushions based on thermoplastic polyurethane foam particles - the same material that is used in the soles of Adidas BOOST running shoes - gives the required damping and flexibility characteristics for ride comfort.



The technical advantages only cause a slight loss of performance, so the rolling resistance and the weight are slightly higher than for inner tubes. However, wherever a 100% maintenance-free system has the priority, the Airless System beats the inner tube.

The Schwalbe Airless System is mounted using a special assembly tool and the installation time is not much longer than for a normal tyre. Installation is only possible for bicycle dealers and only by bicycle technicians, who are certified after a Schwalbe training. This training started in May 2018, initially only in the Netherlands and Germany.

New Tyre for E-Bikes

Schwalbe has also recently brought out a new tyre for e-bikes, Marathon E-Plus.

The tyre is a further development of the famous Marathon Plus and stands for even better puncture resistance and less wear. In addition to the SmartGuard anti-puncture layer, the tyre has two layers of RaceGuard canvas which gives pointed 'intruders', like thorns, even less chance of causing leaks.

Next to its carcass the Marathon E-Plus also has a new tread, made of what Schwalbe calls 'Addix E-compound'. Benefits of this new compound is that it offers lower rolling resistance, allows for better grip – even at higher speeds – and shows less wear than the previous Marathon Plus. Moreover, the profile is shaped in such a way that the tyre can well handle different surface types.

The Marathon E-Plus side-walls are protected from showing cracks and age at low tyre pressures. For that the carcass structure has, compared to the Marathon Plus, been substantially improved. The side-walls have textile inserts for extra stabilization when under pressure due to higher weights. The new Schwalbe e-bike tyre series has the ECE-75R certification meaning that they are homologated for the higher speeds of the speed pedelec category.



Stephenson and Stevenson on Route 51

From Bedfordshire Verse by Frank Batt (1927-2017)

Under the clouds with a pack on your back
Riding from Bedford to Sandy and back
The wheels go round on the cycle track
Clickety clickety clickety clack

Out by The Swan and the bridge on the Ouse
The bandstand and boat house and elegant crews
Pedal the path and indulge in a game
Dream of the steam of nostalgia again

Gathering speed with those piston like knees
Take to the track with the tractor and trees
Puffing like Stephenson's monsters of steam
Follow the line in a fantasy dream

Whistle through Willington flood-plain and field
Gravel pit woodland river and Lea
Rushing through hedgerow dashing through rain
Puffing along like an old fashioned train

Shatter the silence in shuddering scenes
Shiver in shadows by shimmering streams
Huffing and puffing and chuffing in dream
Hooting and tooting while shooting out steam

Into the tunnel with rumbling sound
Humming and rumbling into the night
Drumming and tumbling back into light

Pounding like Stephenson's monsters of steam
Follow the path in a fantasy dream
Wheeling along on the cycle track
Clickety clickety clickety clack

Running to Blunham by stunted oak trees
Hawthorn and rowan and cabbage and peas
Rosebay and sedges and thistle down seeds
Fly with the bunting and skim through the reeds

Pounding like Stephenson's monsters of steam
Follow the path in a fantasy dream
Wheeling along on the cycle track
Clickety clickety clickety clack

Over the bridge with the sound like a drum
Bloombadee boombadee boombadee boom
Butterflies dragonflies midges and bees
Fly with willow and poplar white leaves

Under the clouds with a pack on your back
Riding from Bedford to Sandy and back
Wheeling along on the cycle track
Clickety clickety clickety clack

Sway through the haze where the cows lying still
Laze in grazing grounds down by the mill
Cruising so smoothly to Sandy old town
Slowing down, slowing down,
Slowing down....
Ssssssssstop



A video of Frank Batt (published by Doreen Steinberg on 29/04/17) reading some of his own poems, mostly set in Bedfordshire can be seen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sqr7zEleBw>

Stephenson is George - civil engineer who introduced railways to Bedfordshire and
Stevenson is Robert Louis - Scottish novelist and travel writer

Frank Batt 1937-2017

CCNB Annual General Meeting

This will take place on Friday 24 April 2020 at 7.30pm
Friends Meeting House, 5 Lansdowne Road, Bedford, MK40 2BY

This is a chance to meet other members and discuss what is
happening on the cycle scene in the Bedford area

Please put the date in your diary

Local Cycle Rides Contact:

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)