

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN was set up in Summer 1990 as an independent pressure group concerned exclusively with the promotion of cycling in the city. It lobbies official bodies for better facilities, encourages employers to cater for cyclists and organises various bike-related events. We are a member of the national Cycle Campaigns Network.

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Newsletter No.4 APR 1992

INTRO

It was obvious during the recent election that all the parties were preoccupied with big issues which didn't have any particular bearing on cycling. Examining their transport policy documents revealed a general recognition that cycling ought to be encouraged but scant detail as to how this should be achieved. The replies to questionnaires which we sent to all the local parliamentary candidates were mainly supportive but it seems the politicians are all waiting to be told what is needed. The same holds at the local level and that's where we come in. The recent establishment by Norwich City Council of a Cycling Forum and appointment of Cycling Officer represents a breakthrough for our Campaign. With the General Election now out of the way and local elections due soon, we intend to press ahead even more strongly with our lobbying and planning, to build on our successes to date.

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MEETINGS

We are continuing to hold monthly meetings in a room at the Development and Environment Centre, Exchange Street, normally on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm. The dates for the next three meetings are 20th May, 17th June, 14th July and 19th August.

- Please come along if you can.

SURVEYS

Having detailed survey data to back up our arguments has been the key to our campaigning successes to date. If you regularly ride the Avenues/Avenue Road/Park Lane route into the city you may well have espied clipboard-clutching individuals noting down every movement of the many cyclists who pass through in the morning and evening rush hour on a particular day. We were fortunate to be supplied with three volunteers via the Volunteer Bureau; particular thanks must go to Brian Jones who has put in a number of hours of meticulous cycle-counting and provided us with a superb set of data. This will be incorporated into our next report dealing with the Avenue Road route (see page 3 of this newsletter). We are pleased that Brian has now been able to take up employment again, but it does mean that we could do with some more help on the surveying. Various city locations available.

- If you fancy doing the odd hour's survey work please ring Matthew on 503824.

NEWMARKET ROAD - CITY END

In the last newsletter we reported that we were going to dig in over a County Council's proposal to introduce a bus lane which evidently included no consideration for the needs of the many cyclists who use Newmarket/Brunswick/Grove Roads.

We are pleased to say that our submission was taken very seriously by the City Council Planning Sub-Committee, to the extent that we were given the unusual opportunity of addressing directly the February planning meeting. This we did, and the Committee subsequently deferred making a decision until the County Council had submitted revised proposals including cycle facilities. Needless to say, we have since had urgent contact with the County planners who are most anxious that the bus lane proposals will not be delayed!

- We'll see this one through to a satisfactory conclusion.



SPACES FOR BIKES ON TRAINS CUT

With summer on the way, you might think about putting your bike on a train and taking off for a cycling holiday in distant parts, or for just a day out in the country. Well, beware - it's not going to be as easy as it used to be. As the regular bike/train commuters in Norfolk have already found out, spaces for bikes on trains are being cut dramatically.

There are reductions on Inter-City services, but the main culprits are the new Sprinter trains, of which there are two types, that BR are introducing on local and cross-country routes as they take their old guards vans out of service.

Our Cycling campaign has spoken with local BR management on several occasions to see if anything positive can be done, but we have found there is little mileage in this when the policy to reduce the allocation of space for bike/train use and the design of the carriages is decided at national level.

Recently I attended a Bikes by Train conference in Coventry to see if anything could be achieved via that avenue. It comprised some local cycle groups like our own from around the country, and the Cyclists Touring Club, all of which are interested in putting pressure on the BR decision-makers to cater for our needs. I found a broad intent to get BR to provide better rolling stock, the best option seeming to me to be including an area of flexible space, so that cyclists, mothers with buggies, disabled passengers and parcels all find room to travel by train. If you add to this flip-up seating you even provide extra seating space if you need it. Any significant improvement to the cyclists is unlikely, however, in the short term. Members of the conference are engaged in the sustained lobbying of the political parties, and regular six-monthly meetings with BR on their Cycle Liaison Group. Unfortunately, it is not yet clear if any alterations to the cycle-unfriendly trains that are now being foisted upon us can be brought about.

Over recent years British Rail, like everybody else, has expected to show more competitiveness, but this has only brought timid and short-term decision-making that turns away cyclists, a long-term growth market for them. Bike/Train use gives the traveller the freedom that is going to look more and more attractive as people see the freedoms that the car used to have steadily diminishing. Lets hope BR catch on soon. After all, they are only in danger of making some money...

In the present unencouraging conditions for Bike/Train travel you should:

- ▶ Ring or call in at a station before you make your journey. You will need to find out if you have to book a space, or if you are allowed to take a bike with you at all.
- ▶ Complain if you find a reduction in facilities, or if you find the procedure unnecessarily inconvenient. Ask for someone to write to.
- ▶ If you are keen to do something more, there is a Railway Development Society questionnaire applying to cross-country routes from East Anglia that you can get from myself or from Les Hopkins. The information will be used to put pressure on BR to make improvements on these services.

For a local service you just can't beat.



REGIONAL RAILWAYS

The advertisement pitting bikes against trains only adds insult to injury...

MS

Council on road to help cyclists

City's poor marks over cycling

LIFE in the cycle lane is not much fun in Norwich which could do better for cyclists, says a survey.

The New Cyclist magazine report, based on a survey of 150 of Britain's biggest towns and cities, identifies the 10 best and 10 worst for cyclists.

Don Mathew of Lowestoft, who compiled the survey, said the Norwich performance was very disappointing.

The city council had not replied to the survey but local cyclists had been questioned.

"There is eternal argument about what to do about traffic in Norwich but nothing is ever done about it."

It should be in the same category as other similar cities which came top of the survey, York, Cambridge, Peterborough and Oxford.

"As it is, it's in the 'could do much better' category," he said.

Phil Harris, chairman of the city's environmental health committee, said it was an oversight that the city had not replied to the survey.

"We are trying to tackle the car problem. If we tackle that it would be easy for cyclists. We have got a cycle network that we are proposing to put in."

But it was not easily solved, he said. "While the will has been there, Norwich City Council is not in fact the highway authority."

Lowestoft was one of nine towns in the second-tier category because of its cycling officer, positive policies and a planned major cycling route.

PEDAL power is being brought to the fore with the promise of a concentrated look at the future of cyclists' rights and cycle paths in Norwich.

Norwich City Council has decided to appoint a cycling officer for the city who will spend two days a week working for improvements for the increasing numbers of cyclists.

The news has delighted the Norwich Cycling Campaign which hopes a planned cycle network for the city will become a top priority.

Joint co-ordinator Matthew Williams said the city had a ten-year plan to provide cyclist facilities outside the inner ring road.

"There is an enormous pressure for

News that a cycling officer is to be appointed in the city has been welcomed. Jo Holden reports

cycling at the moment. People do want to cycle and many people are cycling but we need improvements in the city to help them to feel safer.

"We are confident the appointment of a cycling officer is a move in the right direction."

The latest cycling campaign figures show that about 15 per cent of all Norwich journeys are made by bicycle, about four times the national average.

City council spokesman Tim Anderson said a cycling officer would be named soon and confirmed they would be working on co-ordinating action on development of cycling and cycling routes.

A little bird has told us that this bad report on Norwich touched a raw nerve within City Hall. Perhaps in future we may see more of the fine words converted into fine deeds?

A BREAKTHROUGH!

Following a series of informal meetings between ourselves, Friends of the Earth and council officials from both City and County, the City Planning Committee decided on 19th March to designate one of its traffic engineers as 'Cycling Officer' and to convene a regular 'Cycling Forum' which will start in June. See press cutting. We are very encouraged by this development, which must partly be in response to all the pressure we have applied to the City Council to date. We can now be more confident of the council's commitment to definite action to promote their own cycling strategy.

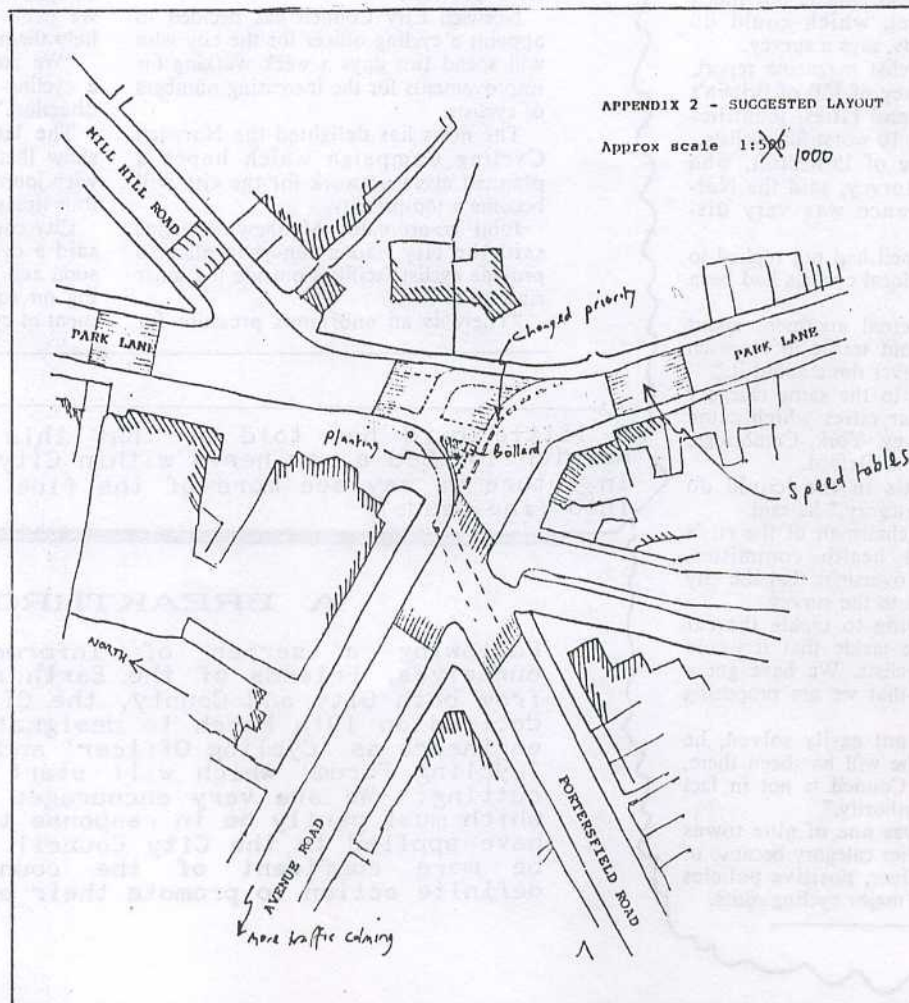
INNER AREA CYCLE NETWORK

You may recall last year that we presented to the City Council our suggested proposals for a cycle network for the area within the Inner Ring Road. Well, the document has already been used by the Council in connection with an application for planning permission, and has been brought out again as a starting point for two informal meetings (in February and March) to which we were invited to discuss the development of an Inner Area Network. We have subsequently produced a discussion paper covering the pros and cons of the various crossing points over the Inner Ring Road, i.e. where the Inner and Outer Networks will have to fit together! We are concentrating on the west side of the city for the moment since the completion (or otherwise) of the Inner Ring Road on the east side is such a contentious issue.

AVENUE ROAD STRATEGIC ROUTE

We have been asked by the City Council to advise them on what can be done to develop a strategic route from Bluebell Road into the city centre via The Avenues and Avenue Road. This route has been given top priority (together with Christchurch Road (north)) on the basis of cycle accident statistics.

We are currently compiling a report which will incorporate the results of our surveying at several points along the route, comments received from members, and experience gained from elsewhere. Our overall attitude is that while specific engineering measures are needed at certain junctions (such as Avenue Road/Park Lane - see sketch), the adoption of general 'traffic calming' measures (i.e. to slow vehicle speeds) will do much to improve safety for cyclists and make the route more attractive. What we do *not* want is an awkward and expensive cycle path which would only serve to get cyclists out of the way of speeding motorists.




ESPERANTO WAY BIKE PARKING

We have had contact with the City Planning Officer about the deficiencies of the existing cycle parking outside the City Library, pointing out that many cyclists prefer to lock their machines to the ramp railings as it is more secure. The Director of Arts and Libraries agrees with our argument that improvements are overdue (i.e. installing proper 'Sheffield' type racks) but has inevitably no funds available. Opportunities to find funds from other County or City budgets are currently being investigated, with a view to sharing the cost of replacement. At least this is now on the shopping list.

LOBBYING

Following our meeting (as reported last time) We have had quite lengthy correspondence with Patrick Thompson in the run up to the election, both on the Government's attitude to cycling, and also as a means of applying pressure on Norfolk County Council to spend more on their cycling budget. Incidentally, the county's budget will rise from a pitiful £43,000 in 1991-92 to a slightly less pitiful £280,000 in 1993-94.

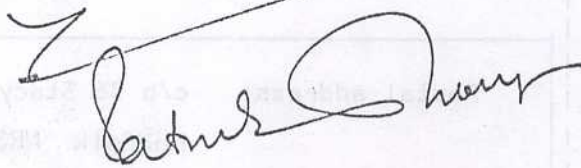

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

9 March 1992

Matthew Williams
Norwich Cycling Campaign
36 Stacy Road
Norwich
NR3 1JN

Dear Mr Williams,

Thank you for your letter dated 2 March following our earlier correspondence. I do not disagree with the fundamental points made in your letter and I hope you will continue to keep in touch about these issues. In the meantime, I thought you would like to see the information which has been sent to me by Norfolk County Council following my letter to the County Surveyor.



PATRICK THOMPSON MP

Not Patrick, unfortunately, but he is rumoured to ride a bike occasionally



GREAT MOMENTS IN CYCLING HISTORY

22 MARCH 1992 NEW CYCLIST



The first recorded puncture - Rhodes, 25BC

DOES THIS MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER?

From the recent authoritative British Medical Association report on cycling and health: "The average cyclist would have to ride 330,000 kilometres before being seriously injured and 17 million before a fatality."

And from the Royal College of Surgeons:
Regular cyclists on average have the health equivalent to someone ten years younger.
(Thinks....Where does that leave my ten year old son?...Ed)

OCTOBER CONFERENCE

Arrangements are in hand for the joint CTC-Cyclists Rights Network/Cycling Campaigns Network Conference to be held at Wensum Lodge on 3rd October 1992. This is the same weekend as the Norwich Century Bike Ride organised by Cycling Plus magazine and Bike Events of Bristol. We are expecting a number of conference delegates to require overnight accommodation and have booked some space already at the Youth Hostel. However, it's likely that we'll be asked to provide other B & B. • If you are prepared to offer simple accommodation, please contact as soon as possible.

NATIONAL BIKE WEEK 20th-28th JUNE

Help! Matthew and Les cannot cope with this on top of everything else! Are *you* the person to organise just one event during the week? Plenty of ideas available.....

- Will that person please ring us soon.



MEMBERSHIP

I enclose : (Annual Membership)

Individual (waged) £9 ☐

Individual (unwaged) £4 ☐

Family £15 ☐

Donation £..... ☐

TOTAL ENCLOSED £.....

Cheques/POs to Norwich Cycling Campaign

I would be able to help with :

Cycle surveys ☐

Cycle events ☐

Self-help repairs ☐

Typing / Wordprocessing ☐

Fundraising ☐

Other (please specify).....

Signed _____ Date _____

Name

Address

Tel

Return to : Norwich Cycling Campaign
36 Stacy Road, Norwich NR3 1JN

COME ON A CYCLATHON!

Fancy a day's worthy pedalling South of the Border? The BUNGAY CYCLATHON celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, with an even more attractive route in quiet Suffolk countryside south of the Waveney. Keeping almost entirely to tranquil rural roads, you can do 25, 50 or 100 miles on Sunday 7th June. You even get a certificate to prove you've done it - and a medal for the centurians. This sponsored event will this year fund a crucial CTC report on the benefits of cycling, to add to recent reports which have already had a major impact on policy makers. So lets get as many cyclists out to help the cause of cycling as possible.

- Details are available from Matthew on 503824, or direct from Mr Pat Sheppard, 22 Quaves Lane, Bungay NR35 1DF (send SAE).

Postal address: c/o 36 Stacy Road, Norwich,
Norfolk NR3 1JN

Co-ordinators: Les Hopkins Tel 762722
Matthew Williams Tel 503824

Treasurer Nigel Howard Tel 502188

Membership Sec. Hans Hoffbauer Tel 664206

STOP PRESS

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN MAY —
don't forget to ask your candidates
about cycle facilities!

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**NORWICH
CYCLING
CAMPAIGN**

**BIKES ON TRAINS
BULLETIN No. 1**

JULY 1992

Les Hopkins writes...

Firstly, many thanks to those of you who took part in our protest demo on 6 July at such short notice.

I think the most relevant part of the demo was when, in front of press and TV, the train we had selected for our protest - a train on which only two out of 25 protesting cyclists would have been allowed, because of BR's desire to provide space for its "other passengers" - pulled out of Norwich station with less than a dozen passengers.

The demo also gave us some invaluable publicity in the local press and particularly in the Evening News editorial of Wednesday 8 July (both items reprinted here). The radio interviews we had done prior to the demo were also useful in bringing the matter to public attention - just as well, really, as, despite saying they would put up posters explaining the bans, BR failed to put up a single poster just hours before the bans started.

ED 7/7/92 'Lucky dip' protest by the bikers



Picture: PAUL HEWITT

Protesting cyclists set the wheels in motion at Norwich Station yesterday in a bid to force a change of policy by British Rail.

Cyclists protested at Norwich Station yesterday after British Rail's announcement of tougher restrictions for bikes carried on trains.

BR has said that cycles will be banned on certain trains and restricted to two per train on other services.

Norwich Cycling Campaign has claimed the proposals show disregard for cycle commuters.

The campaigners also say the plans will deter potential leisure cyclists wishing to visit the Norfolk countryside this summer.

Joint co-ordinator for the cycling campaign, Les Hopkins, said: "Deliberately restricted space for cycles on sprinters loses BR a substantial potential source of revenue at a time when they are just announcing huge losses."

To make their point about 25 protesting cyclists held a mock lottery on the station platform to show what a game of chance it will be for commuters to get a bike space on trains.

One of the protesters, Pam Redwood of Norwich, said she

planned to ask BR for a refund on her family railcard.

She said her husband Pete and their 10-year-old daughter Chloe liked to go for day outings on the train with their bikes.

But under the two-bike rule they would be stopped from going on family outings together.

"I shall be writing, asking for my money to be refunded," she said.

A BR spokesman said that the new generation of sprinter trains did not have a guard's van where cycles could be stored. Instead

there were more seats for travellers.

The ban affects many services between Norwich and Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Sheringham.

And reservations for cycles will have to be made on many services between Norwich and Liverpool, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Cambridge and Peterborough.

British Rail says a more comprehensive reservation system for cycles will start when new timetables are introduced on September 28.

British Rail on wrong track

BRITISH Rail has become the whipping boy of modern life, the organisation everyone loves to hate, subjected to jokes by comedians and newspaper stories about the wrong sort of snow.

It reaches the level that it almost becomes possible to feel sorry for the organisation and its hard-pressed employees, whose morale must be affected.

Yet British Rail does not help itself. Back in 1988 cyclists expressed fears that the move to faster sprinter trains would leave less room for cyclists. They were right.

It has been made pretty clear to cyclists that they are not British Rail's favourite customers.

This week's message was blunt — the new generation of sprinter trains have more seats for travellers and therefore less room for cyclists and their inconvenient bikes.

Cycles will be banned completely on certain trains and only two will be allowed on others.

In a rural area, at a time when the roads are jam packed with traffic, surely anything that gets people out of their cars would be sensible.

Cyclists may be a bit of a nuisance but they were surely good paying customers for British Rail who seem to have given them little consideration.

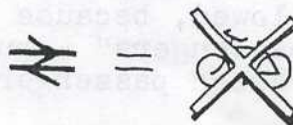
Many of the problems facing our railways relate to the need for massive investment which has clearly paid dividends in many areas.

The future for the railways should be bright, given the environmental pressures on the roads.

However against that background British Rail's attitude to its customers in this case is hardly encouraging.

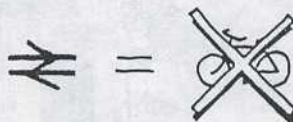
We have written to both the press and BR complaining about BR's attitude to its customers. By introducing the bans at just two days' notice, without any consultation, they have shown not the slightest concern about commuting cyclists — many of whom have work arrangements based on using particular trains, and many of whom are season ticket holders — nor about leisure cyclists who may have made travel arrangements.

We have also complained about the attitude of BR management at the demo. In the opinion of many who were there (and not just cyclists!) their attitude was hostile, flippant and officious, with not the slightest recognition that we were frequent users of rail services, many of us family railcard holders, and that we had a legitimate complaint.



On Tuesday 7 July 1992 the bans were discussed as an emergency debate at the full City Council meeting (see press reports below). Many thanks to Cllr. Phil Harris for getting this on to the agenda at such short notice.

National publicity for the campaign will also be appearing in a future issue of New Cyclist magazine who 'phoned us for details, having heard of the demo via CTC HQ (probably via Don Mathew).



► The next stage

Now that the issue has been raised, we need to keep up the momentum. It is vital that as many individuals as possible write letters to the press, to BR and to their local MPs and councillors. Please let us have copies of any replies.

- * If you have friends coming to this area who would use the bike/train facility, put them in the picture and ask them to complain.
- * If your own holiday is affected, write to the East Anglian Tourist Board. If actual holiday plans are affected, it may help pressure.
- * If you cycle/commute, write to BR explaining the effect of the bans/restrictions on your work arrangements.
- * If you have any ideas for future direct action, let us know (remember they must be legal and non-violent!).

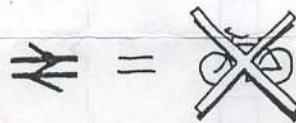
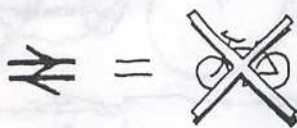
EN 8/7/92

Anger at railway ban on cycles

The intermediate stage

Once we have collated replies to our letters we will have a better idea of future action. At that point we will hold a 'brainstorming' meeting to decide the best way forward.

One of the most ominous things for Norfolk cyclists is BR's announcement that the current bans and restrictions will last until 28 September "when a more comprehensive reservation system will commence". According to a BR spokesman on radio last week, this is likely to mean that every bike will have to have a reservation, probably with a reservation fee. The current reservation fee on applicable trains is £3 each way. Thus, if cycle commuters' fares were increased by £30 a week (ie five days at £6 a day) or if leisure cyclists had to pay an extra £6 each time they used the train, this would obviously kill off the whole concept of carrying your bike on the train, which is clearly what BR want. The current unrestricted cycle carriage on DMUs is also coming to an end as, according to an informal BR source, they will all be phased out within six months.



The long term

Quite clearly, BR need to be pressurised to re-think their policy on cycle carriage. The new generation of sprinters is likely to be around for some time so perhaps the answer is to remove some of the 'airline' type seats and replace them with flip-up seating, thus providing a convertible space for cycles, wheelchairs etc. The bike/train market is worth £20 million annually to BR (Harris Institute Internal Report to BR, 1985). At a time when BR have just announced losses of £144 million, they really are not in a position to turn down any customers.

RAIL passengers have hit out at a ban, which comes into force next week, on cycles being carried on many of the region's trains.

British Rail says its new trains do not have the room for bicycles and from next Monday many of the region's peak-time trains will no longer take them and many others will only take a maximum of two — on a first-come first-served basis.

On longer distance trains, bicycles will only be carried if a reservation is made in advance.

Steve Hewitt, spokesman for East Norfolk Travellers who published 2000 leaflets on bike rides by train in Norfolk said: "This is something which we must oppose."

"Bicycles are becoming increasingly popular, especially among the young and it's these sort of people British Rail ought to be encouraging to use the trains — not discouraging them."

"It's the thin end of the wedge. What will they ban next? Prams? Wheelchairs?"

"We sold out of pamphlets when we published them two years ago. Many Dutch and Germans come to Norfolk for a cycling holiday on the train. They won't be able to do that now. If they turn up at a station they may be turned away."

British Rail spokesman Justine Waugh said: "Obviously this is going to upset some people who use bicycles. But they are a small minority of passengers."

"Previously we had a guards van where you could put as many bicycles as you liked, but with the new generation of rail stock we have put in more seats and there is no room for bicycles."

She stressed that wheelchairs would never be banned from trains.

The new rules banning cycles affect many service between Norwich and Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Sheringham and Cambridge.

EN

John McGregor MP
Minister of Transport
Department of Transport
Marsham Street
LONDON SE1
(also MP for Norfolk South)

SOME FACTS ABOUT BR AND BIKES

- * In 1987, a FOE/CTC survey showed almost 70 daily cyclists coming to Norwich in the morning rush hour.
- * Two-thirds of these said that if they couldn't take their bikes on the train, they would not use the train at all.
- * On 22 May 1987, Mr Charles Devereux (then Provincial Manager (Anglia)) stated, "I am not prepared to entertain any suggestion of bicycle reservation for local trains". Quite.

For a local service
you just can't beat.

REGIONAL RAILWAYS



MEMBERSHIP

I enclose : (Annual Membership)

Individual (waged) £9 ☐

Individual (unwaged) £4 ☐

Family £15 ☐

Donation £..... ☐

TOTAL ENCLOSED £.....

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I would be able to help with :

Cycle surveys ☐

Cycle events ☐

Self-help repairs ☐

Typing / Wordprocessing ☐

Fundraising ☐

Other (please specify).....

Signed

Date

Name

Address

Tel

Return to : Norwich Cycling Campaign
36 Stacy Road, Norwich NR3 1JN

ADDRESSES TO WRITE TO:

①

British Rail
(local)

Mr Barrie Thomas
District Manager, East Anglia
British Rail
Grosvenor House
112-114 Prince of Wales Road
NORWICH NR1 1NZ

Tel. Norwich 622255

②

British Rail
(national)

Sir Bob Reid
Chairman
British Railways Board
Euston House
24 Eversholt Street
PO Box 100
NW1 1DZ
(Tel. 071-922-6301)

③

Local MPs

1) Norwich South:

John Garrett MP (Labour)
House of Commons
LONDON SW1 0AA

2) Norwich North:

Patrick Thompson MP (Conservative)
Address as above

...④ above