

Norwich Cycling Campaign

Newsletter 26
Summer 1997

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN was formed in 1990 to promote cycling in Norwich and to lobby for better cycle facilities. It is affiliated to the National Cycle Campaign Network.

50p free to
where sold members!



**Editor's
column**

John King

Here comes summer – and with it National Bike Week. This year the main sponsors are the Cyclist's Touring Club and there's a super range of events on offer locally.

Please make sure your cycling friends know about it and do get as many reluctant cyclists as possible to 'Bike To Work' on Wednesday the 11th June. Those who do will stand a chance of winning a prize worth £50 in the FREE prize draw. This has been generously donated by Norwich County Council as part of their Travelwise initiative. Thanks to Rob Marshall at County Hall.

Enjoy the week – and the summer!

National Bike Week Special Edition



Norwich
Cycling
Campaign



TRAVELWISE.



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Bicycle repairers and suppliers recommended by Norwich Cycling Campaign members

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

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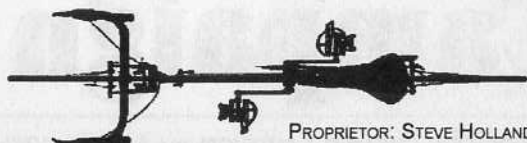
- MUD and CHAINGUARDS
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Proceeds go towards
Norwich Cycling Campaign's
office rent so please come and
see us soon at
The Greenhouse in Bethel Street!

**Every
Saturday
10:30 - 4:30**

What could you be missing?

Andy Mitchell's here to tell you



OK, so you'd like to be in better shape, maybe a bit lighter, but don't have the time or inclination to go to the gym / play football / whatever. You do, however, still have to go to work / school / college, pop down to the pub / shops, visit family and friends, and generally get around. Now, some people don't appear to have realised that both requirements can be simultaneously fulfilled.

Quite simply, use a bike. Get some exercise, and do something useful at the same time. It's definitely not as hard as you might think, and it's certainly not compulsory to hack along at 20mph plus. Go at your own pace. It's quicker than you think.

Particularly in the city. No parking problems, much less stress. Walk away from traffic jams and not get trapped in them. Door to door travel. City centre shops become much more accessible, and

out of town superstores with sprawling acres of carpark become irrelevant.

As a mode of travel, the bike is more of an experience, and much more sociable than using a car. You're not isolated in a steel womb with air conditioning and stereo, you're experiencing the real world. You know exactly which way the wind blows, how strongly and how warm. The road ceases to be a featureless, expanse of tarmac, and becomes a vista of ups, downs, interspersed with manhole covers, drains, rough bits, smooth bits, small landmarks which you come to know. Friends can be greeted with a wave and a call, or even a stop and a chat. The ugly sound of the car horn ceases to intrude.

People who don't travel by bike are often oblivious to its convenience and flexibility. Any point can be stopped at. Down wide roads, narrow

streets, or country lanes. Your route can be adapted as necessary. You are free of labyrinthine one-way systems. Unobliged to stay on the tortuous route, you can circumvent it by walking a short way.

There are other things to consider. Your wallet for example. Using cars cost money, mainly yours. At 30p/mile or more it ain't cheap. Most people just think of cost in terms of petrol, but the costs of insurance, MOT, road tax, maintenance and depreciation hit your wallet even harder. Car ownership is a bottomless drain on your wealth. Decent bikes start from roughly £400, second hand ones much cheaper, cost very little to maintain, and will last for years. Admittedly, some people are in a much easier position to give up the car than others, but for those that can the benefits are well worth it.

Not everything increases. Some things decrease, but only your waistline, and the deleterious effects of motorised transport - noise, pollution, congestion, deaths, injuries, road kill, road rage...

Go on, do yourself and everyone else a favour. Leave the car keys at home, and get the bike out. You wouldn't really want to miss out on all those benefits, would you?

Views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those held by the Editor or Norwich Cycling Campaign. News items are reported in good faith and we cannot be held liable for their accuracy. E & OE

MAKE A NOTE OF THESE CAMPAIGN MEETINGS!

18 June
16 July
20 August
17 September



National Bike Week

PROGRAMME OF LOCAL EVENTS 7 - 15 JUNE

- **Saturday 7th**
Bikeworks Workshop (NCC)
 Everything you wanted to know about bike maintenance but were afraid to ask. Your chance to ask our mechanics about any aspect of bike maintenance. Anytime between 10:30 and 4:30, behind **The Greenhouse**, Bethel Street.

- **Sunday 8th**
Facilities Ride (NCC)
CTC Easy Ride
 OK, so what have the council ever done for us? The good, the bad, and the 'cyclists dismount' signs. Come and see it for yourselves. 10:30, City Hall. Tel. **Christian, 76243**
 35-ish miles to **Great Ellingham**, Crown (lunch), and **Ashwellthorpe Hall** (tea). 10:00am Earlam Road / Ring Road roundabout. Tel. **Mary, 487628**.

- **Monday 9th**
Womens Ride (NCC)
 Women on bikes, riding, and having fun. 6:30pm City Hall. All (women) welcome. Tel. **Cynthia Kirby, 412664**.

- **Tuesday 10th**
NRC Time Trial
 Come and have a go at a 10 mile TT. Meet at 7:00pm prompt, Northern edge of **Horsford** on B1140.

- CTC Very Gentle Poottle**
 15 miles, pub (riverside) included. 6:30pm, roundabout by County Hall. Tel. **Christine (01508) 538166** (before 9:00pm)

- **Wednesday 11th**
Bike To Work Day (NCC)
CTC Easy Ride
CTC Hard Ride
 Much less stressful than driving, and much more fun. Get adrenaline, not ulcers. Complete and return the form by Wednesday 18th June to get entered into the **free prize draw**.
Chedgrave for lunch. 11:00am, Long John Hill / Ring Road junction.
 To **Earle Arms, Heydon**. 7:15pm, Yeast and Feast (ex-Crown) Horsford. BRING LIGHTS. Tel. **Fergus, 6150**

- **Thursday 12th**
Bikes, Trains, and Country Lanes (NCC)
Ride to Reepham
CTC Moderate MTB Ride
 Bike out to **Reedham** - train back or train out - bike back, or just bike both ways (van also available). Meet 6:00pm, City Hall. **Booking essential** (form enclosed), details **664364**.
 for refreshments. Starts 7:00pm, Marsham lay-by (A140), grid ref TG197238. The organiser suggests that you get yourself and your bike to the start by car. Tel. **Phyll, 435547**.
 1½ hours, largely off-road. Meet at 7:00pm, Earlam Road / Ring Road roundabout. Tel. **Tom Smith, 505156**.

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STOP PRESS! Cycle Hire available on the Bergh Apton Sculpture Trail
Only £1.50 per hour, adults or kids, 7th and 8th June. Proceeds to Norwich Cycling Club funds.

• **Friday 13th**
Bicycle Biryani
Blowout (NCC)

Perennially popular favourite. An evening ride followed by a variety of curry and other dishes cooked by the NCC's finest chefs. Probably live entertainment as well. Ride starts 6:00pm, City Hall. Fabulous value at £7.50 per head and **essential to book in advance**. Tel. **Andy** on **436311** or complete and return the form by Thursday 12th June. Vegetarian will be assumed but John King's famous Chicken and Mushroom Dhansak will also be available.

• **Saturday 14th**
Bikeworks Workshop
(NCC)

As on Saturday the 7th, 10:30 - 4:30, **PLUS** The Cycle-Recycle Bike Sale! (between 11am - 1pm). Full range of **GUARANTEED** traditional adult's bikes from £25. At **The Greenhouse**, Bethel Street.

CTC Easy Ride

Sun, Sea, and Sustenance ride to the home of Adnams (Southwold). 60-ish miles, tea at Beccles. Meet at 9:15am, Long John Hill / Ring Road junction. Tel. **Christine** (01508) **538166** (before 9:00pm).

• **Sunday 15th**
Oxfam Norwich
Fun Bike Ride

Choice of safe pleasant routes. Help Oxfam support Ethiopian street children. Get a leaflet from the office or Tel. **Andrea Shepherd**, (01223) **301317**, or contact your local Oxfam shop for a sponsor form. Free Dr. Bike checks on the event.

CTC Hard MTB Ride

Strenuous 2 to 3 hours. Meet at 9:15am, Earlham Road / Ring Road roundabout. Tel. **Tom Smith**, **505156**.

CTC Easy Ride

To Old Stables, Buxton (Eleveneses). Meet at 9:45am, Firs Public House, Cromer Road. Tel. **Colin**, **412398**.

CTC Fast-ish Ride

to Weybourne and the Muckleburgh Collection. 50-plus miles. Meet at 9:30am, North Walsham Rd / Ring Road roundabout. Tel. **Tony Clarke**, **407395**.

Annual Cycle
Recycle Pile Strip

Strip old bikes of useful parts then use to build useful bikes. 10:00 - 4:00, refreshments provided. Tel **Nigel** on **502188**.

You are advised to ring contact numbers to confirm last minute details of all events
Organisers would also be extremely grateful for any assistance you might like to offer
BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!

Priority for bikes!

What is a cycling campaign for, if not to try and get things done - to make a difference at street level?

Perennial Norwich peddlers should by now have noticed that things are indeed now starting to change, if only a short section of cycle path here, a dropped kerb there, but tell-tale signs that our local authorities are at last starting to take cycling seriously as an important (dare I say the preferred) form of general-purpose urban transport.

It is encouraging to see specific facilities appearing for which we have lobbied for so long, or for which we have had some input in the design.

There's the completion of the route along Newmarket Road from Eaton, advanced stop lines at Brazenate, and current jewel in the crown - the contra flow route along King Street slap bang in the city centre. True, each of these hard-won facilities is not without its design faults, And admittedly it will still be a long time before these isolated sections will finally be linked into a coherent network of safe convenient routes covering the whole city.

But the point is, things are now moving in the right direction, and there are some exciting developments still in the pipeline. Take the example of the Hall Road railway path, earmarked until recently as a major new radial road. Thanks to local enthusiasm and commitment, there is now a serious prospect that this route

Consultations Officer Matthew Williams reports on the Campaign's success and looks to the future

will soon be turned into a pleasant traffic free walking and cycling route, a linear park for all.

Much can be achieved by working constructively with official bodies - helping them to achieve really useful measures on the street. Sometimes we can do this as individuals or as residents' groups offering a corporate view, sometimes as environmental bodies with national representation. With your support, Norwich Cycling Campaign will continue to promote the interests of cyclists in the most appropriate way.

We do not always have to be a thorn in the flesh (although there is a need for that on some issues) but we do increasingly need to take opportunities to sit down with officers and councillors and agree on the best way to implement commonly recognised goals. We now have a Cyclist Feedback Group functioning as an informal sub-committee of the City Council's Cycling Forum. We do need more members who are prepared to get stuck into the nitty gritty.

Sustran's visionary National Cycle Network which gained Millennium Commission funding, has been vitally important in getting people working together - not least in

Norwich because part of the route passes right through the city centre. Related to this is 'England's Cycling Country' which will see many more people on bikes coming to our area, hopefully adding to the pressure to improve things further.

In the coming year or two a lot of work will be needed to implement the new Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) which has been agreed by the County, City and District Councils. For the first time ever we have a commitment on paper to giving priority to bikes over cars in the city centre (just think of that!). We must make sure that happens, rather than cycling being marginalised as it has in the past by spurious safety arguments. One symbol of success might be at last allowing cyclists to legally use the Magdalen Street bus lane!

Looking back, much has been done that will continue to bear fruit. Our Campaign can be proud of a certain national reputation as epitomised by the National Cycling Conference recently held for the second time in Norwich. But looking forward, we must work still harder towards improved cycling conditions in our city.

Have serious fun during National Bike Week.

The Traffic Survival Guide

Right, so you've decided that getting out on the bike would be a good thing, but you've seen the roads, and don't like the look of the traffic. Well, it is fast, large, hard and tends to make a mess when it hits people. So what do you do? Read on.

Firstly, get some idea of how it behaves. Read the highway code. Don't expect it to mirror the real world, but it should give you some idea of what to expect. Next, get a street map and look at potential routes. Avoid busy and dangerous roads / junctions. Choose routes less used by motorists. This exposes you to less traffic, and therefore, less danger.

The most important consideration is YOUR OWN SAFETY. No-one else will be giving a toss about it, so you must. Make sure that your bike is road worthy. In particular, ensure that brakes and gears are in good working order.

The best strategy is to pre-empt dangerous situations so that they don't occur. Always try to ride 3 to 4 feet from the kerb. This has two advantages. It gives you room to manoeuvre if a vehicle passes with inadequate clearance (all too common), and it means that vehicles overtaking you have to pull out in order to do so. This gives a very clear indication of your presence to vehicles behind.

Don't weave round parked vehicles. Keep a steady line, so you don't pull out in front of

traffic approaching from behind. It's their problem if they don't like it, not yours. Also keep clear of parked vehicles to avoid being hit by doors being opened unexpectedly.

Control your space when at junctions and roundabouts. Don't pull into the gutter, as this will result in vehicles squeezing alongside you (more potential danger). When going round laned roundabouts, occupy the centre of the lane, it will prevent most close quarter passes. DO NOT assume that approaching traffic has seen you. Look at their actions to confirm that they have. This particularly applies at night. In my own experience, this is the biggest cause of near misses.

Be positive and definite about what you are doing and where you are going. Failure to do so will only confuse motorists (not difficult.). This can be conveyed

by both hand signals, and positioning on the road. Avoid going through red lights. This only gives cyclists a bad name.

Speed helps. It reduces the relative velocity between yourself and passing traffic (from behind), i.e. encounters happen slower. OK, few people are up to Chris Boardman's standard, but going at a similar speed to the other traffic puts you in a much fairer position. And for deity's sake use lights (the brighter the better.) when riding at night, otherwise it's your own fault if you get hit.

Right, this is not a definitive essay on assertive / pre-emptive cycling, but it should give you some idea of what to do and not do. Just get out there and take your common sense and scepticism with you. Help make the world, and Norwich in particular, a better place.

Andy Mitchell

CATI – Come and Try It !

Norfolk Countryside Cycling Group
Rides for novice cyclists (15 - 20 miles)

Thursday 12 June, 7:00pm: National Bike Week event. Car assisted ride from Marsham. Meet in the service road (old Norwich Road) on west side of the A140.

Saturday 21 June, 2:30pm: Meet at bus stop, Thorpe End for a ride led by Jan and Malcolm.

Saturday 5 July, 2:30pm: Meet at County Hall roundabout for a ride to the south east of the city.

Saturday 19 July, 2:30pm: Meet at The Bell, Salhouse for a Broadland ride using Horning Ferry. Tea at Wroxham Bars.

Rides will continue fortnightly until October. For the continuation programme or details of any of the above please ring Phyll on Norwich 435547.

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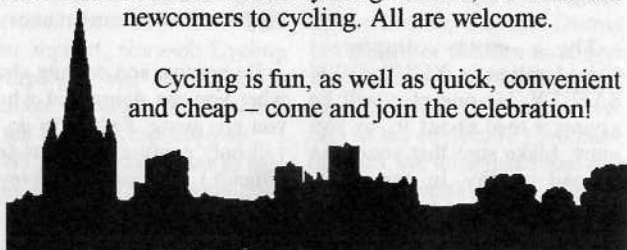
What is National Bike Week?

National Bike Week is organised at national level by the CTC (Cyclist's Touring Club), and is aimed at raising awareness of cycling as a practical form of everyday transport, and at encouraging people to get their bum on a saddle to try it for themselves.

At a local level Norwich Cycling Campaign are organising a series of events where anyone can turn up (usually with a bike) and find out more about cycling in general, as well as actually doing some. The events are informal, and largely social as well, so you'll be able to meet like minded people and discuss any area of cycling that you wish to. The more people who turn up the better it will work.

Some of the events require that you book in advance so that we know numbers (see the forms with this Newsletter.). Our rides, and most of those organised by the CTC during the week won't be going at a fast pace, and will suit people who haven't done much cycling of late, or who are newcomers to cycling. All are welcome.

Cycling is fun, as well as quick, convenient and cheap - come and join the celebration!



in support of Ethiopian
street children

Norwich FUN BIKE RIDE

Choice of safe pleasant routes (7 / 15 / 33 / 45 miles)

Sunday 15 June

Start times: 9:30 to 11:30
ANDERSON'S MEADOW, Mile Cross

Forms from any Norwich Oxfam shop or ring
Andrea Shepherd on (01223) 301317

Free Dr. Bike checks courtesy Norwich Cycling Campaign