

NORWICH CYCLING

campaign newsletter 36

March - May 2000 - 50p - free to members

This newsletter is published by NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN, which 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.



The good, the bad (and the nutty) on Marriott's Way

Bridge replacement delayed

Marriott's Way, between Dolphin Bridge and Barn Road roundabout, was due to re-open in February following construction of a new bridge to replace the old wooden footbridge. Work was unfortunately delayed 'for technical reasons'. But, the good news is that the bridge was due to be lowered into place on Friday February 25th. At the time of writing, this means that the path should reopen in good time for the 'Ride the Net' events due to take place in June! If you use Marriott's Way, please let us know when the bridge is in operation and what you think of it.

Fakenham Road. This long-overdue crossing is vital for the safety of cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians alike who all use Marriott's Way in the Drayton area.

Our contact tells us the crossing is actually called a pecan. If you believe that, you must be nuts! However, have you noticed how a cycle helmet looks like a pecan nut? Strange, that.

Family (and 'non-family') rides

Rob Conway has arranged a series of Sunday rides to help parents gain experience in taking their children cycling, while preparing for Ride the Net.

Everyone is welcome on these short but enjoyable rides - approx. 4 hours in duration - including plenty of stops for rest and refreshment.

Dates are 5th March, 9th April and 14th May. Meet Harford Manor School car park 10.30am unless advised otherwise. Please bring drinks, snacks and a light picnic.

If you'd like to join in, please contact Rob in advance to check details, let him know who will be coming and the ages of any children - 01603 504762 or e:mail conways@netcom.co.uk

Nut found on cycle route

Our long-suffering Drayton correspondent reports that, after much deliberation, the 'pegasus' crossing (or 'toucan' as some in the higher echelons of County Hall prefer it to be called) is actually now under construction where Marriott's Way crosses the Norwich to

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TEL/FAX: 01603 665668
OPEN 8.30am - 6.00pm
e:mail:specycle @globalnet.co.uk
www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~specycle

CYCLE RECYCLE

BIG BIKE SALES

At the corner of Waldeck Road / Leopold Road
1st Saturday of each month (10am-2pm) starting

Saturday 1st April

NEW !! Sales at Mulbarton

2nd Saturday of each month (10am-2pm) starting

Saturday 8th April

RECONDITIONED BIKES FOR ALL THE FAMILY
FROM £20 (3 MONTH GUARANTEE)

'NO OBLIGATION' TEST RIDES

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PUMPS ETC.

MOBILE REPAIR SERVICE

Phone Nigel on 01603 502188 for more info
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1999 Campaign report

Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 15th December at St. Andrews Tavern. Despite the wintry weather and a disappointing turnout, it was a positive event. Financially, the Campaign is in a stronger position than a year ago, with Cycle Recycle breaking into profit for the first time.

On the campaigning front, Matthew Williams gave examples of the many schemes/improvements we have been involved in, at either pre-consultation or consultation stage. These include Nelson Street calming, Millennium Library, Pottergate contraflow, Riverside/Thorpe Station shared use, Bowthorpe/Colney link road, cycle parking in city centre, St. Benedicts, off-road routes eg. Lakenham Way, Marriott's Way, Bluebell Road/Earlham Green Lane encroachment, Gilman Road public enquiry re closure to motor traffic, lobbying for 24 hour bus/cycle lanes, Duke St./Colegate crossing,

accident remedial schemes underway at Dereham Road, Earlham Road, Hall Rd./Queens Road mini-roundabout and the Fishergate/Whitefriars junction.

Officers were re-elected (all unopposed). The position of Campaigns Officer is still vacant.

We then had a brief open forum in the absence of the planned speaker, who was unable to attend at the last minute. Topics discussed included Ride the Net 2000 and a recruitment drive for new active members. Currently a few members are committing a lot of their time, but many do not get actively involved at all. This is something we need to address. The need for more promotion of cycling as a viable transport alternative was stressed and members urged to write letters to the media.

Copies of the full minutes and accounts are available on request.

Pam Frost

Get fit - get cycling!

At last, cycling has been recognised as being a health-promoting form of physical activity. It was not without some effort that Norwich Cycling Campaign managed to 'infiltrate' the Healthy Norfolk 2000 Physical Activity topic group, which led on to cycling being included in the HN2000 Physical Activity conference in January.

So, 'Cycling for Health and Fitness' was one of 15 seminars which the 160 or so delegates could choose between. The keynote speech by Yvette Cooper, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health, in which she mentioned the ban on tobacco advertising (has it had any effect?), gave a cue for comment. No, she said, they would not go so far as banning car advertising and there wasn't anything they could do about media attention. Promoting healthy transport does not sell newspapers.

Hopefully, there will be plenty of media attention to the forthcoming Millennium Festival of Cycling, including Ride the Net events, to celebrate the official opening in June of the National Cycle Network. Sustrans aims to get half a million cyclists out riding their local part of it on 21st June - the longest ride on the longest day - while for us in Norfolk we have the Hull to Harwich Festival on 25th June. More about these in the next newsletter.

Letter writing to the press continues to be an issue. It's an effective way to promote cycling and keep it in the public eye. I only wish more campaigners would do it - I don't want to sound as if I'm the only member of Norwich Cycling Campaign!

Here are some research findings worth quoting.

Regular cycling leads to 'a fitness level equivalent to being ten years younger'. (National Forum for Coronary Heart Disease Prevention)

Cycling 20 miles a week reduces the risk of coronary heart disease to less than half that of non-cyclists.

Cyclists also have lower levels of stress, fewer respiratory complaints and much less chance of obesity. (BMA)

Cycling avoids dangerous traffic fumes. Such pollution affects drivers and passengers most, as pollution is five times greater inside a car than at the kerbside.

The benefits of cycling can be seen in just a few weeks. It is so good for you that creating safe conditions for cycling and walking may provide the only cost effective possibility for improving the nation's health. (Director of the 1992 National Fitness Survey)

Happy cycling and take care on those roads!

Phyll Hardie



STOP

Can Matthew Williams make up his mind?

The trouble with us sprocket-heads is that we see everything as bicycle-shaped. What I mean is, we have a bit of a tendency to think that bikes are the answer to everything. Want to get to work? Go by bike. Want to get fit? Get on that saddle. Want to tackle air pollution? Cycling's the answer. Want to peel an orange one-handed....?

That may be all very well, but let's say you have a thing about bikes, a bit of a negative thing. In fact you think that bikes are a damned nuisance in front of your bonnet. You aren't going to take kindly to being confronted by a luminous lycra-clad haranguing you about how you could be commuting from the far side of Fakenham on your £89 Halfords bike with no mudguards.

Maybe not, but you aren't that person (I hope). And even if you were, it does beg the question why you expect to be able to make that daily car journey without encountering hundreds of others doing the same and with the added insult of seeing cyclists breeze past you.

But I digress. The point is, there are times when it is appropriate to see a slightly broader context, to ease off the suspension-fork fancying and set the bicycle in its place within the wider urban transportation scene. The buzz phrase here is 'integrated transport'. That may conjure up a vision of Mr Prescott climbing out of two Jaguars, but the expression was around well before he pulled up. In technical terms, integrated transport means considering the complete transportation system (say for the Norwich area) and tuning each part of that system to the benefit of the system as a whole.

For us bikies, that means seeing the bicycle as a mere component of the system, rather than an end in itself. But then we can certainly wax lyrical about how important a component cycling is - arguably **the** primary mode of private wheeled transport in the urban area. A mode capable of being used by the great majority of the population for a large proportion of their journeys.

Almost (but not quite) like saying that the bike is the answer to everything.

Labour's transport crisis As the day's prime minister has a plan to reverse departmental woes, his personal popularity is in question

Public deserts beleaguered Prescott



START

There are some members of the Campaign who complain that we aren't doing enough to 'talk up' cycling as a day-to-day means of transport for all. Are we too engrossed in improving conditions for existing cyclists? Rather than pursuing an endless debate on the issue, how about a bit of public noise from you, the member? A letter to the press or a call to a radio phone-in certainly wouldn't do any harm!

