

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN Newsletter 41

June - August 2001

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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.

Rob changes Job

Rob Marshall writes:

All of us involved here at County Hall in last year's Local Transport Plan funding bid submitted to central government got their 'exam papers' back last January with 'ten out of ten' on the bottom. We got £10M for 'integrated transport' projects and a further £19M for maintenance. It's certainly the best transport funding settlement that Norfolk has had and means that our 'green' transport projects (which believe me, dominate the project list) get a major boost. Similarly, the maintenance funding when compared to previous allocations are now approaching the 'dreams of avarice' (so get onto our maintenance people about your 'favourite potholes' and 'dropped' kerbs!). So it's good news all round for cyclists.

So what's all this with this old news, which happened back in January? some might ask. Well, the 'fallout' is that we've had to have a major review in the Planning and Transportation Division of how we are actually going to deliver the projects and, hopefully, make the best use of the money. We're a bit light on 'green engineers' to lead on the growing number of sustainable transport projects so some staff re-shuffles have taken place here at County Hall.

From April I changed jobs from 'County Cycling Officer' to 'Senior Engineer (Traffic Strategies)'. It was felt that the Traffic Strategies team, which undertakes all of the strategy study work needed a shift in skills emphasis, more akin to a 'town planner with green credentials' (they were still green the last time I looked at them). So, I accepted the offer and moved into the team to lead on such things as the Quiet Lanes and the Market Towns Walking and Cycling Strategies (no mean task, there are 20 of them in Norfolk!).



As I write (mid-May), my replacement here at County Hall has not yet been settled but it's in hand I'm assured. I'm also sure that he or she will do a fine job, no doubt in a different way to how I did it, probably better too. I'd like to think that I've left a healthy cycling budget, programme of future projects and a positive pro-cycling legacy to build on. I'm sure that my successor will continue to get the support from all you Cycling Campaigners (you know who you are) who've been my crutch/ally/sounding board/free labour/shoulder to cry on and, not least, a friend. I sincerely thank you all.

I'll still, of course, be here at County Hall promoting all matters cycling and I'm happy to hear from anyone who has a burning cycling issue (tel 01603 224203). Perhaps I'll now

have more time to actually cycle more. I'll certainly feel less guilty taking to footways (which I did occasionally) and not wearing a cycle helmet now that I don't have to set an example as County Cycling Officer!

Take care on them roads!

PS: 1. anyone got a cheap Brompton folding bike going? My 'company bike' is no longer at my disposal.

2. Check out the new cycle link (thanks to the City Council!) through County Hall grounds from Arnold Miller Road/Netherwood Green to Lakenham Cricket Club and County Hall roundabout. We're still working on getting through to Bracondale via The Loaning - bear with us!

Norwich Cycling Campaign would like to say a big 'Thank You' to Rob for his enthusiastic support as Norfolk County Council's Cycling Officer. We wish him the very best of luck in his new position of Senior Engineer (Traffic Strategies).

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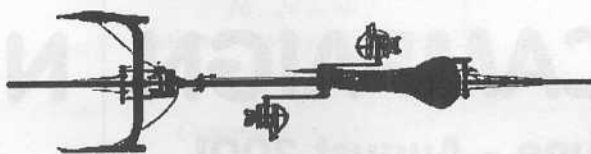
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Editor's Info....

By Mike Savage

In the last Newsletter I mentioned the two new foot/cycle bridges across the Wensum in Norwich. In fact, there are going to be three! The third one will be from Barrack Street (near Greens new leisure centre) to the footpath near Cow Tower). Work is well ahead of schedule on the bridge near the Ferry Boat in King Street and this should be completed by the end of the year.

The second bridge from St. Anne's Wharf to the UCI cinema complex is still held up due to planning and engineering problems.

CHANNEL 4 DROPS THE TOUR

Many of you will already know that, despite broadcasting the Tour-de-France very successfully for many years, Channel 4, for reasons best known to itself, has decided not to broadcast the Tour this year! Instead they will apparently be putting out cricket.

I personally feel gutted about this and will be protesting to Channel 4 toute-suite!

SPACE AGE BIKE SHED



Full marks to Homebase for the elegant bikeshed well located right in front of their new megastore in Hall Rd. Unfortunately the new shared path down Sandy Lane from Hall Rd does not link up with Lakenham Way as mentioned in a previous newsletter. The 50m section between Whiting Rd and the start of Lakenham Way is footpath only although it's quite wide enough to be shared.

Mike Savage



"When I see a man on a bicycle, I have hope for the future of the human race"

H. G. Wells

Also inside:

<i>Chairman's Chat</i>	4
<i>Commuter Challenge</i>	5
<i>More Mutterings from Matthew</i>	6
<i>Isle of Wight Conference</i>	9
<i>Contacts</i>	1 2
<i>Dates for your diary</i>	1 2

Chairman's Chat

By Phyll Hardie

I recently had the pleasure of three weeks supply teaching at Avenue Middle School. This school has a School Travel Plan, devised through consultation between staff, governors and parents (Why weren't the pupils consulted?). It includes a 20 mph speed limit and a one-way system in the vicinity of the school, with the children being expected to walk to school if at all possible. I was disappointed that cycling wasn't mentioned and my enquiry brought the usual response that 'cycling is dangerous'. What a pity that media reports of horrific accidents frighten the 'adults concerned' into discouraging, even banning, cycling while the dangers of children leading a sedentary lifestyle are not considered newsworthy so don't get the media attention they should. If more children cycled to school the 'critical mass' so caused would slow traffic and give a heightened perception of safety.

As I cycled to Avenue Middle I counted the cyclists I saw on the way - 62 on one morning in spite of the inclement weather. The 5-mile journey took 30 minutes, normal for this distance. On the morning I travelled by moped I took ten minutes longer, due to congestion which the cycling facilities allowed me to bypass.

Yes, it really is quicker by bike, as the commuter race to be held during the Festival of Cycling in June (formerly National Bike Week) hopes to prove—see opposite page.

At a recent presentation at City Hall to an audience of teachers, school governors, parents, and health and transport professionals, the Sustrans project director for Safe Routes to School, Paul Osborne, spoke about the necessity of providing safe routes to encourage the adults concerned to allow children to walk and cycle to school. I followed up by giving the children's and young people's views and ideas. A summary of my presentation is available on the Cycling Campaign's website, while a new website helping to make children's journeys to school safer, healthier and more environmentally friendly can be found at www.saferoutestoschool.org.uk. Incidentally, we have received a letter of congratulation on the interest and usefulness of our own website. Why don't you access it? Our website manager and membership secretary, Ian Mold, would be pleased to receive any relevant items with which to keep it updated.

It was good to hear that Norwich's cycling paramedic, Iain Colquhoun, has now become a permanent feature on the streets of the city centre following his six months trial. Iain has also been instrumental in getting similar schemes going in other cities, including in Japan and the US. On behalf of the Cycling Campaign I wrote a letter of congratulation which was printed in the Evening News. As a result I received a letter of thanks from the East Anglian Ambulance Service. How nice - a change from some of the responses I've had to my letters in the paper!

Happy summer cycling! Let us know of any exciting cycling tours or activities you get up to.

Conference at Cambridge

The recent National Cycling Strategy conference 'Cycling - the way ahead', held at Robinson College, was an inspiring day. An early start, leaving Norwich on the 6.52 train, meant I was at the conference venue by 8.30am (the following train would have been too late). Following an argument with a security guard, during which that much maligned object a bicycle became transposed into a neat little packet, a feat which saw the opposition in smart retreat, my early arrival gave the opportunity for conversation with the first speaker, John Whitelegg. You may remember that I reviewed his book in the last Newsletter so I presented him with a copy of the newsletter and he autographed mine. He is a man after my own heart!

Here is a summary of the papers presented at the conference:

Working together to promote cycling - John Whitelegg, Professor of Environmental Studies, Liverpool John Moores University: spoke on the National Cycling Strategy, its objectives and how it is being monitored. The tasks of the National Cycling Forum and its outputs were followed by subjects which we as cycling campaigners probably already know, such as the benefits of cycling, reduced congestion, healthier population, reduced social exclusion, economic benefits for town centres and through tourism, less pollution. The policy dimension included Local Transport Plans,

