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Editor's info....

By Mike Savage



NOVI SAD FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE

The recently opened bridge provides an alternative river crossing to the busy Carrow and Foundry bridges giving cyclists safer access to Thorpe Station, the new swimming pool (now under construction) and the delights of the Riverside shopping and leisure area.

CATTON/ SPIXWORTH CYCLE PATH

Congratulations to local villagers for having campaigned successfully for this recently constructed cycle and pedestrian path. It runs from White Woman Lane to Arthurton Rd, a distance of about one mile.

My only complaint is that there is a continuous ripple in the surface, guaranteed to turn an English Breakfast into severe heartburn, or even worse a technicolor yawn!



BLUEBELL ROAD

Due to high accident rates a 20m.p.h. speedlimit and other safety measures are to be introduced along the northern section by the U.E.A. and Blackdale Schools. Let's hope something will also be done with the much neglected cyclepath alongside Bluebell Rd. This path is badly overgrown and is in places down to about 1M in width. Surface markings have been obliterated by works.

MODERN CYCLE SHEDS

Architects and their clients have at last woken up to the importance of cycling in the community, judging by these examples of cycle sheds at Riverside and at the U.E.A. It remains to be seen what the public facilities will be like at the Forum judging by the mess they've made of the staff cycle storage area!



Riverside



UEA Bike Pod

(Think of a name for this curious cycle locker at the UEA)



UEA

Chairman's Chat

By Phyll Hardie

Firstly, welcome to Tim Jarvis, the newly appointed Norfolk County Council cycling officer, who took up office on 1 October. Although Rob Marshall will be a hard act to follow, I can see that Tim is likely to make a good try. Rob has now moved on to dealing with Norfolk Quiet Lanes and environmental enhancement of country towns, so is still involved in promoting cycling if in a slightly different way.

In my last 'Chat' I wrote about our ride down the Rhine and some of the wonders we encountered in Switzerland and Germany. One of these was the number of people on bicycles, of all ages and types, both on the designated route and in the towns we passed through.

Two weeks after our return my husband Bob and I set off on a 12 day ride around Norfolk. We did this first two years ago and, as then, we set off from Norwich to Sheringham along the Bittern Line cycle map route 1. From Sheringham we turned eastwards this time and our ride to Great Yarmouth took us along the newly-designated and waymarked National Cycle Network regional route 30. This keeps close to the coast along quiet lanes and off-road paths. We continued on to Lowestoft, then along the proposed Waveney Valley route, which keeps mainly to the Suffolk side of the county boundary as the lanes are more suitable there. Through Beccles, Bungay and Diss, then on to Thetford, where regional route 13 took us under the bypass and on to Brandon. We crossed the fens to Ely before turning to re-enter Norfolk north of Littleport, then on to King's Lynn and Hunstanton. (We recommend the meals at Sandringham visitors' centre - excellent!) We were now on the NCN Route 1 which took us through to Wells, Fakenham and eventually back to Norwich.

We in Norfolk are indeed blessed with pleasant and varied cycle friendly countryside (not too many hills) and some lovely designated routes to follow, or not as the whim and necessity take us. All praise to Sustrans and our county council for providing such routes. Now, the point of my telling you all this is that in all the 321 miles of our trip, just 12 miles short of what Christine and I did on the Rhine route, we met not one other cycle tourist. There were a few locals, maybe one or two leisure day cyclists, but none loaded up with panniers like us, obviously on a long tour. People simply don't realise what they're missing! Cycle tourism in this country certainly needs a boost.

In his prize-winning paper for the Falco Lecture Essay prize, presented at this year's Velo-city international cycling conference in Scotland, Michael Jackson of USA suggested that the way to encourage more people on to bikes is to advertise. In addition to provision of facilities and infrastructure, there should be continuous media promotion encouraging bicycle use. This should include the bikes themselves, the benefits to users and the environment, the accessories available and training courses for adult returners. Currently the most popular form of transportation, the car, is also the most promoted. There is research evidence that advertising works, even where the product being advertised is known to have a detrimental effect - hence the ban on tobacco advertising. Michael Jackson suggests that media promotion of bicycle use could be financed by the levy of a small surtax on motor vehicle advertising. Since there is so much of it, all year round, a continuous bicycle transportation advertising campaign, targeted at the adult population, would be well set up to ensure adults, children too as they emulate adult behaviour, incorporate bicycle use as a healthy everyday activity.

One of our members remarked recently that Norwich Cycling Campaign has not done any proper campaigning lately. Well, maybe we've been reasonably satisfied with the way things have been going, new facilities and routes opened, cyclists and pedestrians at the top of the hierarchy with private cars somewhere near the bottom, and so on. But now things look likely to be changing. With the change to a Tory majority on the County Council, plus a City Council whose elected members appear to be less sympathetic to cyclists' needs than previously and thus needing to be closely watched, we are required to be extra vigilant. This week we had a press photo-call at the newly opened Forum in Norwich to highlight the unsatisfactory cycle parking facility, basically provided for the staff but, in the absence of anything else, also for the public. Cycling in the soon to be pedestrianised Queen Street is another issue that will shortly require our attention, and there are other possibilities in the pipeline. If you're on e-mail and have not notified the membership secretary of your address please do so as we may need to ask for your quick response to an issue which comes up. Meanwhile, keep an eye on the public notices in local papers and act on any issues of concern. Queen Street, allowing only one-way instead of two-way cycling, is likely to come up shortly. As an active cycle campaigner, act on it!

Be conspicuous these dark winter nights.

P.H.

