

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Newsletter Number 51

December 2003 - February 2004

50p where sold - 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.

Norwich Cycling Campaign is affiliated to the National Cycle Campaign Network.



Cycles donated to local school

Norwich Cycling Campaign today brought Christmas forward a month for a group of lucky primary school pupils in Norwich. Nine recycled cycles have been donated to St. John's RCVA First School, Pottergate ready for youngsters to cycle to school after their Christmas break.

"Cycle Recycle" has long been an important arm of the Campaign and a stream of helpers has worked tirelessly over the years repairing second-hand bikes donated to them. "Nine classic children's cycles have been fully restored to working order, needing very little attention really; just some tender loving care!" said Nigel Howard of Cycle Recycle. "I am really pleased to see these bikes go to a good cause and be used again in the future by local school children."

Headmistress, Kim Payne today said "This is a fantastic gift for nine children, Christmas has come a month early at St. John's School. We are now going to devise a way of ensuring that children who don't have cycles at present, get one very soon! – very many thanks to Norwich Cycling Campaign and to all the volunteers involved."

Note: CycleRecycle is now trading independently from Norwich Cycling Campaign. There will, however, continue to be close co-operation and support between the two organisations.

IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Info	3	Letter to the Editor	7
Techno Tips	3	The AGM and You	8
Chairman's Chat	4	Campaign Corner	9
News from Cambridge	5	Sheffield Conference Report	10
Bike2Work	5	Cycle Shorts	11
More Mutterings from Matthew	6	Contacts/Dates for your diary	12

Don't forget. . .

Christmas with the CTC

Norwich Cycling Campaign members are invited to join the local Cyclists' Touring Club group for a seasonal get-together on Wednesday 10th December. 7.30pm onwards at the Clubroom, Mile Cross Methodist Church, Aylsham Road. (Secure indoor cycle parking)

Bring and share refreshments - sorry no alcohol!

Stuck for Christmas present ideas?

Why not give a friend a subscription to Norwich Cycling Campaign?
Ring 07812 904652 for details

Good for them - and good for us

HAD A CYCLE STOLEN IN NORWICH IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

Nigel is compiling a list of members who have "lost" their bikes (one member has had three "walk" this year!) Cycle Recycle has had 6 stolen from racks near the station and one whilst on hire last season.

The Police have been reluctant in the past to allow individuals to inspect the dozens of stolen bikes in the Bethel St. "pound" but the Campaign approaching them as a group should be successful.

You will need to give Nigel a brief description of your bike (colour and type are the most important features); Nigel will then send the list to the Cycling Officer at Bethel St. with a request for a "mass view"; Nigel's van will be available, should you "find" your bike, for its safe transport to your home (free in Norwich).

ALL ENQUIRIES TO NIGEL BEFORE JANUARY 31st PLEASE

Phone Nigel on 01603 502188

HAVE YOU COME ACROSS A PROBLEM ON A CYCLE PATH?

Don't ignore it - Please report it to:

CityCare helpdesk on 0845 6582045

Correction

Hillside Cycling Project

In the article which appeared in Newsletter No. 50, the website for the Hillside Travel Group was shown incorrectly.

The websites should have read:

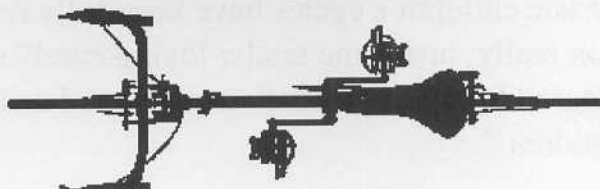
www.hillside-travel.org.uk

Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

MORE USEFUL WEBSITES

www.soldsecure.com
(website for standards of bike locks)
www.thebigwheel.org.uk
(Nottingham's transport network)
www.cycleweb.co.uk
www.nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk
www.whycycle.co.uk
(impartial advice for new and potential uk cyclists)

OFFICIAL DISTRIBUTORS OF DAWES CYCLES & BROMPTON FOLDING CYCLES



SPECIALISED CYCLES

80 Connaught Road, Norwich

(off Dereham Road)

Proprietor: Steve Holland

LIGHTWEIGHT SPECIALISTS, FRAME REPAIRS &
REFINISHING, WHEELBUILDING, SHOES & CLOTHING

CAMPAGNOLO, MAVIC, SACHS, SHIMANO, SMART,
AGUSPORT, BROOKS, CATEYE, CARRADICE, TA, TRELOCK,
PANARACER, DE MARCHI, LOOK 3TTT, CONTINENTAL,
CINELLI, AMBROSIO, MKS, SAPIM, BUSCH & MULLER, DT,
CARNAC, POLARIS, AXA, ASENTER, VITTORIA, SQUIRE,
NOKIAN, TOPEAK, SIDI, TIME, FREESTYLE, NIMROD,
ALTURA, MET, HAMAX, VREDESTEIN, HOPE, ZEFAL,
SAN MARCO, SELLE ITALIA, DIA COMPE and many more lines

TEL/FAX: 01603 665668

OPEN: 8.30am—6.00pm

E-mail: specycle@lineone.net

www.specycle.co.uk

BUS LANES

The new bus lanes at Agricultural Hall Plain certainly improve access to Castle Meadow for cyclists as well as buses. Like bus lanes in many other parts of the city, they are much too narrow to allow a bus to overtake a cyclist. If, as we all hope, the number of cyclists rises in future, buses will be seriously delayed by bicycles – a wholly unacceptable state of affairs!

The council has agreed that the bus lane along Market Avenue will be discontinued to reduce congestion. “The lane is little used by buses” was the official reason. (I counted three buses in ten minutes). The real reason is to avoid the jams caused by cars leaving the Castle Mall car park.



TECNO TIPS: “BREATHABLE BELIEVABLE?”

Many garments in the shops nowadays are labeled “waterproof, breathable”. If you buy one of these and it isn’t waterproof that’s easy to prove and you should get your money back, but what if it’s not breathable? Although breathability can be measured under controlled conditions, and expressed as litres per sq metre, there does not appear to be any industrial standard. Some breathable fabrics such as Goretex or Sympatex are woven, others look like reinforced plastic and in my experience are only microporous. High breathability is essential for a cycling jacket. Cycling is a vigorous activity and the jacket needs to be close fitting. This is why extra ventilation such as “pit-zips” are often used. For leisurely touring I still prefer my old p.v.c. cape, worn with a separate “Sou-wester” cap this is completely waterproof and gives excellent ventilation!

HOSPITAL CYCLE ROUTE



A picturesque part of the UEA “bypass”

If you are cycling from the city to the Hospital here’s a way to bypass the UEA and all those buses and other traffic in the Chancellors Drive. Cross straight over from Cow Drive into Earlham Park, (near the new sports centre). Skirt the woods to your left, following the worn track. Enter the woods at the bottom of the park and turn left where paths cross. This will bring you out between the roundabout and the river bridge. The surface isn’t too bad along this route, at least in dry weather.

A tight squeeze - no room to pass a cyclist here!

If you want to be dry and “cool” my advice is to go to a good bike shop, where they have a selection of cycling clothes and be prepared to pay a good price.

Editor's Extra. . . from Ian Maunders

Update from Newsletter No. 50: Cycle signs have now been put in place at the Colegate/Magdalen Street junction.

*

Several people have contacted the campaign regarding the new bus lanes mentioned above. The main area of concern is how to manouvre across from upper King Street and into King Street (NCN Route 1). Comments welcome.

Remember: a bike is for life - Merry Christmas and best wishes to all for 2004

Chairman's Chat . . .

by Phyll Hardie

In my last Chat I compared our city's cycling facilities with those of other cities, giving ours a score of 5 out of 10. Since then I've had the opportunity to experience at first hand those of Peterborough – their Green Wheel – and Cambridge. It certainly seems to be the case that if the facilities are there people will use them, judging by the hundreds of cyclists in these two cities.

So when can we expect to see Norwich's cycle network completed? Never, if left to our City and County Councils, for they really aren't interested in traffic reduction. They're only concerned with catering for the ever-increasing number of cars, by building a Northern Distributor Route (NDR) and enlarging existing junctions on the inner and outer ring roads. Never mind that people's lives, homes and properties will be adversely affected if they happen to be in the way. They are of minor importance compared with the over-riding necessity to cater for the car. Councillors don't want to accept that by putting in new roads they simply encourage people to drive more, just as by completing the cycle network they would encourage more cycling. Indeed, at the public consultation meeting on the NDR that I attended, the chairman Adrian Gunson had the temerity to say that building the new Spixworth – Old Catton cycle path was 'expensive'. It's just a fleabite compared to the £55 - £110 million the NDR will cost, depending on whether a single or dual carriageway is constructed.

Ten years ago plans for a northern bypass were dropped after concerted protest against it. Now, with change to a Tory majority on the County Council, the idea has resurfaced. We should all make our feelings known, by attending the 'consultation' meetings now being held around the city, completing the questionnaire and by writing to our MPs, county and parish councillors.

Our cycling paramedic, Iain Colquhoun, now one of six who take turns to patrol the city centre, recently gave us a very interesting talk on his work. His speedy response to emergencies has saved many lives in the pedestrianised areas which are difficult to access by ambulance. His pioneering work has also been taken up in other cities. As well as the benefit to patients, the use of a bicycle has shown it to be the speediest and most suitable means of transport in particular circumstances. So when can we expect to see the police similarly mounted, patrolling our pedestrianised areas, parks and off-road cycleways? Warrington is a recent newcomer to this method of policing, following Strathclyde's, and others', example.

While staying with my brother Cliff in Cornwall recently, we took the opportunity to go cycling along the Camel Trail. You see here the contraption we hired to get from Wadebridge to Padstow and back again, about 11 miles altogether. It's called a wheelchair 'duet' and is something like a 'Stop me and buy one' ice cream vendor's vehicle.



I was keen to try it out, as I like to think that disabled people have the opportunity to go cycling with their mates. Actually, I found the steering very heavy as the whole wheelchair bit has to be moved, and it took me a little while to get used to it. Any camber along the way caused me to go into an uncontrollable turn in that direction, thus we needed to stay in the centre of the path. As an engineer, Cliff reckons he could devise a better system for steering, one where the passenger as well as the stoker could take a hand in steering and braking. There are of course other types of bikes, trikes and quads for disabled people to use, both with and without an able-bodied companion. We tried out some of these at the CCN conference in Manchester a couple of years ago. Now wouldn't it be exciting if we could have some of these machines for hire when our new cycle centre is open. Yes, I hear it really is going ahead in the Nestle development.

This will be my final Chat as I'm not intending to stand for re-election at the AGM. I've been in the Chairman's post for 5 years, having taken over mid-term when the previous incumbent moved away. I started off as a 'fresher' but have certainly learned a lot on the job! Now it's someone else's turn to have a go, while I turn my thoughts and energies to other things – more cycling (of course!), giving slide shows to outside organisations (details from me on 435547), my embroidery and patchwork, writing, photography, music and gardening.

My best wishes to you all. All success to our campaigning efforts – will the time ever come when they are no longer needed?

Coals to Newcastle

by Sarah Elsegood

On Sunday 26 October 2003 campaign members Phyll and Bob Hardie, Sarah Elsegood and Katy Appleton, co-ordinator of the UEA Bicycle User Group set off by train on a trip to Cambridge to meet members of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign. Last Autumn, members of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign visited Norwich to meet their neighbouring campaigners and look at the facilities for cyclists in Norwich. The visit coincided with the introduction of the Anglia Railways direct service between the two cities.

The group were met by committee member Nigel Deakin who, together with co-ordinator Martin Lucas-Smith and leisurely rides organizer and former treasurer Simon Nuttall, led us on an interesting and informative tour around Cambridge. We saw and heard about some of the campaign's achievements and frustrations, including the inadequate cycle parking at the railway station and the fine cycle bridge over the railway.

We began by cycling along part of the Cambridge South East Cycle Route from the station into the city. Simon Nuttall, who was employed by the Cambridgeshire Constabulary on a cycle theft reduction project, showed us the Park Street cycle park, where one floor of a multi-storey carpark has been transformed into the largest free UK city cycle park by adding bicycle racks and bicycle lockers. As a result of this project there is now a wide

range of cycle parking in convenient locations around the city.

We went on to see how the final stage of the Core Traffic Scheme has been implemented, banning private motor vehicles from Silver Street (near Queens' College) at all times except for the morning and evening peak. Rising bollards allow authorised taxis, emergency and council vehicles through the road closure using transponder technology. Next, we cycled out across Garrett Hostel bridge and saw a new wider toucan crossing which makes it easier for the students to cross from the city to the university library and faculty buildings on the western side of Cambridge. The university is expanding to the west and we cycled out to admire the innovative design of the new cycle parking at the university's new computer laboratory. Former co-ordinator Clare Macrae joined us for lunch. Afterwards, Nigel Deakin led us up Newmarket Road to look at the bus/cycle lane and cycle filter lights, before showing us Sustrans route 51 of the National Cycle Network.

We hope to organize a follow-up visit later next spring and look forward to visiting the new cycle bridge across the A14 at Milton.

For more information about Cambridge Cycling Campaign, see www.camcycle.org.uk.

Bike2Work

Omitted from *Look back at Bike Week* in newsletter 50 was the result of Bike2Work Day on Wednesday 18 June. There was a big improvement over 2002 when only four organisations took part. This year, nine organisations agreed to offer a Bike2Work breakfast: Norwich City College (which has the longest-standing record of such breakfasts), City Council, County Council, Broadland District Council, Broads Authority, Virgin Money, UEA, Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital and the Institute of Food Research. Several other companies were approached and sounded interested and for once I feel

optimistic that 2004 will be even better. The favoured approach is to ring up the company and speak to someone about it - this also reveals the extent to which staff cycle to work - and then write a letter with fuller information and some promotional material. Also approached were Aviva, Marsh, Mills & Reeve, Homebase, OneAccount, Notcutts and the Castle Mall Partnership. The latter was initially very enthusiastic but did not offer breakfast to its staff; however we were able subsequently to hold a Saturday information stall in the Mall. If any readers can persuade their company or institution to join in next year, please let us know.



Christine Wilson 5

Seeking a diagnosis

My therapist has been trying to encourage me of late to talk out what's bugging me. Even the Newsletter Editor is concerned that I should try to turn the endless muttering into something a little more coherent and enlightening.

Regular readers will know the pattern of this column. Matthew's recurring need to delve back into Norwich's past, digging out old photographs and feasting on views of car-free streets or of hoards of workers leaving the factories on their Raleigh roadsters. Do I really believe that it is somehow possible to wind back the clock to a golden age when bicycling was the norm, and Norm was on his bike (instead of behind the wheel of his 4x4)?

I declare my personal fascination for those archive black and white images of nineteenth and twentieth century Norwich. Places so familiar, yet so strange when they're lacking the present-day foreground of motor vehicles, parked or queuing... against a background of more motor vehicles, queuing or parked... Somehow these images seem to represent a glimpse of sanity in our modern world of fumes, noise and stress, the motor city we have created where its inhabitants have become cast as victims of the ubiquitous four-wheeled predators. Am I being anti-car, or merely sentimental?

It's one thing to say what interests me, quite another to explain the relevance to Norwich Cycling Campaign. So in a nutshell, I will try to outline the reason why I think understanding our city's long past helps us to plan the future for cycling in the city.

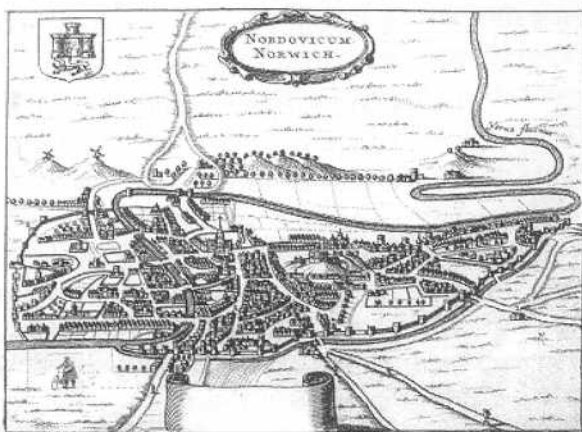
A grand uniting theory

My thesis is this, that in a historic city like ours, there is a deeply ingrained set of natural 'desire lines' that have evolved in response to the landscape as the city grew

from its centuries-old beginnings. More often than not, these represent a good starting point for putting back the cycle network that has been destroyed in the past 40-50 years.

I am indebted to a well-known local archaeologist for setting me off on this tack, after I heard him give a talk explaining why Norwich feels like a medieval city, and how medieval Norwich continues to exist, even though there are very few genuinely medieval buildings left and most of the original streets have been widened. The point is that there are, if we look for them, key elements of the medieval city that continue to have their influence - the shape of the city walls, for example, the hills or the lines of old watercourses. There are also medieval processes still at work, such as the desire to maintain the compactness of the centre and the constant re-use of buildings - things we would now label sustainable. He went on to say how our understanding of Norwich as a medieval city not only enriches our everyday life, but should help our decision-making for the future - justifying the planning rules that make developers save old structures, or pay for archaeological digs!

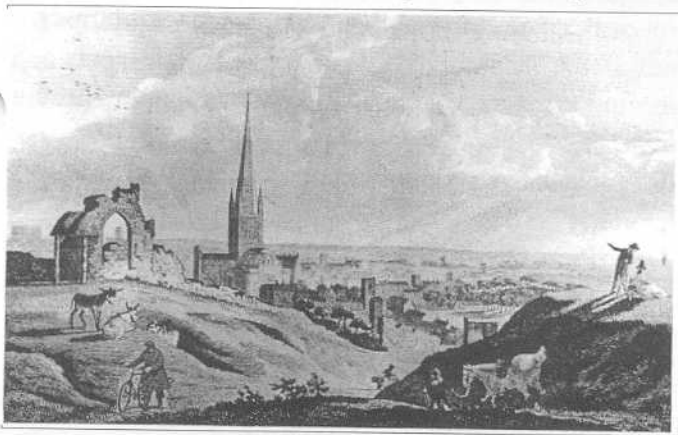
What on earth has this got to do with cycling? Well, if you think about transport in the medieval city, much of it was human-powered. So are bikes. So people tend to take the shortest route, and you don't choose a steep route unless you have to.



Say you wanted to get your laden cart from Tombland the market place. You'd take the level route, so London Street was invented. Is it therefore surprising that cyclists still want to ride that way, instead of using St Andrew's or Rose Lane? Or consider Rosary Road, the route to Thorpe from the medieval river crossing at Bishopgate

(Foundry Bridge hadn't arrived yet) - it's an interesting example of a compromise between the shortest route (straight over Mousehold) and the flat but very indirect route along the river. So we discover that Rosary Road is reasonably cyclable, unlike Gas Hill, and acceptably direct. Back in the centre, I have written in the past how the route across the front of the Forum follows a centuries-old desire line. In spite of all our efforts, this route is once again under threat, from plans to build a permanent amphitheatre where the temporary skating rink is.

There are many similar examples I could quote where we want to cycle on what were once cart tracks. And it's no surprise that many of the present city centre roads that cut awkwardly across the contours date from post-medieval times, when transport was no longer all human-powered.



The coming of the trams around 1900 had a dramatic effect in places, with road widening and the creation of some new cut-throughs with awkward contours, such as at the Bell Hotel and outside Cinema City. [As an aside, it's strange to think that for the first 35 years of the twentieth century we had a public transport system in the city that didn't belch out toxic fumes onto the street!].

It was the post-war planning for the motor car (a mere late twentieth century blip in the full sweep of Norwich's history) that really started messing up the medieval layout, thanks to cheap motorised transport for some and the relegation of human-powered modes relied upon by the

many. Motor cars in the city centre represent the very antithesis of efficient use of energy and space. The more serious congestion/pollution problems we see in the city now (such as the plight of St Augustine's Street or the one-way hazards in Prince of Wales Road) can be attributed directly to past planning decisions that dared to depart from the longstanding sustainable principles of the medieval city. It is in this light that we must examine the present proposals by our highway authority for further road-widening.

Don't call me middle aged

Before you accuse me of being a Luddite, I'm not arguing for a return to the Middle Ages. After all, one of Man's greatest inventions didn't actually arrive until the late nineteenth century. What I am saying is that our preference for certain cycle routes over others may not be entirely based on whim. The medievals actually knew a thing or two about sustainability.



It's been said that the fundamental requirements of the medieval city were that it provided its citizens with food, shelter, security and spiritual nourishment. Once those have been achieved, what more civilised addition can there be than the ability to move about by bike?

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editors,

On Saturday, 4th October (about 4pm), I was quietly riding down Mansfield Lane, when my bike was deliberately rammed from the side by a small boy on a bike. This lad had to cross the road to do this and ran his front wheel into my front wheel. Since I am past 60 and several stones overweight, the resultant fall was spectacular and the bruises painful.

I am sure that if I had been walking past the lad and his friends, he would not have dreamed of attacking me. Is the sight of a mature woman on a bike really so deviant as to provoke such aggressive action?

Needless to say, I was very, very angry and swore loudly at the departing boy, but was too shaken to give chase. I will in future carry a camera whilst out riding, so at least I can get a photo of any thugs' backs to show the police.

Has anyone else had anything similar happen?

Jenny Gladstone

The AGM and You!

Annual General Meeting, Thursday 18 December 7pm

The Greenhouse, Bethel Street, Norwich

followed by a bring & share buffet (drinks on sale in The Greenhouse)

Yes, it's that time again. At the Annual General Meeting all committee posts come up for re-election, so this is your chance to get more involved in local, and maybe national, cycling issues.

You will see from this month's Chairman's Chat that after 5 years, Phyll has decided to step down. During that time she has helped a great deal to raise the profile of Norwich Cycling Campaign and so will be a hard act to follow. However, I'm sure that whoever takes over will get help and support from the rest of the committee. All you need is a sponsor and a seconder and a good show of hands - this procedure also applies to the other committee posts.

At present our committee is made up as follows:

- 1 Co-ordinator (Secretary): Communicates information, deals with correspondence, takes and distributes minutes, compiles agendas, etc.
- 2 Chairman: Chairs monthly and annual meetings, books rooms and/or speakers. Acts as public spokesperson, etc.
- 3 Treasurer: Banks any monies, pays bills, keeps accounts up to date. Provides a summary of current finances at meetings and end of year accounts at AGM. Arranges for accounts to be audited.

These first three posts are required by our constitution and are signatories for cheques. (2 signatures requires.) In addition, we also have:

4 Consultations Officer: Responds to all plans from City and County Councils, monitors planning meeting minutes. Familiar with all cycling schemes in Norwich area. Regularly reports to committee.

5 Membership Secretary: Keeps accurate computer records of membership and provides updates for newsletter mailing lists. Produces mailing labels and reminder letters. Collects membership payments for treasurer.

6 Newsletter Editor: Compiles, edits and produces quarterly Newsletter.

7 Press Officer: Contacts local media (newspapers, radio, TV). Gives newspaper and radio interviews. Issues press releases.

We have other useful posts such as Campaigns Officer, Rides Organiser and special event organisers such as Bike Week Co-ordinator.

If you are interested in any of these posts or helping with some of the tasks, please let a committee member know. Many of us have been doing the work for several years now and it would be good to see some new faces and to get some fresh ideas.

Sunday Rides

The last of the summer Sunday rides took place on 20 September.

Using National Cycle Network Route 1 along Marriott's Way, about ten of us enjoyed warm sunshine, lovely countryside and a traffic-free route nearly all the way to Taverham Garden Centre. As we locked our bikes up to some railings, the manager came out to see us and announced that they would soon be installing some proper cycle-parking facilities.

Sitting in the outdoor area of the coffee shop, we had the wierd experience of relaxing in hot sunshine whilst being distracted by the twinkling lights of their (very early) Christmas displays - eeugh!

After we had all refuelled and, in some cases, shopped

a little (Rachel attempted to camouflage her bike by having a large plant sticking out of a pannier-bag) we retraced our route back into Norwich.

We are fortunate in having Marriott's Way on our doorstep and this summer has seen a great deal of cycle traffic on this section of the NCN.

In October I made a return visit to Taverham Garden

Centre and I am pleased to report that there are now five plastic-coated Sheffield stands near the main entrance and away from the cars - Nottcutts take note please!

Ian Maunders



Campaign Corner

This is the first of a new feature in the newsletter. The aim is to concentrate on a particular issue in each edition and focus members' energies on a specific campaigning objective.

We have been asked by a campaign member to lobby the Lloyds TSB bank on Unthank Road to provide cycle parking, i.e. Sheffield stands, as part of their programme of work whilst improving disabled facilities.

Please write to:
The Manager
Lloyds TSB Bank
Unthank Road
Norwich

(and send a copy to your city councillor) to express the need for adequate secure cycle parking at this location. The more letters they receive the more likely they are to take action. Your letter could include the following points:

- Convenient cycle parking could attract additional customers.
- Sheffield stands are widely recognized as being the most useful form of cycle parking.
- Unthank Road is heavily congested at most times of the day which can deter people from using the existing businesses.
- People will find it easier to cycle to the bank if cycle parking is provided.
- Budgens have recently recognized that cycle parking can improve trade.

Suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Please e-mail to info@norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk or telephone 07812 904652.

Once upon a time . . .

In a recent newsletter, Phyll posed the question "How did you get into cycling?" In my case, I blame it on my mum. Although I had no bike of my own, I learned to ride a small 2-wheeler up and down next door's lawn. In the late 1950's my mother acquired an old bike to cycle to work on - or rather she pushed it up a 1 in 8 hill - then rode through the woods and back. This bike was a lovely old loop-framed BSA, black of course, with a circular 3-speed changer on the down tube and a basket up front.

Although I couldn't reach the ground from the saddle I used to borrow it on Sundays and ride over the nearby level crossing (where I sometimes operated the gates and signals under the watchful eye of the local signalman). These rides took me through the narrow lanes and past fields which are now covered by Milton Keynes. I ventured a little further each time: to Milton Keynes village - as it was then - to Newport Pagnell and on to Olney - famed for its pancake race - and beyond. I loved the sense of adventure and independence, which I still enjoy today.

I also found the bike was an occasional source of income. A basketful of empty lemonade bottles (some retrieved from ditches, and more than one from outside a pub) netted enough money when returned to the village shop to buy a selection of sweets. On one of these missions I was busy holding some errant bottles in place when I rode straight into the back of a parked car. No damage and no broken bottles.

True independence came when I passed my 13+ and was rewarded with a bike of my choice. I chose an incredibly

sensible and heavy Currys "Elizabethan", complete with 3-speed hub/dynamo and totally enclosed chaincase. Dad gave me the money (£22 17s 6d) one Saturday morning and I immediately set out walking

the 3 miles into Bletchley to buy it before he had a chance to change his mind or get his car out. I was a mile down the road before he caught up with me!

Suddenly I could do anything - like cycle to school instead of catching the school bus. I visited friends, including many excursions to one who lived in "The George" on the square in Winslow. I remember riding back from here with another friend one summer night and stopping in amazement at the sight of a grass verge twinkling with hundreds of glow worms.

About this time, 1960, I had my first serious accident. I was cycling along the footpath along the A5 (this was recommended by the local police) a local girl came towards me, also on a bike. Being chivalrous, I swerved to the outside of the pavement (the right-hand side). The poor girl did the same and we hit head on, my nose breaking on her eyebrow. There was blood everywhere and we walked to a local surgery to get cleaned up. I can't recall how our parents found out or how our bikes fared, but it didn't put me off!



I left from Norwich station at 1pm on Friday 17 October with rucksack on my back and Brompton in one hand, looking forward to a stimulating weekend in the company of other cycling campaigners – I was not disappointed. Central trains were on time (gasp!) into Sheffield, and I arrived at my hosts home shortly after 5pm.

On Saturday morning we met up with other cyclists at Sheffield Station for the 10 mile ride to the Earth Centre, built in an abandoned open cast mine at Conisborough, between Sheffield and Doncaster. The route was mainly alongside a canal, with a spectacular structure called the Spider Web bridge just outside Sheffield, which took us across the canal and below a rail bridge all at the same time. At one point we crossed a fence with NO PATH warning notices, so all the land negotiations were not yet complete for this part of the TPT route. I managed to get a rear tyre puncture 400m outside the Centre, so completed my journey pushing the bike, but still arrived just in time for the slightly late start just after 10am.

After welcoming words from Cllr Mick Jamieson, the Chair of Doncaster Council, we kicked off with a fascinating talk from **Dr Alison Hill**, director of South East region public health observatory, based in Oxford. She had cycled in with us from Sheffield that morning, and there was no better example of benefit of cycling to physical and mental alertness than her concise talk. She produced many statistics gathered in her studies, a key one being the number of recorded deaths during 2000 (latest data) from the following causes:

*Cyclists – 125 Motorists – 3600
Heart disease(CHD) – 45,000*

She went on to demonstrate the link between risk from CHD and lack of regular aerobic exercise, concluding that prescribing regular cycling by GP's for patients at risk from CHD would do more to cut mortality rates than any amount of road safety measures.

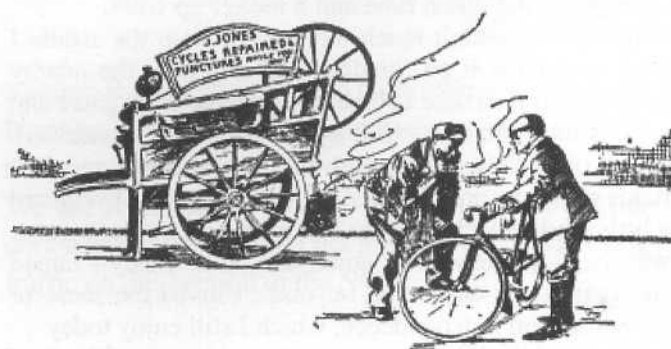
Our next speaker was **Pam Ashton**, who had been employed to co-ordinate the efforts of 27 local authorities in the building, signing and marketing of the Trans-Pennine-Trail (TPT). She now chairs 'Friends of the Trans Pennine Trail' who are active in the ongoing maintenance of the route. As we cycled along parts of the route it is clear the amount of work both in creating and maintaining the nearly 300 miles of signed routes, 80% of which is off road (Phyll can give much more details having ridden the route). The collective 27 authorities and Sustrans spent over £30 million of Countryside Commission and Lottery money on this long distance route, but it was clear that the driving force that made it happen was Pam Ashton and her team.

Robin Field & John Parkin then gave us a good 'double act' with The Lancashire County Council Cycle Design Guide/ A Rational for Cyclability: Space v. Traffic Speed & Volume. What a title! It appears they have done considerable work in Lancashire, creating design guidelines that recognise the bicycle is a vehicle, designed for sensible speeds of the bicycle, particularly influenced by gradients, both up and down. Or to put it in layman's terms – building sharp bends at the bottom of slopes is plain daft!

A formula for relating traffic speed/volume to road space (lane width), which should be below 2m, or above 3.5 m, widths between 2 – 3.5m only work if traffic speed is below 20mph. Quite fascinating work, which we can only hope will be adopted by councils across the country, which could see the end of nasty pinch points.

Derek Palmer from STEER then gave us a round up of the Local Transport Plans, and issues of the Annual Progress Report, many of which do not address rural cycling. He referred to the 10 year National Transport Plan, 2000 – 2010 which has targets to treble cycling over it's life. Much scepticism was expressed from the floor about cycling 'targets' generally, and the failure of local authorities in several areas to deliver on cycling levels, despite inclusion in the LTP. Local Authorities need to recognise the different types of cycle journeys and different needs of leisure and commuter cyclists and plan accordingly, there was too much 'one size fits all' approach to cycle facilities.

I spent my lunch hour catching up with old friends, making some new ones, and also repairing my rear puncture,



much to the entertainment of assembled Brompton riders. No so difficult when you have 6 folded bromptons to see how to get the chain tensioner back on correctly – well it worked OK on the ride home!

After lunch **Roger Geffen**, the CTC campaigns and Policy Manager, brought us up to date on consultations, LA benchmarking and Stations cycle parking survey. He

then introduced the draft *CTC Campaigning Strategy 2004-6* which builds on CTC's "Vision 2000" The document which he supplied sets out seven areas of campaign activity, and four focussed campaign themes, which are:

- 1) Cycling as Sustainable Transport.
- 2) Cycling for one Healthy Nation.
- 3) Cycling Connections (with other transport modes);
- 4) Cycling Escapes (off road and recreation).

Certainly the first 3 are ones I would suggest overlap with the aims of Norwich Cycling Campaign. The draft strategy is being circulated to CTC right to ride reps, various committees and groups of the CTC for comments. It is hoped to adopt the strategy at the Campaigns & Policy meeting in January 2004, and he would welcome views on its content.

Hugh McClintock is a lecturer in Urban Planning at the University of Nottingham. He addressed the issue of integrated transport and particularly the new Nottingham tram system and it's likely impact on cycling.

There are 3 principle areas with trams:-

- 1) Physical infrastructure – e.g. severing of cycle routes with tram lines, crossing tram tracks, and potential new routes alongside tracks.
- 2) Cycle parking at tram stops and heavy rail (train) stations.
- 3) Carriage of bikes on trams – folders and non folders – which is dependent on both the design of rolling stock and the rules and attitude of the operator.

One vital conclusion was the need for discussion between tram builders and cycle user groups at a very early stage in the design process, and to realise that light rail systems can take many years build, and can cause considerable disruption to existing transport infrastructure in the process.

Finally we heard from **Graham Allsop**, a cartographer at Sheffield University on how his department were involved with Sheffield Pedals in producing the Sheffield Cycle Map. This was a joint venture with city council and the University, special student editions have been produced which are free to all 20,000 students – UEA please note! How to identify clearly all types of cycle facilities and keep the map relatively uncluttered, while also showing severity of gradients – an issue in Sheffield! The end product is pretty good, because I used it to find my way out of the city on the Monday, but if you wish to make the map free (or very cheap) then it requires grant support to produce.

All the papers were supposed to be put on the conference website, along with an email discussion forum www.pedalpushers.org.uk/cec03 Also please ask Richard if you wish for more information on any of the topics.

Following the close of the conference, there was a led ride back to Sheffield for those returning there. However I decided to accompany Alison Hill and 4 others who were going on to Doncaster for a train home, with the assistance of a local cyclist who knew the route. This was only about 6 miles and much shorter than the original ride out in the morning. We followed the river valley for most of the way and were treated to a spectacular view of the setting sun through a large brick viaduct carrying the railway over the river. The Norwegian visitor in our party was impressed, and I wish I had taken a camera! The train ride back to Sheffield was uneventful, passing through Conisborough and the right by the Earth Centre again.

My weekend was concluded with a jolly evening out in the chinese restaurant, and a longish country ride towards Hathersage on Sunday. We had a pleasant pub lunch near there, but an unpleasant ride home in the wind & rain. My hosts Tony & Polly Cornah of Sheffield pedalpushers were keen organic gardeners and environmental campaigners, so we had some fascinating discussions about life in green circles of Sheffield and Norwich – do ask about the story of the left hand shredder nut!

The next CTC/CCN conference in Spring 2004 (date tba) will be in Dublin. Kieran Byrne of the Dublin Campaign gave few basic details on travel to Ireland. Only in Ireland could a bicycle repair person have on his business card 'Cycloanalyst' and the company 'Square Wheel Cycleworks' No doubt it will be an interesting location, and I'm sure full of inspiring and stimulating information and people.

SHORTS

Mobile phones: From 1st December 2003 it will be illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. There will be a £30 fixed penalty for an initial offence, with the possibility of fines up to £1000 (£2500 for drivers of lorries, buses and coaches) if the case goes to court. Welcome news for anyone who has travelled on a bus swinging round a roundabout while its driver is happily chatting on his phone.

* * *

"And that will be England gone,
the shadows, the meadows, the lanes
the guildhalls, the carved choirs.

There'll be books; it will linger on
in galleries; but all that remains
for us will be concrete and tyres."

from "Going, Going" by Philip Larkin

Contacts

Norwich Cycling Campaign
42-46 Bethel Street
Norwich NR2 1NR
Telephone 07812 904652



Website

[Http://www.norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk)

E-mail

info@norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk

Discussion Group

norwichcycling@yahoo.co.uk

Newsletter Editors

Mike Savage	612880
Ian Maunders	405285

Campaign Chairman

Phyll Hardie	435547
--------------	--------

Treasurer

Richard Bearman	403415
-----------------	--------

Membership Secretary/Webmaster

Ian Mold	617505
----------	--------

Co-ordinator

Nicola Maunders	405285
-----------------	--------

Consultations Officer

Matthew Williams	503824
------------------	--------

Press Officer

Sue Bergin	765745
------------	--------

Other Committee Members

Christine Wilson	451015
Rachel Wix	617505
Jeff Jordan	411898

Norwich City Council Cycling Officer

Tim Mellors	213502
-------------	--------

Norwich City Council Cycle Forum

Gordon Dean (Chair)	223011
(home)	666700

Norfolk County Council Cycling Officer

Tim Jarvis	222230
------------	--------

What's Happening?

Family Rides

For details please telephone Rob Conway
01603 504762

Gentle, suitable for almost all ages. Plenty of interest
and stops for rest and refreshment.

Various Sundays, starting 10.30am at Harford
Manor School.

Christmas with the CTC

Wednesday 10 December
(see page 2)

Annual General Meeting

Thursday, 18 December, 7pm

The Greenhouse, Bethel Street, Norwich

*followed by bring & share social
(no meat dishes please)*

*Beers, wines and soft drinks available from
The Greenhouse*

*Competition to identify
the most cool and most naff
cycling spots in Norwich.*

Send your nominations in advance to the
co-ordinator via e-mail:

info@norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk or bring them
along to the AGM.

A vote will be held on the night

Monthly members meetings as below:

Thursday 15 January

Thursday, 19 February

Unless shown otherwise, meetings will be held at:

Saunders & Senior

2 Tombland Alley, off Princes Street, at 7.30pm
all members welcome

PLUS

Public Open Meeting at

The Greenhouse, Bethel Street

Thursday, 18 March

Guest speaker TBA

Deadline for the next Newsletter is Friday 13 February 2004