

NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Newsletter Number 58

September - November 2005

£1.00 where sold - free to members



Seven (+1) go to Beccles

Sarah Elsegood

In the last newsletter we included a feature from former Norwich Cycling Campaigners Sue and Graham Bergin, who have built an eco-friendly B&B in Beccles, close to Sustrans routes 1 and 30 (Living quietly, sustainably and B&B too). On Saturday 2 July 2005, members of the Norwich Cycling Campaign Committee were invited to see this amazing eco-house for ourselves and to sample the facilities. We took Sustrans route 1 from County Hall roundabout and cycled the 28 or so miles to Beccles. Newly-weds Jane Saunders and Nigel Howard borrowed a tandem for the occasion and Nicola and Ian Maunders attracted much attention during the journey, on their recumbent bicycle and tricycle ("Cool bikes"!). Sue and Graham (and the dogs) gave us a very warm welcome and Sue had ice cold drinks ready for us on arrival. The accommodation is very clean and comfortable and Sue and Graham are working hard on sustainable land management - planting hedgerows and trees. In the evening we celebrated Pinetrees' success - it has been awarded four diamonds by the English Tourism Council.

Thank you to Sue and Graham for a very enjoyable stay.

For further information see: www.pinetrees.net or telephone Sue Bergin on 01502 470796



"Norwich Cycling Campaign members arriving at Pinetrees, the Bergins' new B&B enterprise in Beccles, following their ride from Norwich on 2nd July. There followed a tour of the extensive grounds followed by a delicious meal and chilling out to the Live 8 concert on TV."

Matthew Williams

NCFC Bike To Work Day

Norwich City Football Club's bike to work day was held on 3rd August. It was part of a publicity campaign branded "On The Move City" which was promoting a new scheme aimed at encouraging Canary supporters to get to Carrow Road by sustainable transport. The bike to work day was well publicised with photos in the local press as well as live coverage on radio Norfolk.



Ray Walpole (left) with team

The day went very well with Ray Walpole, a 78 year old member and City supporter in the limelight. There was not much mention of the campaign. We gave out leaflets and maps and did Dr Bike checks and adjustments for the players and staff.

Although Richard Gough - a regular cyclist - is keen to encourage cycling to the ground, the club has only put in half the racks, and will only install more when use builds up.

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Campaign News

Ian & Rachael step down

Ian and Rachel Mold have looked after membership and the website for many years and have done an excellent job. They now need to concentrate on Ian's health.

Norwich Cycling campaign would like to thank Ian and Rachel for all their effort since the 1990s, in facilitating the smooth running of the campaign. We very much appreciate the contribution they continue to make to the committee.

We are also pleased that Oliver Stretton-Downes, one of our members, has volunteered to take over the role of Website Manager. He can be contacted on Norwich 483353 or by email: oliver@s-downes.freemove.co.uk.

It's an important role, as the campaign relies on it to communicate with people who get in touch and make enquiries. We are very grateful to Sarah Elsegood, one of our committee members who has taken over as membership secretary.

We very much appreciate the contribution Ian and Rachel continue to make on the committee.

Monthly members meetings

Public meeting "Cycling to Work"
September 15th 7.30 at the Greenhouse

Monthly members meetings

October 20th, 7.30 Saunders & Senior

November 17, 7.30 Saunders & Senior

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Mike Savage

Deadline for next issue:
Friday 11th November

Membership Matters

Enclosed with the newsletter each quarter, some members will find a renewal reminder letter. Please check inside your envelope and return your renewal form as soon as possible. Your continuing support is very important to us. We are especially grateful to those members who have included a donation together with their membership subscription. Thank you!

Have you changed your postal or e-mail address? Please let us know so that we can update our database.

Sarah Elsegood, Membership Secretary

National News

Women more likely to cycle if their peers do so already

New research has revealed that women are more likely to start cycling if people in their peer group already do so. Although women are less likely to take up cycling than men, they are more willing to attend cycle training courses.

Alix Stredwick, who recently completed a Cycling for Women project for the Women's Design Service said that role models that visibly demonstrated that cycling is for women too were a strong influence. Organisations and people who promote cycling are catching onto this and are promoting the activity with images of women cycling in everyday clothes and making everyday journeys.

"You don't have to don on the lycra and be an urban warrior just to go to the shops"

Abridged from article on bikeforall website (www.bikeforall.net)

Cycle use up on Sustrans routes

The results of a survey published in July show that during 2004 showed that walkers and cyclists made 201 million trips along Sustrans routes. This was an increase of just over eleven and a half percent on the previous year.

Cycle use on the network rose by 11.1%.

50 million trips were journeys made on foot or bike that would normally have been taken in a car.

John Grimshaw, CEO of Sustrans commented that the survey appears to contradict surveys published by the Department of Transport because the Sustrans survey records journeys taken on routes that are closed to motor vehicle traffic, whereas the DOT surveys do not.

SORENS CYCLES

17 Drayton Wood Road
(off Drayton High Road)
Hellesdon, Norwich
Tel: 01603 400764

*

Fully assembled cycles

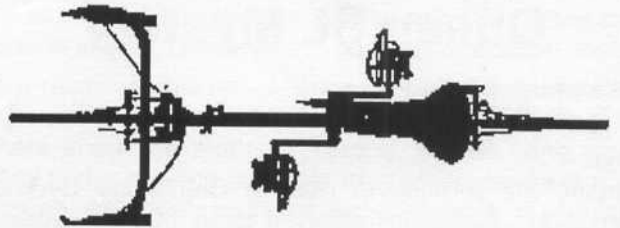
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TEL/FAX: 01603 665668

OPEN: 8.30am-6.00pm

E-mail: specycle@lineone.net

www.specycle.co.uk

Local News

"Billy Bluelight" opens Wherryman's Way

The Wherryman's Way was opened on the 28th May by an actor playing Billy Bluelight - a historical figure who used to race Wherries for a wager at the beginning of the 20th Century.

The 35 mile recreational path follows the river Yare from Norwich to Great Yarmouth. Along the way users can discover the history of a century ago. Stainless steel wherry sails, life-like figures, an audio post and information panels all help to tell the story along the way.

The path cost £200,000 and took 5 years to build. Most of the funding was provided by the Broads & Rivers LEADER+ Programme, (managed by Defra.) The Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk District Council and the Chet Valley Development Partnership all contributed money to the project.

Queen St. Mystery

Taken from NCC newsgroup

Phyll:

Imagine my surprise to read in Cambridge Cycling Campaign's newsletter received today that our Queen Street in Norwich is now two-way for cyclists. Apparently the alteration has been introduced by stealth - has anyone noticed the new signs? Looks like the City Council are too afraid of losing face to announce it with a fanfare.

This is the same method used as when Gentleman's Walk became cyclable before 10am and after 4pm, but this included some rather ambiguous wording. Is London Street also available to cyclists during peak commuting times? See the signs and let us know what you think.

Matthew:

I haven't visited yet, but are you referring to the 'except cyclists' signs at the Tombland end that have naughtily been turned through 180 degrees by persons unknown? They were put up meaning to refer to the no right turn out of Queen Street for motor vehicles.

Phyll:

I went to look at the signs today and see that, yes, the 'except cyclists' signs have been naughtily turned around. What a disappointment, obviously someone's wishful thinking. Will have to inform Dave Earl ...

New bikes for the Broads

Broads Authority press release

Most people think of exploring the Broads by boat. But sixty new bikes have been delivered to five bike hire centres throughout the Broads to encourage land lovers to explore Britain's largest protected wetland on two wheels.

The £34,000 Broads Bike Hire development project aims to promote quiet, healthy, family recreation and an environmentally friendly method of transport while helping Broads businesses to diversify.

The Broads Authority's Sustainable Development Fund has provided £15,000 towards the project, the Broads Authority has given £9,000 in kind and Norfolk County Council has given £2,000. The bike hire operators have contributed the remaining £8,000.

This year the funding has encouraged three new centres to join the original network of five, which are scattered throughout the northern and southern Broads. New equipment at all the centres includes bikes for all ages, baby seats, helmets, tag-alongs and trailers.

New cycle routes are being researched by Broads Authority Countryside Rangers and maps of the routes will be available free to bike hire customers. In addition 75,000 leaflets have been distributed to holiday outlets publicising the bike hire network.

Broadland Cycle Hire, with outlets at Hoveton and Ludham Bridge, has purchased 30 new bikes, Outney Meadow Caravan Park has bought nine more, while new centres at Clippeby Hall Caravan Park and Waveney River Centre near Burgh St Peter have taken 16 and six respectively. Stokesby Riverside Tea Rooms and Stores hires cycles but has not added to its fleet, while Norfolk Outdoor Recreation Centre at Whitlingham Country Park plans to set up a cycle hire centre in the near future and will benefit from the funding package.

Peter Howe, Project Manager, and proprietor of Broadland Cycle Hire, said:

"The cycle hire network provides boat-based tourists with an alternative activity and gives opportunities to enjoy the delights of the wider Broads area, by visiting nature reserves and attractions not directly accessible from the river. It also allows visitors to discover, in a relaxed, non-threatening environment, the benefits of cycling. The grant has allowed us to maintain a high quality service by updating our equipment with excellent new cycles."

It is anticipated that integrated canoeing, cycling and camping routes could be developed, allowing people to cycle or canoe from one centre to another over several days while their luggage is transported for them.

The Bike Hire Network was set up eight years ago, but with the closure of several of the original centres and lack of funds to replace stocks of cycles, it was failing to provide an adequate service. The funding is helping to establish new centres, replace cycles, add new cycle routes, provide marketing and promotion and train new staff.

Chairman's Chat

Jeff Jordan

National Bike Week was a great success in Norwich thanks to the Campaign.

Thousands saw our banner on City Hall, and our spot on Radio Norfolk also let people know about NBW and our events. Leaflets went out all over the city to libraries, bike shops and many other information points. Hundreds of people joined our rides throughout the week, and many people benefited from our free Dr Bike cycle safety checks at the Forum, County Hall, St John's First School fair and the UEA.

We were involved with the Century Bike Ride, with The Lord Mayor Mick Banham starting the ride, and sitting astride a penny-farthing provided by one of our members. Our information stall in the Cathedral Close had lots of enquiries.

The Bicycle Biriani gave us good publicity with our first TV appearance, on Look East. A lovely sunny evening ride was followed by a wonderful meal prepared by members.

We saw the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress again when they rode bikes for the first time for many years, and joined us on the Snowball Pedaling Picnic. Many thanks to all those members, too numerous to mention, who made all this possible.

More recently 20 youngsters enjoyed the Cycling Challenge week at the City of Norwich School, which Richard Bearman organised, helped by many members, with different rides and activities each day. So many children rely on their bikes for getting around, if only they kept this up into adult life!

Since journeys to work and study are the major cause of congestion and pollution, any initiative to reduce car use

and increase cycling must be valuable. Our next meeting is at 7.30pm on 15th Sep at the Greenhouse when we will be focusing on these issues, and we have invited a speaker from Cambridge, who is involved in these initiatives.

We have also invited employers and members of Bike User Groups from many workplaces, who have all been able to improve facilities for cyclists. The article on the Group at county hall is one example of this. It's an opportunity for all members to hear how to set up bike User Groups and how these groups have been able to influence employers and other agencies, with benefits to both staff and customers.

Consultation between employers and cyclists have been important in ensuring that any equipment provided is appropriate, like Sheffield stands instead of "wheel-grabbers", as decision makers are often not cyclists themselves. Lockers, showers and cycle storage have been provided or improved. Providing better cycling facilities fits well with many company policies as it reduces the cost of providing workplace parking, encourages staff to enjoy better health and probably all companies are keen to present themselves as environmentally sound.

Even keen cyclists may not be able to cycle every day, needing to take passengers or to have a car at work. People cycling once a week can make a major contribution to reducing traffic. Once someone cycles part of the time, they are much more likely to increase this as routes become more familiar and they realise the benefits in time, convenience, health and reduced costs.

As a reader of this newsletter you will be well aware of the issues, and probably well practised in talking to others about the merits of cycling. Please bring your ideas to the meeting and hear from other members and local employers about initiatives which work. If you can bring someone from your employment who has some responsibilities for transport issues, so much the better.

USEFUL LINKS

www.norwichcycling.fsnet.co.uk

General Cycling

(www.)

eastangliancc.org/Events.html
cyclejourneyplanner.org.uk
cycleweb.co.uk
whycycle.co.uk
bikeweek.org.uk
bikeforall.net

Miscellaneous

(www.)

biceberg.es/INGLES/index.htm Underground bike storage
onrailway.com
travelinesoutheast.org.uk/

Government/ Politics

(www.)

nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk
norfolk.gov.uk
norwichareatransport.org/
dft.gov.uk
norfolk.police.uk
broads-authority.gov.uk

Campaigning

(www.)

cyclenetwork.org.uk Cycle Campaign Network
ctc.org.uk Cyclists Touring Club
transport2000.org.uk
brake.org.uk

County Hall Bike Action Group

This Group has been active since March 2004, after a few years lying dormant. Although there are around 2000 staff at county hall, only 50 or so cycled each day. Many staff live within 3 miles, a comfortable cycling distance, and there is secure covered cycling storage in the basement area. so it seemed there was scope to encourage cycling by improving facilities and incentives. There was great pressure on parking spaces, with the county council spending £136,000 on a temporary parking surface for 126 cars in front of county hall.

Norwich Cycling Campaign decided to offer support to staff to improve conditions for cyclists, and 2 campaign members attended a first meeting. I have continued this involvement, and some staff are now campaign members. Miriam Robbins, a campaign member and past BAG member has given much help to the Group, and Ian Sankey has joined the Campaign and plays a leading role in BAG.

After a survey of staff, we identified issues which would encourage more people to cycle to work and also increase business use of bikes. The county council currently pays 23.3p per day for business use, and pressing for a fairer rate has remained one of the prime aims of BAG. Unison has also been lobbying for this, and these negotiations are ongoing.

There have been many improvements in facilities during the past 18 months, some initiated by BAG. Consultation with the group has ensured that any changes meet the real needs of cyclists. BAG has lobbied for the pool bikes, purchased but unused for a year to be brought into use, and these 10 bikes, including 4 electric bikes are now available to all county hall staff.

A second row of covered Sheffield stands has been provided on the forecourt, and a third set are due to be installed at the Annex. BAG is keen to ensure that there are enough stands to cover future needs, rather than only those cycling at present.

Little information was available about other facilities, such as lockers and showers, and many of the lockers were out of use. It is now clear how to access these lockers, which are now fully in use.

Human Resources have been supporting these moves, and their web pages on the Intranet give details to all

staff on these facilities, as well as the interest free loans for purchase of bikes and accessories.

In our initial survey, better cycling routes to County hall, including on-site was the top priority, and to this end a map is now available on the intranet of safer cycling routes, contributed by BAG members. Steps have been taken to improve safety on site by better signage and marked routes.

More dedicated cycle lanes would be helpful to the general public as well as county hall cyclists. The BAG and the county council have secured many improvements for those cycling to work, and this achievement should be celebrated. Much more needs to be done however to substantially increase cycling above the 60 people each day now using these facilities. There are many more measures which BAG has suggested and which are in the County Council's Green Travel Plan.

Clearly, a realistic payment for business use, set high enough to be an incentive is a priority. The council

predicts that this would increase their costs, and could cause problems with budgets already under pressure. No account seems to have been taken of reduced claims for car use, parking and extra time taken on short journeys into the city for Norwich based county council staff. Setting up a tax efficient bike purchase scheme would be a step forward, at no cost to the employers.



Dr Bike at County Hall

The Dr Bike session provided by Norwich Cycling Campaign and BAG during National Bike week was in great demand, with 26 bikes checked, but with no time for adjustments. If the county council were to fund regular sessions this would surely be an incentive to get bikes back into use.

The sums involved in these measures to increase cycling are small compared to the cost of car parking provision. With continued lobbying by BAG and Norwich Cycling Campaign we hope the county council, as the counties largest employer will set an example and live up to its commitments to reduce car use in the county overall.

If the council continues to consult the thriving BAG this will ensure that any measures will reflect the needs of cyclists.

More Mutterings from Matthew

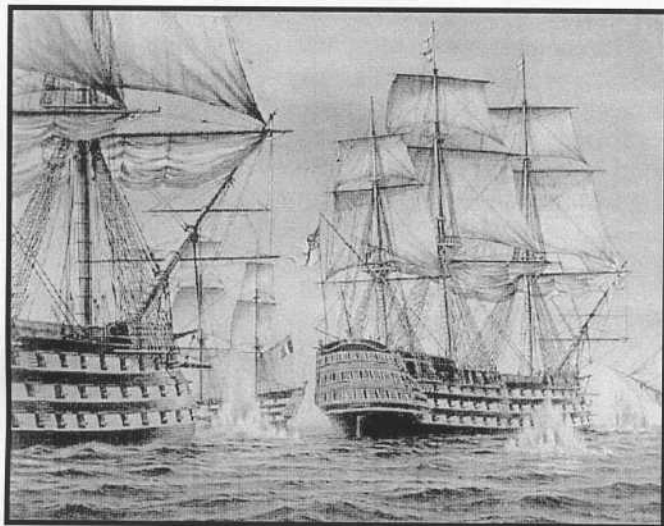


England expects...

Preparations are now well underway for a unique new monument that will commemorate one of Norfolk's finest sons. It has been discovered that the great Horatio Gunson once got stuck in a traffic jam on Norwich Inner Ring Road, and an opportunity has arisen to create a permanent memorial on a prominent site at the top of Grapes Hill. There is an

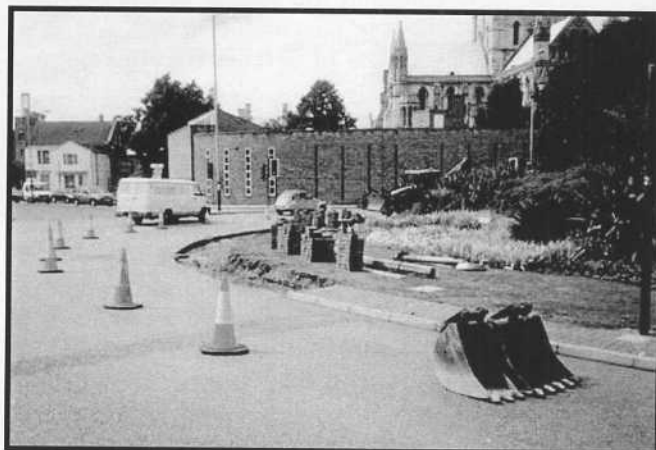
intention to make something that will cause passers-by want to pause open-mouthed, gasping for breath (obviously the design must allow for the delays so caused). It is hoped that the new landmark feature will inspire all citizens with patriotic fervour and zeal to build a new road somewhere north of Norwich, anywhere.

The existing junction between Chapelfield Road, Chapelfield North, Convent Road and Grapes Hill is to be remodelled with the widened approach arms named after the admiral's four famous battles. A key feature of the plan is an ingenious device whereby the fleet approaching from the south and east will be able to tack around a central raised area, ensuring maximum density of traffic right where it matters. It will be a flagship scheme. With a following wind and led by the flagship, the fleet will then move gracefully back the way it came before docking at the nearby shipping mall.



The central roundabout will be have its sails trimmed back but with enough landmass preserved to accommodate a large plinth upon which will be erected a column (or folly). Surrounding it will be many supplementary posts adorned with coloured lighting and explanatory motifs guaranteed to entertain all those

engaged in the writhing cacophony surrounding the central orb. The crowning glory will be a life-size figure of the admiral placed at the top of the column, depicted holding a telescope to a blind eye, with an inscription beneath "I see no bicycles."



Nibble nibble, the work begins

Local experts have warned that the actual statue will be visible only on rare occasions because of the poor air quality in the area of Grapes Hill, but PR gurus have pointed out that this could serve as a stunning representation of the immortal Lack of Vision. Indeed, county council experts have offered to further extend the scheme so that the whole city centre may benefit from noxious emissions.

In acknowledgement that the road widening will generate even more traffic and worsen breathing difficulties for locals, officials hope to incorporate on the central island a small thicket with a specially camouflaged 'Help My Self' dispenser of nasal inhalers, to be known the HMS Vick Tree.

Although construction was commenced some weeks ago, the designs are still being worked up, and this is expected to continue until some weeks after completion of the scheme. A spokesperson from County Hall said that they wanted to maintain maximum flexibility, so the use of rubberised tarmac was under consideration. She would not comment on rumours that bendy buses are also to be introduced together with compulsory limbo-dancing facilities for pedestrians.

Since the abolition of cycling as a serious transport mode, the existing red-coloured areas are either to be removed completely, or re-designated as parking bays reserved for "Admiral's Ships of the Line" (ASL). Any cyclists trying to negotiate the roundabout across the unsignalised arms are likely to be the recipients of a broadside. When this was pointed out at committee, the one complainant from the City Council side was roundly

condemned by County members as a "loose canon", with murmurings of "too many cooks ..."

County officers have explained that the wide spaces to be cleared around the folly are absolutely necessary to allow it to be presented to maximum effect. In any case these graceful swathes of tarmac will double as fine open-air car parks where families will be able to pull up amongst like-minded people and enjoy their burgers and stuff.

Meanwhile, on the good ship Modal Shift ...

As you may have gleaned from the above contrived drivel, Norwich Cycling Campaign has been commemorating the Battle of Trafalgar by an anything-but-mock engagement with the forces of County car-headedness recently. This culminated in our own epic Battle of Traf. off the coast of Grapes Hill Roundabout (that's "ficklight" rather than "algar" by the way)

Unfortunately we lost the fight, albeit heroically. We did not succeed in preserving the existing signals on the roundabout which have in recent years helped to make it useable for most cyclists. But we have honourably negotiated some concessions on other aspects of the design. This will now be based on dual on-road and off-carriageway facilities for bike users connecting between Unthank Road and the city centre.



We all know Nelson was smitten with Emma Hamilton. The County Council's "amour fou" is the blind obsession with increasing capacity for motor vehicles on the Inner Ring Road, to be pursued as a strategic priority ahead of all else, and at the expense of cyclists and pedestrians.

The notion of modal shift (encouraging car drivers to use better travel modes) is at best something just to pay lip-service to. This because those holding the power (i.e. at County rather than City Council level) just don't have any real understanding of the needs of people making local journeys in the city.

Norwich Cycling Campaign has always been critical of Norwich Area Joint Highways Committee members for the ills of Gunson's County. Previous Campaign Chairmen may have made some progress, but there can be no truth in rumours that the admiral once uttered the words 'Kiss me, Hardie...' It remains to be seen whether the old sea-dog will be able to resist the charms of Jordan. Much as we like to blame the members of the committee, the blame must also lie with the seriously outmoded approach of the senior planning and transportation management at County Hall, the director of which department is mercifully soon to retire.

Making a comeback

For some time now, rumours have been circulating that the former cycle lanes between Earlham Fiveways and UEA were planning a dramatic reappearance. You will recall that these were mercilessly erased a year or two back in favour of reallocating valuable road space to a hatched area in the middle of the road. [The only conceivable purpose for the



Fossil bike lane/logo at Earlham Road

central hatching was to make vehicle pass on-road cyclists with less space than they did previously.] Well, as you can see from the photograph, the old bike lanes are coming to the rescue, little by little, and very helpful that is too. On the other hand, if they become suddenly obliterated again in the next week or two, it does at least prove that CityCare read this august publication, which can be no bad thing.

Little time to reflect

Something CityCare clearly have no idea about is the vital importance of the last few details of a job (see "Mind the gap 2" in Newsletter 57). Last time I mentioned our despairing efforts in trying to get some reflective treatment to the barriers at West Pottergate. Even the City Council's cycling officer reckoned it was a waste of time even asking. But would you believe it? As if by magic, some unknown fairy godmother has fixed four small but perfectly formed yellow reflectors in exactly the right places to stop a nasty encounter between cyclist and the railings as the nights draw in. Their effectiveness does assume, of course, that the bike has some means of forward illumination, but you, dear sensible reader, will need no reminder to be readily equipped for the gathering gloom.



A safe finishing touch at West Pottergate

Hassling gets ASL back



Then (inset as Newsletter 57) and now.

Another little victory to report, to help justify our existence. In the last newsletter I noted the sudden removal of the advanced stop lines (ASLs) at the Bowthorpe Road-Outer Ring Road junction. They thought we wouldn't notice, did they, eh? Well, following us giving the issue a bit of dog-and-bone treatment, I'm pleased to say that we managed to persuade the County Council to reinstate these useful facilities, and they are now even redder and brighter than before. And the same goes for the ASLs as well!

Dramatic development at Carrow Road

Oh gasp. The solution to all the traffic problems on match days at a stroke! Cycle parking in the form of Sheffield stands has arrived, just in time for the matches against Sheffield United and Wednesday. You may recall the provision of a three-figure number of cycle parking spaces was a condition of the planning application for the new Jarrold stand, and ever since the stand was completed, we've been asking where the agreed cycle parking is. Premiership



The height of ambition.

fans don't arrive by bike, but now the team has been relegated to the Championship it's evidently OK. Furthermore it's probably become expedient to appease those pesky planners. So all of 21 double-sided stands have been discreetly installed. You'll have to look hard for them because they're mostly tucked out of the way behind trees to the rear of the new stand, safely out of the way of the Proton car showroom. Maybe the rest of the cycle stands will arrive once further relegation has been achieved to League 1...?

Cycling Training at George White Middle School

Schools in Norfolk are being required to produce travel plans this year to help reduce congestion and pollution, and help children to travel safely to school. Those with intentions to increase cycling are able to request funds for cycle facilities, including cycle storage. At George White Middle School in Silver Road, Norwich children wishing to cycle to school have had to book a place in the school bike stands, so up to 20 children have been cycling each day. The school will be receiving a grant for more cycle storage, so more children will be cycling in and using these spaces.

The head, Paul Stanley, often cycles to school and has been keen to encourage children to come on their bikes. It's not the easiest of journeys as most routes to the school involve a steep hill, and Silver Road is very busy with commuter traffic in the mornings. My son attended the school and my grandson has just completed his final year there. The head asked for some training to be provided, and 2 courses each for 12 children have been organised in the summer term.

I have been a volunteer at the school assisting cycle training officers from the county council on these courses, which have been fully taken up and very

successful. All the children have improved their cycling skills and knowledge, and become more aware of road safety issues during the courses. The majority of children have had a positive assessment, and the few who need further training will be included in the next course in the coming term. It seems hard to fail children who have worked to improve their skills and knowledge, but it is important not to give them message that they are fully competent to cycle on the roads in traffic until they are proficient.

It is difficult in training a group of children to expose them to realistic traffic situations in training. We try to make sure they are aware of the hazards of negotiating junctions and car doors being carelessly opened, without exaggerating these risks. The benefits to these children's health and well-being will far outweigh the risks, and the benefits can be lifelong.

I think these courses are excellent for children at the school, especially as they will be moving on to high schools, possibly further from home, and cycling to school will give them such freedom and independence.

If you would like to encourage your local school to take up this training, heads can contact Philip Archer, cycling safety officer at County Hall (Tel 01603 224202)

Jeff Jordan

What's Happening?

Come and Try It (CATI) Cycle Rides

Note that afternoon rides have a tea stop.

For further details contact the leaders - Phyll on Norwich 435547, Janet & Malcolm on Norwich 700134.

CATI rides will continue throughout the summer and autumn - see forthcoming programme.

September & October 2005

Saturday, 10 September, 2.30pm: meet Barn Road / start of Marriott's Way for ride to Ringland.

Leaders: Janet & Malcolm

Saturday, 24 September, 2.30pm: meet County Hall roundabout for ride round the Great Broad, Whitlingham Country Park.

Leader: Phyll

Saturday, 8 October, 2pm (note earlier start time): meet Sainsbury's car park (bus bay), Pound Lane, for ride to Blofield.

Leader: Phyll

Summer evening bike ride:

Tuesday 13 September The Parson Woodforde, Weston Longville

We aim to be at the pub between 7 and 7.30pm. Either meet us there or join us on a ride from Norwich. It would be helpful if you could phone us if you are definitely coming, as we will book a table.

Give us a ring on 01603 897738.

The Outsider

Sean Austin

I will be making a couple of visits to Norwich in September as Jeff has asked if I could attend the meeting on the 15th September. Fortunately I still have some leave left so the invitation has given me an incentive to use it up. I will be making a couple of day trips to Norwich during that week and I will stop over on the Thursday.

Because the public transport links between MK & Norwich aren't well joined together I considered buying a car.

But then I realised that it would not be worth the money or hassle because I would hardly ever use it for local journeys, so it would be parked in the car park most of the time, making it vulnerable to theft or vandalism. And add to that the depreciation - there are much better ways to waste 8 - 10 grand over 6 years.

I went out and bought a new Dawes Kalahari instead. Now I will be able to catch the train to Bedford (Mondays - Saturdays) and either cycle to Cambridge, or get the express coach there, and then get the train to Norwich with or without the bike.

Getting to Norwich is the easy bit, getting home is almost impossible as there are long periods between connecting trains and buses in the evening and all services seem to stop at about 2200 hours, so I will end up being stranded in Bedford if I am lucky, Cambridge or Letchworth if my luck runs out.

I am not optimistic about the Canaries attempt at encouraging their supporters to get to Carrow Road by bicycle, as I went past the National Hockey Stadium (the temporary home of MK Dons) on Saturday 20th when a game was in progress. The stadium has plenty of cycle stands around its perimeter and being near the central rail station has a main cycle route going past at least four gates - yet only about half a dozen were in use. I don't watch football but I believe that the Dons are playing the Canaries in MK on the 23rd August, it will be interesting to see how many fans of either side cycle to the event!

A cyclist was killed on a grid road at the approach to a roundabout near the central train station early in August. There will no doubt be letters in the newspaper calling for cyclists to be banned from the roads even though this is the first cycling fatality for some time as far as I am aware (there have been several incidents involving cars and HGV's on roads in and around MK, but only one tongue in cheek suggestion that cars should be banned from the grid roads (following a motorcycling fatality.)

Some readers may have noticed a slight change in the appearance of the newsletter. This is due to two things - first and foremost - the committee have decided to splash out a bit and pay for a colour cover. Secondly, I have been exploring some of the features of the software that I use to compile the newsletter and have made minor adjustments to the templates, which will, all being well, give the newsletter a more consistent appearance.

I wanted to include some pictures in this article but I didn't have time to process them, perhaps I should spend some of the money I will save by not having a car on a new digital SLR camera?

Phyll's Philosophies

'Bikes, Barriers and Breakthroughs' was the title of the CTC/CCN conference hosted by Godalming Cycling Campaign in May.

The keynote speaker was my pin-up Dr Mayer Hillman, Senior Fellow Emeritus of the Policy Studies Institute. He gave a stirring presentation on cycling and climate change. He emphasised that, before we do anything else, our first priority must be to tackle harmful carbon emissions. As suggested in his latest book, 'How we can save the Planet' (Penguin 2004), he wants to see the introduction of carbon rationing through personal credit cards which everyone would have to use to buy C-based goods and services. Cyclists would of course be among the winners. It was interesting to see that such a scheme was mentioned at the recent G8 summit - will it ever be implemented?

Phillip Darnton, chair of 'Cycling England', successor to the National Cycling Strategy Board, spoke of its mission to see 'more people cycling, more safely, more often.' Their main programme of activity will cover cycling demonstration towns, local authority support, young people, health, marketing and communications. Sue Sharp talked about the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which now covers transport and which could lead to questioning of local authorities' cycling policies, including shared use facilities. Simon Pratt of Sustrans spoke about plans for NCN route 22 between Guildford and Farnham, and other local developments. Alix Stredwick informed us about the Cycling for Women project in London, where currently only about half as many women as men cycle. Enabling and encouraging more women to cycle for transport was top of her wish list.

Other speakers included Alex Sully, formerly of the English Regions Cycling Development Team, now of Cycling England and a partner in Transport Initiatives, offering consultancy services to central and local government on sustainable transport issues; Alec McCalden of Godalming Cycle Campaign on his experiences of appearing at the A3 Hindhead tunnel public enquiry; and Will Ward, Local Transport Director for Surrey, on opportunities for cyclists in the LTP process. In his summing up, Kevin Mayne, CTC Director, reiterated the urgency to address the global threat of climate change and the need to support cyclists campaigning for better provision and recognition at local level.

The conference included the usual selection of Sunday rides. I joined one that took in some local routes - the River Wey towpath (a route which apparently goes all the way to where the river joins the Thames at Weybridge), a recently constructed railway path, and back over some hills, something we're not used to in

Norfolk. As ever, it was an excellent conference and one returns home inspired. But has anything changed since we hosted it ten years ago? I feel these conferences preach to the converted, that it is our sceptical, and in some cases obstructive, local and national politicians and council officers who should be attending, but they keep well out of the way. I think that we in Norfolk, are getting nowhere, even going backwards, while problems of too many cars, congestion and the threat of climate change due to global warming loom ever larger. Can we ever hope to see some common sense prevailing?

Next CTC/CCN conference: Saturday 12 November, hosted by Warrington Cycle Campaign.

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One of the ways we've gone backwards is by the gradual demise of the cycling forums. These were started about ten years ago by our then county cycling officer, Rob Marshall. The purpose of the forums was that they be a point of contact between local cyclists and cycling organisations, and the councils. Ideally each council district had one. I was involved with the Broadland, North Norfolk and Norwich City cycle forums. Of these Broadland was the first to founder, mainly due to lack of cyclist support. North Norfolk went down earlier this year due to lack of support by councillors and the county cycling officer. Now our own Norwich Cycle Forum has foundered, not due to lack of councillor support but to the general feeling that we were wasting our time. We'd had some excellent discussions over the years, had made recommendations and put them forward, but then very little happened. So why bother? The rejection by city and county councillors of our long awaited cycle centre, apparently due to lack of confidence in its long-term financial viability, was one of the final nails in the coffin. No such lack of confidence though in the viability of the Chapelfield car park due to open shortly, something which demonstrates neatly the brick wall of attitude we cyclists are hitting our heads against.

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One positive outcome of the recent tragic bombings in London has been the sharp rise in the number of commuters cycling there. Nervousness and disruption on public transport are given as the reasons cycle shops have reported soaring sales and demands for repairs to old bikes. On the day of the bombings, when the whole transport system closed down, bike sales went up 300 per cent as people sought means of getting home. Good old bicycle, coming up trumps in an emergency, but will this new found popularity last after all the disruption has died down?

Phyll Hardie

National Bike Week



Dr Bike outside the Forum

Lord Mayor Mick Banham and Lady Mayoress Carolyn Fenn -Snowball picnic



Matthew's leaflet dispenser



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.

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