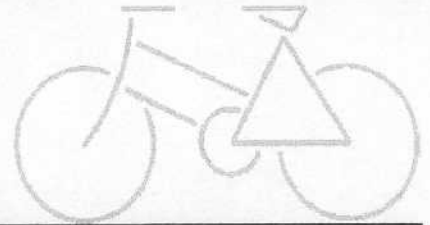


# NORWICH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

## Newsletter Number 59

December 2005- February 2006

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## Rage Against The Machine

Excerpts taken from messages posted on the Campaign's email list.

### City Cycling

**A1** I have been searching locally in vain for anyone with a more strident opinion on the car Vs. cyclist divide, having joined your campaign and read your past two newsletters you seem to be a pretty complaisant bunch, don't you do battle on the roads of Norwich every day or do you just do pub trips to Wroxham? Important as issues such as the provision of more city bike racks and improvements to cycle paths are, I feel that motorists attitudes to cyclists are the problem. Every time I use my bike I am putting my life in danger, we are treated as second class citizens and, whether it is right or wrong I feel I have to be more aggressive and obstructive in my cycling in order to defend my right to use the roads. There are no easy answers to this problem but I'd feel much happier knowing that I wasn't alone in this view or the only one who has resorted to kicking cars, shouting at taxi drivers and flyering urban 4x4's in order to cycle in safety. I'm sure I've opened up a hornets nest by posting this but it'll be interesting to hear others views.

**J** I wonder if some of the car drivers who have recently forced me off the road have just had an unpleasant encounter with you?

I can't think of any situation which has been improved by random aggression ...

There is off course much more that should be done to encourage cycling and make it safer for us all. I will stick with the political process.

### Critical Mass

**A1** Does anyone know if there are still Critical Mass bike rides in Norwich? Would anyone be interested in joining up for a mass ride round central Norwich? Maybe we could have a large slow demonstration as a show of support for the Cycling Campaign.

**P** We used to have critical mass rides around the city, back in the bad old days. But the City Council got the message and gave us some cycle facilities, such that we've given up such demos.

I just wish we could motivate the Govt to make a more realistic effort, as they do in Europe. However, Norwich Cycling Campaign do their bit by organising the CAT (Come and Try It) rides fortnightly from Easter to October - we've been doing them for 15 years now. We've managed to capture lots of 'wannabe cyclists' from among former committed motorists. I think this is the way to go about it, not get rude and aggressive. That's just puts people off and gives all cyclists a bad name.

**A2** I agree that the attitude of \*some\* motorists towards cyclists is a problem, but maybe that's due to an inferiority complex (especially with 4x4s[!]) or even just plain incompetence, so don't feel you are being victimised as a cyclist.

I'm in no doubt that most of the time [that being aggressive to a motorist] will make no difference because the driver is a selfish ... who knows no better and should be pitied. In fact, I think most of the time it will more likely confirm to the driver that they got the reaction they desperately craved and that it will be worth trying the same manoeuvre again on the next victim.

So yes, you aren't alone in your view that cyclists are treated as second class citizens by \*some\* motorists, but hey, try to chill out and set a good example to other road users. It is wrong to be more "aggressive and obstructive", but right to be more assertive, not to mention \*very\* smug when you are sailing past a line of stationary cars!

**S** [newsletter editor] I make no apologies for making the newsletter too complaisant for your liking. My personal bias is towards utility and commuter cycling in an integrated transport environment. I am an outsider so I do not know ... what outside bodies read it. I can only put in what I receive I would like to receive more articles with varying points of view from more members.

Having visited Norwich for the first time and having seen how compact it is, I cannot see why people use the bus service let alone drive in Norwich. I am sure it would be quicker (or just as quick) for most people walk or cycle in the area. Most of the cyclists I know also use a car. As someone who has owned motor vehicles in the past and has used PT recently, I know why people think they could not live without their cars.

### Commission for Transport Equality

A drive to end discrimination against cyclists by the car lobby.

Cars should be designed to leave the showroom with no lights or security.

Drivers could choose from a range of clip - on lights, and chain their car to the nearest tree for safekeeping.

Cycling on pavements by adults will be met with a punitive fine by traffic wardens, who would first issue tickets to every car in the city parked, and therefore having being driven, on the pavement.

Jeff Jordan

## Train Station Parking

An abridged excerpt from Matthews posting to the Campaign's email group.

Norfolk County Council are at it again. They want to build a bus interchange at Norwich Rail Station (that's fine), but by taking most of the space currently used for the bicycle parking (that's a disaster). The number of parking spaces would effectively halve, a few of which would be put under cover. Needless to say, none of the car parking spaces are affected by the proposals!

The main grounds for our concern are as follows:

1. Misleading representation of number of cycle parking spaces

The present provision for cycle parking provides maximum capacity (ignoring access considerations) for 110 bicycles. The proposed cycle parking provision would only have a total capacity of 52 bicycles. This represents a more than 50 per cent reduction in the cycle parking capacity. Recent daytime surveys have indicated that between 45 and 65 bicycles regularly use the existing stands. There does not seem to be any recognition that a greater amount of cycle parking is required to meet future demand .

2. False claim of 'relocation' of cycle stands

The applicant claims that the 20 double-sided stands that are to be removed will be 'relocated' to the south side of the station building. This is specious because all of the new stands shown on the application drawing are already there (15 are in place) - or have only recently been removed temporarily (accounting for at least another 10) for the area to be used as a builder's compound. The reality of the proposals is that there will be a significant net reduction in the total amount of cycle parking.

3. The proposals are in conflict with Local Plan Policy

The effect of the proposals is to encourage a modal shift AWAY FROM cycling in favour of public transport. This conflicts directly with Policy TRA3 of Norwich City Council Local Plan, and other policies which are intended to promote cycling. This regrettable and avoidable situation has arisen because the space needed for the bus interchange has been reallocated mainly from space currently dedicated for the amenity of bicycle users. To accord with adopted policy, the required space should have been reallocated from car parking space (either directly, or by conversion of car parking spaces to replacement bicycle parking).

4. The cycle parking 'relocated' to the south of the station building is not acceptable

The cycle stands along the south external wall of the station building are 'tucked away' and are perceived to be

- (a) insecure because of the lack of passive surveillance,
- (b) unsheltered and thus exposed to adverse weather,
- (c) inconvenient for bike users approaching the station from the north and west,

5. No information has been provided on design of covered shelter

Although the principle of including some covered cycle parking is welcomed, we've been given no information on the design (including height) of the proposed covers to some of the cycle stands. Lighting and personal security issues have not been represented adequately in the application drawings.

We are not in any way opposed to the concept of the proposed bus interchange, but we cannot support it until the proposal's adverse impacts on cycling parking are fully mitigated. This has been the consistent view we have expressed from the outset.



Composite view of existing main cycle park. Photographed 09.11.05/1400hrs. Counted occupancy 75 bicycles + 7 motorcycles (also 5 bicycles + 6 motorcycles on south site).

**STOP PRESS!**  
SEE MATTHEWS  
ARTICLE ON  
PAGE 9 FOR AN  
UPDATE ON THE  
STORY

## Bug Meeting

Norwich Cycling Campaign's 'Bicycle User Groups (BUGS) and working with employers' open meeting was held on Thursday 15 September at The Greenhouse.

Jon Osborne, Norwich City Council's Sports Development officer reported on 'Fit City', a health and fitness initiative at City Council involving stepometer trials, Bike Week events, Bike2Work and the Bikes4work - a scheme that allows people to buy bikes from their employer and benefiting from tax-free saving 35%. The City Council also intends to improve existing facilities with changing rooms to be put in and the cycle shed to be tidied up and install a noticeboard.

The problem of where cyclists could keep their spare clothes etc was discussed. Lockers could be a problem if keys were not returned rendering lockers useless. It was suggested that swimming pool type lockers, which have a coin operated or swipe card system. Another option would be to charge a deposit on keys and keep a register of users.

UEA have been able to make a lot of improvements because they have a paid transport co-ordinator. This includes covered cycle parking, raising awareness of cycling and a mileage allowance of 25p per mile. Bike theft and vandalism is still a big problem at UEA. Car parking permits have been taken away from those living within one mile.

Jeff Jordan produced a map showing cycling times and distances from County Hall. This could be produced for other workplaces.

County Hall currently has a scheme where employees are not allowed to use the car park for 1 day each month. This may be increased to 1 day every 2 weeks.

David Cumming of Norfolk County Council raised the issue of people needing to estimate their cycle mileage if they did not have a cycle computer although this would not cause great problems. (Drivers estimate mileage at times after forgetting either to use their trip milometer or to record it at the time.) It was suggested that a flat rate be paid for all forms of transport.

Michael Dale of the Valuation Office Agency at the Inland Revenue said that the Inland Revenue pay 12p/mile mileage rate although rate allowed is 20p/mile.

It was mentioned that cycling makes people fitter and more likely to turn up for work and also reduces the amount that needs to be spent on maintaining car parking spaces. Some employers offer free insurance for people using their bike for work through CTC.

Wish list to encourage people to cycle to work:-

- ✓ Secure, well-sited cycle parking
- ✓ Dr Bike held at work place
- ✓ Cycle maintenance sessions for employees
- ✓ Employers to provide free bike repairs, in conjunction with local bike shops
- ✓ Cycle proficiency for adults
- ✓ Bike buddies
- ✓ Encourage senior managers and directors to cycle more and act as role models.
- ✓ Route planning - produce a map highlighting the best and 'safest' routes. Better signposting
- ✓ Modal priority make cycle and pedestrian access a priority
- ✓ Design roads for people, not bikes, pedestrians or cars.



The meeting in progress

### Secure locker facility in City Centre?

Jamie Wayland would like to set up a cycle centre in Norwich, providing secure parking. He would be interested to know what other members think of the idea and if they were to use it, what facilities would they like to see. He can be contacted by email: [thejamiew@hotmail.com](mailto:thejamiew@hotmail.com), or by post: Cycle Locker, 75 Denton Road, Norwich, NR3 4DP

### Local School an example to others

The Evening News website reported on the 11th November on a local school which is being held as a good example of how to encourage more children to cycle or walk to school for other schools throughout the country to follow.

Hillside Avenue Primary School created a school exercise plan to deal with concerns about poor parking at the front of the school. The school tried a walking bus scheme but that proved impractical at the time and was abandoned. But at the same time children were encouraged to cycle to school. Now 70% of the school's pupils cycle there.

