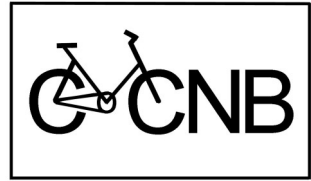


Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



Bedford High Street c.1914 - With pedestrians and cyclists as it could be in the future

Newsletter No 59

February 2011

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

Committee

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Campaigning Representation

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

- Bedford Cycle Strategy Group
- Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership Forum

and is a key stakeholder on the preparation and implementation of the:

- Bedford Green Wheel
- Bedford Stations Travel Plan
- Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

It is affiliated to the following organisation:



(previously Cycling Campaign Network - CCN)

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Editorial

This year is the start of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 (page 25). Although Bedford or indeed Great Britain do not have the most dangerous roads in the World - the honours go to Kenya and Costa Rica - we do still have a high rate of deaths and seriously injured, particularly amongst children and other vulnerable people.

Speed of traffic on our roads nearly always comes out top in the priorities set by Local Community Safety Forums (page 21) and is one of the main factors that deters potential cyclists. It is for this reason that CCNB and the national cycling organisations, CTC and cyclenation alongside numerous other organisations have for a number of years been calling for a lower speed limit of 20mph not only around schools but for all residential roads as already found in most European towns and cities. Its impact will not only significantly reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries, but will encourage more residents to cycle and walk to give more safe, sociable and healthy communities.

In December 2009, world leaders at the Copenhagen UN Climate Change Conference missed the opportunity to realise a global deal on carbon emissions. One year on in December 2010, a further conference in Cancun, Mexico was hailed by the UK government as a 'significant' step forward, with nations agreeing, as at the previous conference that average world temperatures should not be allowed to rise more than two degrees Centigrade. It was decided to have a green climate fund to share new technology, help conserve forests and ease the stresses on the poorest counties but not how to deliver it.

In the meantime global carbon emission estimates for 2010 are expected to increase by at least 3%, more than the average increase for the past decade. At this rate the result will be runaway climate change with ecological devastation and potential social breakdown.

More people cycling, more often, particularly for that short trip, will help reduce carbon emissions but will make only an extremely small step towards the overall target. At least it is in the right direction.

In a report on what makes a successful Cycle Town (page 22), it is believed that Bedford meets most of the criteria cited.

Cycling is still on the increase (pages 13 and 25) and it will be interesting to eventually see the results of the 2011 Census (page 7). To try and persuade non-cyclists or those that only cycle occasionally to cycle more often, CCNB has revamped its promotional website www.cyclebedford.org.uk. Please take a look at it and in the meantime good luck with your cycling during 2011.

Priory Country Park Cycle Access Improvement



Cycling between Priory Country Park and Priory Business Park has been made much easier, particularly for those with tandems or bicycles with trailers, by the long awaited introduction of bollards to replace the previous kissing gate type.

Friday 8 April 2011 at 7.30 pm
Friends Meeting House 5 Lansdowne Road Bedford

‘Borough’s Active Travel Strategy’

Presentation by Peter Knight

Cycling Development Officer

followed by

CCNB Annual General Meeting

This is a chance to meet other members and to find out what is happening on the cycle scene in the Bedford area.

Please put the date in your diary.

Cycle Schemes to be Commenced Shortly

The Borough has indicated that the following three schemes are planned to be carried out by the end of the financial year (31 March 2011):-

- Upgrade of shared use footpath and cycle track from Cauldwell Street to Hastingsbury School in Kempston.
- Woburn Road opposite the station will be made two way for cycles but will remain one way for other vehicles.
- The south side footpath on Goldington Road from Polhill Avenue to near Riverfield Drive (Tesco) is to be converted into a shared use path. This is the completion of work first started by the Highways Agency in the late 1990s.
- A toucan crossing to allow a safe crossing of Williamson Road Kempston on the National Cycle Network Route 51 between the Saxon Centre and Hastingsbury School.

RAF Cardington Development - Section 106

As part of the Section 106 agreement for the development of the RAF Cardington site the developer has agreed to encourage Active Travel (cycling and walking) between the site and Bedford by carrying out a number of cycling infrastructure works. Two are currently underway.

On Bedford Road Cardington the west side path is being upgraded to a two metre wide dual use cycle/pedestrian track between Harrowden Lane and Smeaton Bridge. Unfortunately due to the narrow historic bridge the track will not join up at present to the existing track around the Cardington Road roundabout,

On the A600 between the Cambridge Road roundabout and Tinkers Hill Shortstown the path is being upgraded to give a two metre wide cycle/pedestrian dual use track.

High Street Trial Closure Success

For this last year's Victorian Christmas Fair, the opportunity was taken of having a three day trial closure of the High Street with activities all the way from St Peters to St Paul's Square. The closure was a success with very little traffic congestion on the alternative routes. It is hoped that further trial closures will take place with the view in the long term to permanently close the street to non-essential traffic allowing both the regeneration of the street and the creation of a two way north south cycle route.

See cover of this newsletter for picture of pedestrians and cyclists safely using the High Street in circa 1914.

Census 2011

The latest census, conducted once in a decade, for England and Wales is due to take place on 27 March 2011 and everybody will shortly receive a questionnaire to fill in and post back to the Office for National Statistics or to complete securely online.

The data from the exercise are used for numerous purposes such as planning of houses, schools, hospitals and roads for our communities.

For cyclists the interest will be to see how cycling has fared since 2001 in the question 'How do you usually travel to work' - i.e. the mode for the longest portion of the journey. In addition there will be a question on 'Address of place of work' to show the destination of individual journeys in relation to the usual address to identify commuter routes.

In the 2001 census cycling was the main method of travelling to work for more than 650,000 people between the ages of 16 and 74. This represented 2.9% nationally. The urban area of Bedford at 6.0% was in the top ten percent of districts for cycling for those who travelled to work. The top ten wards were:

Kempston South	7.9%
Kempston East	7.5%
De Parys	7.5%
Kingsbrook	7.1%
Castle	6.8%
Newnham	6.4%
Kempston North	6.4%
Queens Park	6.2%
Goldington	5.9%
Brickhill	5.7%

There is still a long way to go however to reach Cambridge at 25.7%. Other results of interest were:

Oxford	15.8%
York	15.2%
Hull	11.0%
Peterborough	8.9%
Milton Keynes	3.5%
Luton	1.9%

Cycling is now on the increase with the UK bicycle industry stating that in 2010 it was valued at more than £1.5 billion. The increase has been due in some small measure to the government's Cycle to Work initiative which it is estimated has had more than 400,000 users since the start in 1998. More recently the recession has turned people to cycling as a cheaper mode of transport to the motor car or public transport and of course the success of cyclists at the 2008 Olympics.

Cycle Path Obstruction - Update

Although CCNB managed to have a planning application refused for the installation of a telephone mast and two cabinets within a cycle/pedestrian track in Brickhill Drive (see Newsletter No 58), a further application has been allowed.

The original application would have resulted in a 30% reduction in the width of the path for a distance of about 8 metres and created a potential safety hazard for the people who use it. The new application has the mast and cabinets on the edge of the path on the opposite side to the earlier application but still on the path. Due to the presence of a nearby lamppost, also on the path, it is believed it will create an unnecessary 'chicane' for cyclists at this point. The only condition attached to the approved application was that the cabinet doors should face away from the cycle/pedestrian track.

Clapham Footpath 24 - Update

The old carriageway between Hawk Drive Brickhill and Green Lane Clapham is currently a footpath (FP 24) but has been used by cyclists for at least 40 years.

With the passing of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act in 2006 it was possible to claim a way as a 'Restricted Byway' if there was evidence that cyclists had used the route for (normally) 20 years. Consequently CCNB lodged an application in July 2006 with Bedfordshire County Council (BCC) to have FP 24 converted to a 'Restricted Byway'. After nearing completion of the case by BCC it was passed to the Borough to complete when it became a Unitary Authority. A report is expected shortly on whether or not it has been proven.

In the meantime one of the landowners last November placed notices on both ends of the track stating that no cycling was allowed.

School Bike It Success

Goldington Middle School on 14 January 2011 was awarded Sustrans Bike It Bronze School Mark which is awarded to schools that work in partnership to 'bring about some organisational, cultural and behavioural changes that help to support pupils in cycling to school.'

Staff and students in conjunction with Richard Noon, Sustrans Bike It Officer, have worked hard over the last two years to increase the number of cyclists from just a handful to more than 70 during the warmer months. Richard said:

'Achieving the Mark means that they will be able to keep the momentum going into the future and embed cycling into the culture of the school.'

Bunyan Road/Bedford Road Kempston Junction Re-instatement

The work on the re-instatement of the diagonal crossing at this busy junction, part of Route 51 was finally completed and the new toucan crossing switched on on 5 November 2010.

The original loop activated cycle crossing was disconnected when the junction was re-surfaced in January 2009. Unfortunately the cycle track markings were not removed making it a potential safety hazard for cyclists still trying to cross at this point.

CCNB has been campaigning for its re-instatement since this time and is pleased to see the completion of this scheme.

As well as the crossing itself there are also Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) at all four arms on the junction for on-road cyclists together with a short on-road lane on Bedford Road from just before Stuart Road to the junction. Halfway between is another toucan crossing to allow cyclists from Stuart Road to safely cross over at this point to the Route 51 on the north side (see photograph below)



Further work on Route 51 is due to be carried out by the end of the financial year (see page 6).

St Neots Road - Pegasus Crossing Now Open

After eight months since the work started the crossing on the A428 St Neots Road, just east of the Norse Road roundabout, was finally opened on 15 October 2010 following the completion of the bridge across Renhold Brook. This now allows a safe crossing of the busy road to get to the hard surfaced bridleway to the Riverside Circular Track and the Bedford to Sandy Route 51.



Park Avenue Re-surfacing

Part of Park Avenue was re-surfaced between Foster Hill Road and St Andrews Road during October 2010. Some of the line markings have still not been redone making it less safe for cyclists and others emerging from Bedford Park West Lodge entrance.

CCNB is chasing this up with the Borough as a matter of urgency.

Bedford Borough Council Cycle Allowance

It has been confirmed that the cycle allowance for council employees from 1 April 2011 will be 50p per journey as per previous years when undertaking approved journeys.

Borough's Green Travel Plan

Following on from the Borough Council's adoption of its first Green Office Guide in September 2010 (see CCNB Newsletter No 58) the council is now considering a Green Travel Plan.

A Position Statement on the best practice in Green Travel Plans, particularly for local authorities was presented to the Borough's Environmental Regeneration and Corporate Services Committee in November 2010. A Green Travel Plan, it was stated, is a package of measures tailored to the needs of individual sites or organisations aimed at promoting cleaner and greener travel choices and reducing reliance on vehicles using fossil fuels. The plan addresses different travel types within an organisation such as commuter journeys, business travel, visitor travel, deliveries, contractors and fleet vehicles. It is up to individual organisations to decide which travel types are relevant to their organisation and which ones they wish to target.

After some debate the Committee noted that it may be possible to begin work on a Green Travel Plan in Spring/Summer 2011 after allowing for harmonisation of staff terms and conditions to be completed as well as the proposal to introduce charges for staff car parking following the Government enforced spending cuts.

Green Travel Plan Best Practices

A plan must have a clear defined strategy based on communications, delivery and resources.

It must be endorsed at the most senior level with a clear commitment from the Executive and Members and normally a champion to drive its implementation.

Current travel behaviour and attitudes to alternative forms need to be obtained initially to determine which initiatives would have the greatest benefit.

Marketing is a key part, particularly where behavioural change is being sought.

Monitoring on a regular basis to determine its progress, identifying problem areas and initiating corrective measures to ensure target are met.

Scope for Cycling

Safer and better quality cycle routes, showers and changing facilities, lockers at key locations, good quality secure cycle parking at council sites, cycle training, cyclists' breakfasts/Bicycle User Group (BUG), assisted bicycle purchase scheme, pool bicycles and cycle maps.

It was noted that some of the above are currently available for Council staff and visitors.

Bedford Station Car Parking Charges Increase Again

First Capital Connect raised its car parking tariff at Bedford Railway Station on 1 January 2011 by an average of 8.5%. This includes the 2.5% increase in VAT which took place on the same day. It was only in June 2010 that the cost of parking had been previously increased (see Newsletter No 58).

This makes an average increase across the car parking tariffs of 10.6% since 4 January 2010. With increases in petrol over the last few months as well, it is time for those non-cyclists who live a short distance away to consider cycling to the station, if they are able, to join the 300 to 400 commuters who already do so. Cycling to the station could save you between £1300 and £1768 per annum simply in car parking charges alone and would go a long way towards meeting the accompanying increase in train fares.

Bedford Station Improvements!

CCNB was disappointed to find that work on Bedford Midland Station forecourt over the weekend of 6/7 November 2010 had resulted in the loss of 50 cycle spaces to make room for the re-allocation of the motor cycle stands. This was at a time when further stands not less will be required to cater for the growing number of cycling commuters.

A First Capital Connect spokesman has said the cycle stands at least to the same level as before will be re-installed before the 2011 peak summer cycle season.

Allocations and Designations Plan

The Pre-Submission draft of the Allocations and Designations Plan will be considered by the Borough Executive on 16 March 2011 and will then be published for a further six weeks' consultation prior to a submission to the Secretary of State for approval in July 2011.

Cycle Contra-Flows

The Department for Transport is to change its signing rules during 2011 to make it easier for local authorities to allow cyclists to travel in both directions along streets that have been converted to one way. Until recently councils have been expected to build expensive engineering measures to create a dedicated contra-flow cycle lane at the entrance to a one way street.

The rule will be amended to allow existing 'No Entry' signs to have an 'except cyclists' to be added as is common practice in many European countries.

Cycling England and Bikeability

Cycling England (CE) was one of the 192 government agencies scrapped in the 'bonfire of the quangos' announced last October and will be disbanded on 31 March 2011.

'Bikeability', the flagship national cycle training scheme, administered by CE will be taken in house by the Department for Transport (DfT) where it is claimed, as for other quangos abolished, that it will be more accountable and open.

A budget for Bikeability has been guaranteed to the end of the current parliament in 2014. However a recent poll by Ipsos/Mori for the DfT has shown that the scheme is extremely popular with both parents and children and should help persuade ministers that it is worth continuing.

A total of 98% of parents were pleased with the scheme and 92% believed that it had improved the road safety of their children who had taken one of the courses.

The full report of the study can be seen on www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/cycling/bikeabilitytraining/pdf

The Government has indicated that in future, local authority cycling schemes will be supported through a 'Local Sustainable Transport Fund'

A Cycling England board member has said that 'If the Government is to build on the last five years success in getting more people cycling, it will need to do more than simply allocate grants. CEs experience is that in order to get results, you need to cut through the red tape, and really support, engage, enthuse and challenge. You need to combine the energy and passion of the cycling non-government organisations with the expertise of professional local authority teams; you need to share ideas and experience, and you need visionary leadership.'

Norman Baker, the junior transport minister, has said that a paper will be issued within the next few weeks.

National Cycle Network - Route Usage 2009

In 2009 the National Cycle Network carried 407 million walking and cycling trips, 209 million by bike. This was a like for like increase of nearly 6% on the previous year and since monitoring was started in 2000, a 400% increase in cycling.

Sustrans research has shown that the network was used by 1.5 million cyclists of which 11% were new to, or returning to, cycling. Nearly a quarter of all the journeys, 95 million, were commuting trips. Women users increased at a greater increase than male users.

Local Transport Plan

An exhibition took place in the Harpur Suite during November 2010 which featured revised schemes for the Town Centre West, High Street, The Riverside and Station Quarter as well as seeking views on the Borough's Local Transport Plan (LTP3). For the rural areas a Roadshow Bus visited 46 villages over a two week period. The responses from the feedback of the public consultation which closed on 13 December 2010 are being analysed.

In the meantime a meeting of the Local Transport Forum, of which CCNB is a member, was held on the 13 December 2010. The slides of the presentations together with a Non-Technical Summary of the Draft Environmental Report and the Draft LTP3 Strategy can be found on the website under:

www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/transport_policy.aspx

The transport strategy for Bedford Borough will focus on the following five key principles:

- Encouraging Modal Shift
- Promoting Accessibility
- Encouraging the links between health and active travel
- Reducing the environmental impact of transport within the climate change and carbon reduction agenda
- Maintaining the asset

The Draft LTP3 Strategy document being developed includes 8 key supporting strategies:

- Active Travel Strategy
- Freight Strategy
- Network Management Strategy
- Parking Strategy
- Passenger Transport Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy for Schools (SMOTS)
- Transport Asset Management Plan Strategy

The need for a Transport Policy can be summed up by one of the conclusions of the draft Environmental Report which states:

The emphasis of Bedford's transport objectives is to ensure that transport provision improves accessibility for all, provides a greater choice of transport modes, improves health and quality of life, reduces congestion and emissions and promotes economic development.'

The final LTP3 document is to be considered by BBC Executive Committee on 9 February 2011 and will then be approved by the Full Council to enable it to be in place by 1 April 2011.

Citizens Panel

The Bedford Citizens Panel were consulted last June as part of the consultation process for the Local Transport Plan and of the 53% who responded to the priorities for investment to **reduce congestion**, 'make better/more use of sustainable modes of transport' came top with 61% and 'improve cycle routes' came fifth in the comments.

For difficulties in **Accessing Services** 'poor cycle routes' came fifth.

'Lower speed limits in some areas', for example, residential areas, town centre and outside schools came top for **Road Safety** with 43% while for **Environmental impact of traffic** 'provide more cycle and pedestrian facilities at key destinations' came second at 58% after 'reduce impact of traffic from the town centre' at 70%.

When asked what would encourage them to cycle the replies were:

More off-road cycle routes	58%
Secure cycle parking	53%
Safer better lit cycle routes	46%
Better information on cycle routes	30%
Better cycle route signage	29%
Discounts to purchase bicycles/equipment	21%
Cycle training	12%
None of the above	23%

When asked which mode of transport do you use to travel around the Borough the replies for the bicycle were:

Already use	33%
Would use regularly	9%
Would consider using occasionally	23%
Would not consider using	22%
Don't know/NA	13%

Additional comments were made by a number of respondents:

- Safer cycling routes (17)
- Improve/increase cycle paths/routes (14)
- Prevent cyclists riding on pavements (13)
- Off road cycle routes - do not feel safe on roads (11)
- Continuous cycle routes/problems at junctions (11)

One respondent however summarised the consultation as follows:

*"The identification of issues, and the creation of aims is easy, anyone can write down the things we would all like
Nothing is said as to how the strategy will be implemented.
You spend a fortune on collecting and analysing data,
but nothing ever comes out that actually achieves anything.
Stop collecting opinion and do something....."*

A421 New Dual Carriageway Now Open

The new dual carriageway from the M1 Junction 14 to the Bedford Southern Bypass was officially opened on Wednesday 1 December 2011. The new road has a number of bridges and underpasses along the route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders including an underpass for the eventual new course of the National Cycle Network Route 51 and the Bedford and Milton Keynes Canal.

At the new Marsh Leys elongated roundabout and overpass for the A421 (see photograph below) the Toucan crossings which were put in place during the construction phase no longer exist. It is now not as safe as it was for cyclists on the cycle track around the roundabout to get across the A421 slip roads, particularly during busy periods such as the rush hours although both roads from the A421 are signal controlled for vehicles.



Wixams Railway Station

A planning application has been submitted to the Borough for the proposed Wixams railway station. The application is available for public inspection under the number 10/02805/MAF.

If approved it is expected to be completed by the end of 2014. It will have cycle parking, bus access and car parking for up to 600 vehicles.

Bedford Stations Travel Plan

A number of stakeholders including CCNB, have been working away for the last two years on a Travel Plan for Bedford Midland and Bedford St Johns railway stations. The final document is about to be signed off by the Portfolio Holder for Environment, DSD and External Trading.

A soft launch of the plan is provisionally due to take place at Bedford Midland station on Tuesday 15 March 2011 between 6 and 11 am.

It is also expected to launch at the same time the new contra-flow for cyclists in Woburn Road at the junction with Ashburnham Road. This is one of the main routes to the station for commuters and for the last 10 metres is currently 'No Entry' into Ashburnham Road for all vehicles including cyclists. Over the years many cyclists have been caught cycling through this point. The construction of the cycle contra-flow is expected to be carried out during the February half term holiday.

Bedford Station Quarter South (The Focus Site)

Although the development of the full station quarter is now in abeyance due to the recession and the cancelling of the new Bedford station until at least 2018 it is still proposed to carry out development of the Bedford Station Quarter South site which currently still contains the redundant Focus store with the remainder having been converted by the Borough into a car park.

At the November 2010 Town Centre Exhibition (see page 14) visitors were asked for their views on how the site should be developed. Walking and cycling routes through the site was voted the seventh most important land use preference by respondents to the exhibition and website consultation.

Signalled Crossing Improvements

A review is being carried out by the Borough of all Pelican, Puffin, Toucan and Pegasus crossings to see if changes in the signal timings can be made to reduce the average waiting times for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly for families with young children, without any significant delays to road traffic.

In the urban area there are currently nearly 60 signalled crossings and it is expected to be able to amend approximately two thirds.

Crossings:

- **Pelican/Puffin** - for pedestrians - cyclists **MUST** walk across
- **Toucan** - for pedestrians and cyclists
- **Pegasus** - for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
- **Zebra** - uncontrolled for pedestrians - cyclists **MUST** walk across.

A Tandem in the Moselle Valley - Bill and Jean Tordoff

Anyone whose interest in the Moselle valley was aroused by reading Janet and Neville Hobday's account of their package tour in 2010 (see CCNB Newsletter No 58) might be interested in our impressions of the area the year before, when we organised our own tour of nearly three weeks, getting to the area on the European Bike Express coach.

Our drop-off point was Thionville, a French town on the Moselle cycle path. Lunchtime on the first day's cycling brought our first memorable moment. We stopped outside a restaurant where we did a double-take as we realised that the menu was in German, and that, without knowing it, we had crossed one of the most significant international borders in Europe, between two powers who had been at each others' throats for a thousand years and we had never even noticed it: no officials, no signs, no flag, not even a line across the cycle path.

But before we could even take out our German dictionary to express our amazement, we were collared by two old men who insisted that we cross the Moselle to eat with them in Remich on the other bank. As we wheeled the bike off the ferry we noticed on the side a large notice urging Germans to cross to Luxembourg, where shopping was cheaper: this could only mean that within an hour we had just crossed yet another frontier and were now in Luxembourg. By now our minds were bogging in several languages.

After lunch we set off along the Luxembourg side of the river on a well-used cycle path. Here a language problem arose. I'm the sort of chap who likes to greet folk in a cheery Yorkshire way, but I was doubtful how to address the cyclists whom we met here. As a schoolboy in WW2 I had learned the usual indispensable French phrases about the pen of my aunt and the garden of my uncle, and I had also opted to study German in the unlikely event of being captured by the Gestapo, so I felt equipped to address anyone in their own tongue. But how to identify them? Eventually I decided to address those male holiday-makers stripped to the waist in true "Strength Through Joy" mode with a hearty "Guten Morgen!" and to reserve "Bon jour!" for wearers of black berets, black-and-white maillots and strings of onions, while treating everyone else to a matey "Hi!". I must admit that we were rarely favoured with more than a curt nod in return, and I had to dissuade my stoker from shouting abuse at the one or two who replied with what she swore was the equivalent of "The one at the back isn't pedaling" in Luxembourgish.

We stayed at a variety of hotels and pensions which we had booked online. Our first night was at a pleasant hotel in Nittel, but unfortunately there was a noisy wine festival including stalls and dodgems in the grounds of the hotel, so it was well after midnight before we finally fell

asleep. Our next hotel, in Trier, stood right next to the cycle path and the river as they passed under the old Roman Bridge. At the pension in Zell, the maid told us that she came from Kryrgyzstan (“It is a beautiful country”) to improve her German (“Germany is also a beautiful country”).

At Treis-Karden we paid over the odds to stay in the luxurious Schloss Petry hotel where we found ourselves in a suite including two large bedrooms. We still have the card from our breakfast table proclaiming that “Dieser Tisch ist reserviert für Fam - Tordorf” [*sic*].

In Cochem the pension was a working vineyard, and the vine-clad hillside outside our window was so vertiginous that it blocked out the sky. Our Koblenz hotel stood on a built-up corner of the station square and we were half-prepared to be told there was no space for the tandem, but the manager helped us manoeuvre it into a corridor. When I congratulated him on his immaculate English he confessed “Well, old boy, I was a NATO spokesman for many years”.

A cyclist whom we had spoken to on our outward journey had assured us that we would have no problem taking the bike on a train or boat. The first time we tested this was on the day between Trier and Bernkastel-Kues, when I had planned a stage of over 40 miles. As the temperature was pushing 40 degrees, we decided to halve our day's cycling by using the river. This turned out to be simplicity itself: we simply bought tickets for a cruise boat and wheeled the laden tandem aboard, free of charge, alongside several other bikes.

On a Sunday morning three days later came the opportunity to test the alleged ease of using the train. While loading up before leaving the Schloss Petry we discovered that a rough track the previous day had shaken two bolts from the rear carrier, which was hanging on precariously. After failing to make a temporary repair we remembered that our hotel was opposite the train station. Again: no problem. An hourly service runs daily, including Sundays, between Thionville and Koblenz. A local helped us to buy tickets and assured us that bikes go free. When the double-decker train pulled in, both the large cycle compartments looked full, but other cyclists helped haul the loaded tandem on board.

Our fondest memories of the tour are the old towns of Trier, Koblenz and Luxembourg. Our first day in Trier was spent wandering round the pedestrianised centre admiring colour-washed half-timbered houses with their elaborate baroque carvings, as well as several Roman buildings. The impressive Roman Baths still stand, as do the Imperial Throne Room and the Porta Nigra, a large Roman building which used to house the city gates. Looking at such awe-inspiring structures, one can't help feeling embarrassed by those BBC archaeological programmes where people like Tony Robinson squeal with excitement

as they dig up what just might be a rare fragment of Roman pottery.

Koblenz is another city full of historic buildings and monuments. During WW2 it was heavily bombed by the Allies, and a brass plaque in one of the squares commemorates the fire-raid of November 6th, 1944, when the Royal Air Force destroyed 80% of the town centre. So you find yourself looking at a building which a guide is telling you was built in 1350 and destroyed in 1944, and you have to wonder in what sense it is the real thing. In another square a column depicting the town's history during the last 2000 years includes a menacing mushroom of smoke near the top which serves as another grim reminder of the war.

After the memorable antiquities of Trier and Koblenz, we were looking forward to spending the last day of our trip looking round Thionville, the only large French town on our route. However, the charming girl in the deserted Tourist Information Office had to concede that Thionville simply isn't a tourist town: no pleasure boats on the river, and nothing else except for an art-gallery and museum which only open for two hours a week.

Our holiday looked as if it was going to end in anticlimax, at least as far as memorable towns went, until we went to the station, and little over 30 minutes after leaving Thionville we were gliding in a TGV on the last lap of its journey from Paris into the heart of Luxembourg city, where we spent an enjoyable day before returning to our hotel and awaiting the Bike Bus for our return journey.

European Bike Express: 3 Newfield Lane, South Cave.HU15 2JW.

www.bike-express.co.uk. Tel: 01430 422111

The map we used was a 1:150.000 (1 inch = 2+ miles) cycle-touring map No. 19, Saarland-Mosel, published by ADFC (the German equivalent of the CTC).

We booked our hotels etc on 'Booking.com'

There are cruises every day from most of the towns such as Trier, Cochem, Traben-Trarbach, Wasserbillig and Koblenz, though you need to check the timetables in advance if you're planning to use them as part of your itinerary.

myjourney - Central Beds Draft LTP3

myjourney is the name given to Central Bedfordshire's Local Transport Plan which is currently being prepared for adoption by 31 March 2011.

The draft document including the strategies for Cycling, Road Safety and Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools and Colleges (SMTSC) can be seen on the website:

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/policy/LTP/what-it-says.aspx

Consultation is open until Friday 11 February 2011.

Speeding and 20mph Update

Bedford Borough Mayor, Dave Hodgson, reported to the Environment Committee at their meeting last November that during visits around the Borough, speeding had been raised as a priority in all of the villages and by 17 of the 18 Community Safety Forums. As a result speeding was now one of the top priorities of the Community Safety Partnership in relation to tackling anti-social behaviour.

Following on from this the Mayor advised that he was considering areas for reduced speed limits and had asked officers for a position statement on 20mph limits in addition to seeing whether a 20mph speed limit was appropriate for the areas outside Borough schools.

Latest 20mph Reports

The **London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine** has carried out a study of casualties from 1986 to 2006 that gives powerful evidence for the success of 20mph speed zones in London. The following benefits were found:

- Overall casualties reduced by 41%
- Deaths and serious injuries to children reduced by half
- Pedestrian injuries reduced by one third
- Cycling casualties down 17%
- In areas adjacent to 20mph zones casualties also fell 8%
- 20mph zones saved over 200 casualties per year, including 27 killed or seriously injured.

The full report can be seen on the British Medical Journal site:

www.bmj.com/content/339/bmj.b4469.full

Scientists at **Royal Holloway, University of London**, have found, based on measuring the perceptual acuity of children in primary schools, that at this age children have difficulty in judging the speed of vehicles travelling above 20mph.

Anna Semlyen, campaign manager for 20's Plenty for Us said:

'We can't address child road safety by simply teaching them to pay more attention. It's up to adult society to protect families through 20mph limits where people live, and for drivers to obey these limits.'

At the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety's (PACT) Westminster Lecture last November, Professor Danny Dorling of the **University of Sheffield** evidenced that road deaths today are the greatest avoidable public health epidemic. Once it was open sewers, then tobacco, now roads must be recognised as the nation's major killer to be tackled. Dorling said:

'Introducing 20mph is the most cost effective way to improve quality of life in Britain today.'

Making a Cycle Town

It was confirmed in the Government's Spending Review announced last October that Cycling England (CE) would be disbanded at the end of the financial year on 31 March 2011 although funding for Bikeability, the National cycle training scheme, would be maintained until at least the end of the current parliament in 2014 although at a lower level.

One of the last acts of CE has been to publish, via the Department for Transport (DfT), a report on a Qualitative Survey of what makes a **Cycling Town**.

It was in October 2005 that CE granted 'Cycling Demonstration Town' CDT status to six towns with funds from the DfT for three years to enable a travel behaviour change programme to be set up to increase cycling for short urban trips through the introduction of both infrastructure and Smarter Choice measures.

The programme aimed to learn about the relative impact of different types of measures in different local contexts, as well as about best practice implementation of the most effective measures to enable other local authorities and stakeholders to learn from the projects and make the case for further investment in cycling.

In June 2008 further funding was committed for a further three years to March 2011. At the same time the creation of eleven new Cycling Towns and England's first Cycling City was announced.

The survey reported, based on the experiences and impact from the six towns between 2005 and 2009, that the programme had been a major success in getting *more people cycling, more safely, more often* with an average increase in cycling of 27% thus contributing to seven of the Government's key objectives - Health, Transport and Economic benefits.

It is believed that this success can be replicated in any town or city given two crucial criteria:

- Consistent political leadership and a determination to champion sustainable travel
- Sustained investment over time.

One of most valuable lessons learnt was that before a decision to install or improve cycle infrastructure is made, cycling will only increase if a coherent plan focused on an understanding of the following three things is made:

- **People** - who can be persuaded to take up cycling?
- **Place** - where do they go?
- **Purpose** - why do they go there?

A package of measures, a mixture of infrastructure and 'smarter measures' was found to be required rather than individual projects

which was true for every target audience or trip type. For example:

Getting children to cycle safely and well required not only Bikeability national cycle training, but also secure cycle parking at school, an identified suitable route to school for each child, and ideally a school champion to establish a 'cycling culture'.

The most successful programmes were based on specific '**hubs**' such as a school, workplace, hospital, station, college or town centre.

Funding for each town was £5 per head per year matched locally to give a total of about £10 per head which was comparable to the annual investment in cycling in towns in mainland Europe.

People - The starting point is to identify groups of people who are most likely to make such a shift - the *maybe* cyclists. These are school children, students, large employers with a significant number of employees living locally, over 50s, women and families, station commuters and people visiting the town centre.

Places & Purpose - Once knowing the main destinations of key target groups, cycle routes to get there must be convenient, direct, safe and attractive. The network must be determined by the previous identification of key destinations. The routes should not have gaps or barriers. There should be clear provision at main roads and reasonable priority at junctions.

Cycle routes may include a mix of:

- Slower speed roads (often with lighter traffic)
- Attractive traffic-free sections (e.g. through parks)
- Tracks alongside busy main roads (sometimes shared with pedestrians)
- High quality on-road cycle lanes.

Town centres must be permeable to cyclists and this and stations must offer convenient parking.

The survey also mentions the role of large **events** as part of a more general engagement with the local community to make cycling an enjoyable/fun activity.

These range from active engagements in mass rides and charity events to passive 'entertainments' such as elite cycle races, bicycle film shows and a 'bicycle ballet'.

To date it is claimed there is little evidence of the impact or effectiveness of these broad spectrum activities. They may help to set cycling in a more attractive cultural milieu, but do little to encourage new cyclists and entail considerable effort and resources to organise. Likewise mass rides tend to appeal to existing, albeit occasional, cyclists and do not represent the circumstances of ordinary everyday cycling.

The programme is the start of a longer process to create a European style cycling culture, which will take sustained effort and investment over a decade or more. However Cycling England's ten 'top tips' for success for local authorities to make to get more people cycling based on the project grouped into two themes are:

Foundations

1. Senior political and executive commitment to the programme is critical for success.
2. Investment must be sustained over the long term
3. A skilled and motivated delivery team is critical
4. A successful programme needs the support and engagement of colleagues from teams across the local authority
5. A successful programme needs the support and engagement of local stakeholders.

Design Principles

6. The programme needs to be 'joined up', integrating investment in both infrastructure and Smarter Choices
7. The programme has to be based on local context, priorities and opportunities
8. The programme needs to be focused on a defined target audience - taking a 'people first' approach and identifying the 'hubs' where these groups can be reached
9. Infrastructure has to serve the needs of these people and these hubs
10. People new to cycling have to be supported to use new infrastructure through maps, signage and route promotions.

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How does **Bedford** compare as a Cycling Town to Cycling England's recommendations?

CCNB believes that it already meets quite a lot of the 'top tips'. After all Bedford with the 2001 census showing 6% of the working population travelling to work by bicycle is although not yet in the league of Cambridge, Oxford and some other towns and cities, is nevertheless in the upper quartile of UK cycling towns.

Cycling has senior political and officer commitment and is an integral part of the new emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP3) under the Active Travel theme.

A strategic network is in place, albeit with still some gaps in the routes, a few safety hazards, and some barriers, particularly through the town centre and across Bromham Road railway bridge. Sign posting of routes in some areas is also deficient.

The network has been promoted for some years through the distribution of almost 15,000 copies of CCNB's Bedford and Kempston Cycle Map.

UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020

In 2011 the United Nations will launch a 'Decade of Action for Road Safety' with the aim of stabilising and then reducing global road deaths by 2020. Major economies of the G20, leading developing countries and public institutions like the World Bank and the World Health Organization have all endorsed the Decade of Action.

Ten reasons to act on road deaths:

1. 1.3 million people are killed on the world's roads each year
2. Road crashes kill more people than Malaria
3. 50 million people are injured, many disabled as a result
4. 90% of these casualties occur in developing countries
5. Annual deaths are forecast to rise to 1.9 million by 2020
6. It is the No.1 cause of death for young people worldwide
7. By 2015 it will be the leading health burden for children over the age of five in developing countries
8. The economic cost to developing countries is at least \$100 billion a year
9. Injuries place immense burdens on hospitals and health systems
10. Road crashes *are* preventable.

Now the leading global cause of death for young people, road crashes kill 260,000 children under the age of 18 each year (see also Speeding article on page 21).

Quality of Life

A recent National Car Park (NCP) survey, in a poll of 9000 motorists, has shown that drivers spend an average of more than 6 days per year searching for a parking space. This is equivalent to nearly a year of their life* circling streets and car parks looking for a spot.

Editor - What a quality of life compared to the benefits of cycling.

**Based on driving for 50 years equivalent to 7600 hours or more than 45 weeks.*

Cycling on Increase

Sport England's Active People Survey which began in 2007 has shown that only four sports - cycling, netball, mountaineering and athletics - have a significant increase in adults participating at least once per week. Of these the majority have been delivered by recreational cycling and jogging.

A key Olympic legacy pledge by the last government after London's bid succeeded partly on the basis of its claim that it would inspire people to play more sport. The government's target was to get one million more people playing sport three or more times a week by 2013.

cyclenation/CTC Autumn Conference 2010

The cyclenation/CTC Autumn Conference was held in Edinburgh on Saturday 6 November 2010 hosted by The Lothian Cycle Campaign (Spokes) with the theme 'Cycling Across the Border'. Speakers:

Gordon Mackenzie - Edinburgh transport chair - said that cycling gave a good rate of economic growth and since the introduction of on-road facilities and bus lanes there had been a steady increase in cycling and they were now confident of achieving a modal share of 15% by 2020. An Active Travel Action Plan had been also introduced recently with focus on short and medium term actions rather than policy or strategy with an early priority of filling gaps in a 'family' network of off-road/quiet road routes for the less confident cyclist. For the experienced cyclist the creation of a cycle friendly city through on-road main road corridors with parking restrictions in cycle lanes, advanced stop lines, one way exemptions and expansion of 20mph zones.

Dave du Feu - Spokes Edinburgh - said that as most cycle funding comes from national rather than local sources there had to be national lobbying. He confirmed what had been said earlier that there had to be a top politician and officer who were Cycling Champions to make it happen. In Edinburgh cycle use had taken off with the introduction of on-road cycle facilities. These were also liked by pedestrians and tourists as they kept motorists further away from the pavements.



Your Editor (on right) immediately behind Phillip Darnton

Phillip Darnton - Cycling England chairman until 31 March 2011 - spoke about the achievements of the first six cycle towns (see pages 22-24) resulting from the investments made and said it was a realistic target to be able to convert 24% of car trips, under 2 miles, to bike trips.

He added that there was a need for cycling to be part of a government's transport policy and not to rely on the Transport Minister of the day being a 'champion' or not. Consistency is the core requirement and in Holland cycling gets all party support and they are now talking of investment levels of £40 per head compared to the £10 per head which was given to the six UK cycle towns.

Jennifer Calvert - Transport for London Senior Policy Officer - spoke about the new Barclay Cycle hire Scheme, the 'Boris' Bikes. The scheme has been extremely popular since its instigation in July 2010 and will be extended eastwards in time for the 2012 Olympics. Two Cycle Superhighways had been opened and it was planned to have a total of 12 routes by 2015. The routes are radial, from outer to the centre and are intended for commuters. The aim is for 20,000 journeys per day. To date there had been a 20% increase on the two opened routes with a 90% increase on some sections.

Enforcement is a feature of the routes with 1300 tickets already issued for Advanced Stop Line (ASL) infringements. Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) driver training courses have been introduced and a task force of 30 appointed to tackle theft

Ashok Sinha - the new Chief Executive of London Cycle Campaign - noted the greater diversity of cyclists which were now on the road in London and the change in attitude by the media helped in part by the support of the Mayor. The outer boroughs have potential for growth but will lack strategic direction with the demise of Cycling England and the need to bid for money from the new Sustainable Transport Fund introduced by the government.

Ian Aitken - CEO Cycling Scotland - said that the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) has a target of 10% modal share by 2020 but cycling gets barely 1% of the transport budget. One of the key areas is cycle training and two thirds of schools are now having it although only half include on-road training.

cyclenation/CTC Autumn Conference 2011

It has been decided to hold only one conference per year instead of two. As a result the cyclenation/CTC conference scheduled for Spring 2011 will now take place in the Autumn and will be held in Sheffield hosted by CycleSheffield, previously called Pedal Pushers. Information on the event will be available in the next few months.

Diary

- Sunday 6 February 2011 - Borough Green Fair - St Marks
Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill
from 12 to 4 pm (CCNB stall)
- Friday 8 April 2011 - CCNB AGM preceded by presentation at
Friends Meeting House, 5 Lansdowne Road,
Bedford MK40 2BY at 7.30pm
- 18 - 26 June 2011 - Bike Week 2011
- Autumn 2011 - cyclenation/CTC Conference - Sheffield

cycleBedford



Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire Objectives

- ◆ To promote, encourage and support cycling as an important means of transport and recreation.
- ◆ To encourage consideration of the needs of cyclists in all aspects of transport planning and management, access issues and recreational use.

Membership

If you have not already joined, or if you know a friend or relative who would be willing to lend their support, we would be delighted to welcome you as members. Please write to:

Membership Secretary, 20 Haylands Way, Bedford, MK41 9BU

Please include your name, address, postcode, telephone number and e-mail address (if available) together with your subscription.

Adult £3.00 (£13 for 5yr); Under 16 £1.00; Family £5.00 (£22 for 5yr)