

# Cycle Bedford

**Cycling is not just  
for leisure or sport.  
It is also a mode of  
transport to take  
you that short  
distance from  
A to B.**

Issue 62  
February 2012

**The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire**



Cycle track in front of newly restored Shorts building - New Cardington

# CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

*Founded 1992*

## **Committee**

Chairperson	Hazel Mitchell
Vice-Chair	Peter Blakeman
Secretary	Carole Blakeman
Treasurer	Neville Hobday
Membership Secretary	-
Other members	Veronica Brown Hywel Davies

## **Other positions:**

Newsletter Editor	Peter Blakeman
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Promotional website: <http://www.cyclebedford.org.uk>

## **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



(<http://www.cyclenation.org.uk>)

# Contents

Committee	2
Campaigning Representation	2
New Member	3
Editorial	4
Dave Lukes	5
Annual General Meeting	5
Mile Road Crossing Conversion	6
Stress Levels	6
Goldington Road Dual Use Path	7
Park Road Re-surfacing	7
Riverside Track Widening	8
Bedford College - New Cycle Link	9
Priory Park - New Link	9
Riverside Path Part Re-surfaced	9
Planning Applications	10
Bedford Station Cycle Stands	11
Cycle Stands - General	11
New Cardington	12
Bus Lanes	15
New Riverside Underpass - Update	15
Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011 - 2016	15
Emilia Romagna - Neville & Janet Hobday	16
Sustrans Free Range Kids	19
New Transport Secretary	19
Marston Vale Trust - New CEO	19
Peter Knight - Farewell	19
Pedal Power	20
National Highways & Transport Survey 2011 Results	22
Traffic Signs Review	23
Cyclenation/CTC Autumn Conference 2011	24
Infrastructure and Cycle Safety	26
Pen Portrait - Veronica Brown	27
Diary	28
CCNB Vision and Objectives	28

## New Member

We welcome to CCNB new member: Kath Jeffery.

# Editorial

The year of the 2012 London Olympics has arrived where all eyes will be again on the GB Cycling Team to win as many gold medals as possible.

Many of you may have seen in the local press at the turn of the year, CCNB's suggestion to all Borough residents that with all the interest there was likely to be in cycling there was no better time for those who were able to cycle to make a New Year Resolution. For those who didn't see the letters or haven't made one there is still time for the summer cycling season, namely:

*I MUST buy a new bike and start cycling (if necessary after some training) or get that bike out of the shed/garage and (after servicing) start cycling again or for those who already cycle -*

## ***'I MUST cycle more often during 2012'***

CCNB's counts have shown an increase in cycling in Bedford for some years with an average rise of 8% per year over the last four years (see page 22 for latest NHT Survey results) but for this special year let us see if we can increase the level by at least 10%. There is a huge potential in the Borough for more people to cycle with all the added benefits for better health and wellbeing.

As a result of the Borough's failure to secure funding last June from the Government's Local Transport Sustainable Fund, money for improved cycle infrastructure will be tight over the next few years but what is available should be used to fill the gaps and safety concerns in the existing network.

Growth Area Funding from the Government has fortunately secured a number of recent open space cycle/pedestrian path improvements (pages 8/9).

It is encouraging to note all the new planning applications going through the system (page 10) which will eventually see increases in the Borough's cycle network and facilities.

One of the key documents in many applications is the (Green) Travel Plan to encourage staff, students, visitors and customers to use sustainable modes. The plan should be a living breathing document but unfortunately once the initial flush of enthusiasm has passed many are left on the shelf gathering dust or on an archived computer file. Yet if monitored and updated annually could be just what is needed to help boost cycling.

The year also holds two other landmarks: This newsletter has been slightly revamped and is now available online in colour to members and other recipients and it is our 20th anniversary. The next issue will be a special one devoted to the history of CCNB and cycling in Bedford.

# Dave Lukes

Dave Lukes died on 19 January 2012 after months of fighting the effects of a brain tumour. He took such an active part in encouraging and supporting cycling in so many ways.

Dave was a long term member of the CCNB, serving on the committee for some years and the Cycle Strategy Group when we worked with both Bedfordshire County Council and Bedford Borough Council. He could be relied upon to challenge any assumptions or half-baked ideas! He would pursue matters with considerable expertise, and make us sit up and take note.

He was always cycling and undertook long-haul distances, took his bike to remote places, pushed the boundaries, and sought challenges with his trusty bike. He even managed some cycling after he became ill.

Dave would be there to offer help when we attended public displays, organised social rides - one I remember finished with the group cycling home on a hot evening after a stop at a pub in summer lightning! His was a rare devotion and commitment.

We shall miss him as a very much loved and respected member of the cycling fraternity and hope Nicky and the family will feel that his life has been so valued by so many.



*Hazel Mitchell - CCNB Chair*

**Friday 27 April 2012 at 7.30 pm  
Friends Meeting House 5 Lansdowne Road Bedford**

**‘Green Infrastructure Developments’**

**Presentation by Joel Carré  
Bedford Borough’s Head of Communities**

**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.**

# Mile Road Crossing Conversion

The zebra crossing in Mile Road near the new Bedford Academy (previously John Bunyan Upper School) in October 2011 was converted into a Toucan signalled controlled crossing to improve the safety of the students who walk and cycle to school.



*New toucan crossing in Mile Road*

## Stress Levels

A recent survey by a leading motor insurance company has found that one in five drivers have to start work before 7.30am in a bid to avoid traffic jams while more than half of all motorists arrive before 8.30am to beat gridlock. The average delay is 27 minutes per journey and it is claimed now costs businesses more than £752 million per year.

More worrying is that one in five said that their daily commute was extremely stressful.

This survey follows on from one reported in the previous newsletter which said how regular cyclists are less stressed when they arrive at work and are therefore less likely to have sick days. Cycling saved businesses around £128 million per year through reduced absenteeism with projected savings of £2 billion over the next 10 years.

# Goldington Road Dual Use Path

Last summer the south side footpath of Goldington Road from Newnham Avenue to the toucan near Riverfield Drive (Tesco) was converted into a shared use path. Outstanding was the creation of a path across the grassed area in front of the Wayfarer Hotel to link the paths on either side. This was the result of it being common land and requiring approval from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This was obtained last Autumn and the path finally constructed which also serves a local bus stop.



*New dual use path in Goldington Road*

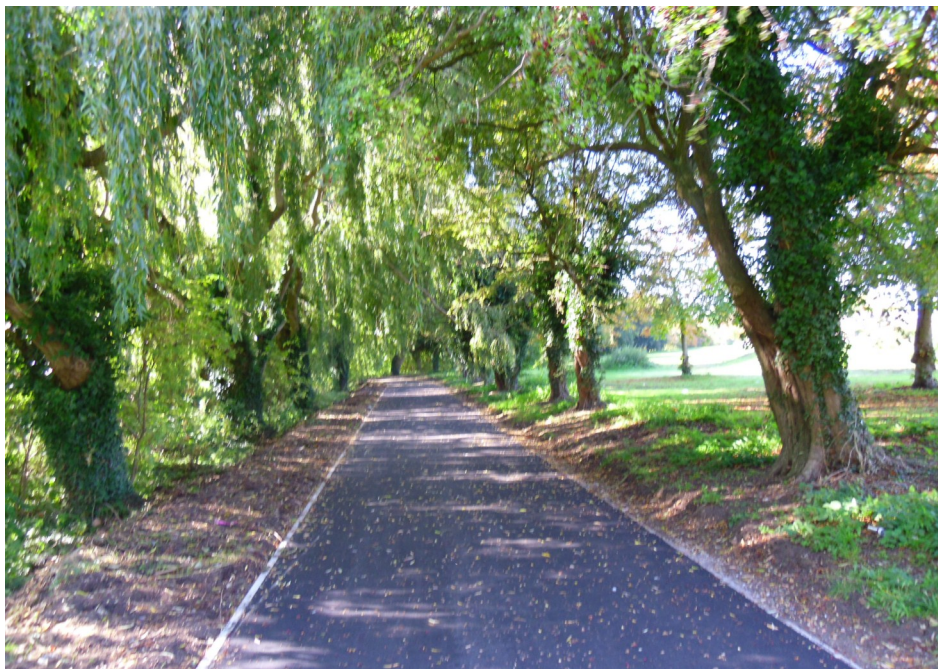
# Park Avenue Resurfacing

The remainder of Park Avenue from Pemberley Avenue to Kimbolton Road is scheduled to be resurfaced by the end of March 2012.

When completed designated car parking bays will be marked out together with the continuation of the on-road cycle lanes. It is hoped that the cycle lanes will be protected in the non designated parking areas by the provision of double yellow lines.

# Riverside Track Widening

The track along the riverside south of Woodstock Road which connects The Slipe and Honey Hill Road was widened and re-surfaced during October 2011.



*Widened and re-surfaced track south of Woodstock Road*

The upgraded three metre wide path will improve the link for cyclists and pedestrians to Queens Park and Kempston as well as the growing settlement of Great Denham.

The work was reported in the 9 October 2011 edition of Bedfordshire on Sunday as a waste of public money. This resulted in a flurry of letters the following week decrying that it was not a waste and for the number of cyclists in Bedford the level of money spent on cycle infrastructure was extremely low compared to some other town and cities. The money in fact did not come from Borough resident's council tax but was funded by the government's Growth Area Fund.

One local resident was so pleased with the work that he now did not have to stop on his tandem and ask his wife to go and recover his false teeth which was often shaken out by jolting over the corrugated surface of this path.



# Bedford College - New Cycle Link

Bedford College a few months ago created a short section of bright red coloured dedicated cycle track onto St Mary's Street although observations show that it is being mainly used by walking students.

# Priory Park - New Link

A new off-road link has been created from Route 51 alongside the entrance road to the Priory Park circular car park and the visitor centre. This will be very useful for families with young cyclists to avoid the hazards of them mingling with motor vehicles.

# Riverside Path Part Re-surfaced

Part of the riverside path between The Slipe and the Railway Bridge underpass was also re-surfaced during October 2011.



*Bedford College Link to St Mary's Street*



*Priory Park Link to Route 51*

# Planning Applications

The last few months have seen a spate of planning applications including the A428/A6 link between Bromham Road and Clapham Road to complete the Western Bypass, further applications for the large new housing developments at Great Denham, New Cardington, North of Bromham Road, Britannia site in Kempston Road and Field Road Wootton to smaller ones East of Eastcotts Road, East of Amphill Road, Coronation Business Park, Marsh Leys Business Park and the proposed new supermarkets off Goldington Road and Amphill Road.

All of these applications propose the installation of varying degrees of cycle infrastructure and cycle facilities. CCNB has sent in a number of responses supporting or requesting slight changes to the proposals made.

## **A428 - A6 Link Road**

A planning application was received by the Borough Planning Department last October for a single carriageway to link the A428 Bromham road at its junction with Gold Lane/Deep Spinney and the A6 Clapham Road. The link will have a cycle (and pedestrian) underpass on the north side of the Gold Lane roundabout to allow a continuous east west route to be maintained along Bromham Road. There will also be cycle tracks alongside the link together with a bridge (one third along) for residents of the proposed adjacent housing development and others to safely access the proposed new country park alongside the River Great Ouse.

## **North of Bromham Road**

A planning application for the construction of up to 495 dwellings together with infrastructure including a network of cycleways was also received by the Planning Department for the first phase of the new development north of Bromham Road.

## **Land Rear of Eastcotts Road**

A planning application for the construction of 57 dwellings if approved will see a new cycle/pedestrian link from the development through the Fenland meadow nature reserve onto Cardington Road.

## **Park Hotel Bedford - Improved Cycle Facilities**

A planning application was submitted to the Borough in November 2011 which included the proposal to close up the vehicular access along Park Avenue to improve safety and create a dedicated pedestrian and cycle access to the site.

At the same time a new, secure, cycle rack is proposed to be positioned along the application site side of the wall.

# Bedford Station - Cycle Stands

First Capital Connect hope to install additional cycle parking stands at Bedford Midland Road station by the end of March 2012 to accommodate an extra 42 cycles for commuters.

CCNB is pleased to see this investment but this still does not compensate for the loss of 54 cycle spaces removed in the November 2010 revamp of the station forecourt. The photographs below show where they will be installed.



The location of cycle stands is very important and the ones put up in the Borough's Ashburnham Road car park last July and never used are to be relocated to the east side of the site under cover with additional CCTV presence.

## Cycle Stands - General

Bedford is fortunate in having many stands but there is still a need for additional ones to encourage cycling.

If your employer, doctor, dentist, church, leisure centre, village hall, does not have any cycle parking stands, or they are not sufficient or are of the 'Not fit for purpose' type please encourage them to provide some by stressing the environmental and health benefits of cycling.

# New Cardington

New Cardington is a development of eventually 5000 houses on the old RAF Cardington site adjacent to Shortstown south of Bedford on the A600. It has been planned to be a walkable and cycle friendly neighbourhood.

The development started in 2008 with the semi-circular diversion of the A600, now called Carmichael Drive. It will be built in a number of phases and consist of a comprehensive network of cycle routes and links.

As of January 2012 there is a three metre wide off-road cycle track around the west side of Carmichael Drive with two double sets of toucan crossings at the junctions which will eventually lead to phases 2 and 3. At the south end there is a toucan crossing to the east side which will lead to the Frontier development behind the two Cardington hangers.

From the Greycote roundabout an off-road track merges into an on-road cycle lane going north along The Highway (now a traffic restricted road due to a bus gate at the south end) until just before the new North Drive roundabout where it goes off-road again. (There is another on-road cycle lane in the opposite direction on the other side of the carriageway - see picture on front cover where it goes in front of the impressive newly restored Shorts building).



*Carmichael Drive off-road cycle track looking north from Greycote*

Behind the Shorts building is Beauvais Square which includes a car park and play area and around it shops, apartments, houses and soon a new lower school Cycle parking is well catered for with several sides containing a small number of 'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands with a larger bank immediately behind the Shorts building. In all there is sufficient parking for 70 bicycles in this area.



*Beauvais Square and rear of Shorts building*

*Cycle parking stands in front of Shorts building*



Both New Cardington and Shortstown are linked to the existing Bedford urban cycle network at the Harrowden Road roundabout by an off-road dual use path on the west side of the A600 with a toucan crossing across the slip road to the southern bypass west.

At the old Harrowden junction there is the opportunity to use Old Harrowden Road to the west and then the bridleway Bumpy Lane to Meadowsweet Drive or the quietish Harrowden Lane to the east where at the junction with Bedford Road, Cardington there is an off-road route (apart from crossing Smeeton Bridge) to join the existing network near Priory Business Park.



*Off-road dual use path down Tinkers Hill*

*Bumpy Lane between Old Harrowden Road and Meadowsweet Drive*



## Bus Lanes

All the bus lanes in Bedford were open to bicycles, motorbikes, taxis and private hire vehicles from 16 September 2010 in an 18 month trial designed to reduce congestion around the town. This trial is due to finish in March 2012 when the Borough will decide whether or not to make it permanent.

Obviously CCNB would still want cyclists to be able to continue to use the bus lanes but what about the other current users, for example motorcyclists. Have you had or seen any problems? It is important to make any comments known to the Borough before the deadline. These can be communicated electronically using the web address: [www.forms.bedford.gov.uk/buslanes/](http://www.forms.bedford.gov.uk/buslanes/).

Although Bedford does not have as many or the length of bus lanes as there is in the capital, Transport for London after three years of trials has decided to allow motor cycles to permanently use bus lanes in London although it has been claimed by a number of studies to have given a sharp increase in both motor cycle fatalities and the rate of cyclist collisions with motorbikes, both vulnerable groups for which it was expecting to see safety improvements.

## New Riverside Underpass - Update

The latest information is that Network Rail will now replace the footbridge over the Marston Vale line instead of building a new underpass as originally proposed.

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2012 – 2017

Bedford Borough Council is responsible for 984 kilometres of Public Rights of Way which link Bedford and Kempston to the villages and the countryside. Within the Borough there are 350 kilometres of Public Bridleways and 34 kilometres of Public Byway (BOATS) which cyclists can use officially although a number of sections may only be suitable for mountain bikes and even then not in the wet winter months.

Bedfordshire County Council in 2006 produced and adopted a Bedfordshire Outdoor Access Improvement Plan (2006-2011). As this is now out of date Bedford Borough Council have drafted a new plan which was issued on 26 January for a 12 week public consultation until 13 April 2012.

The final document and action plan when adopted will guide the work of the Council from 2012-2017 in managing the public rights of way network in the Borough. It will complement the Bedford Borough Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

## Emilia Romagna - Neville & Janet Hobday

For various reasons - the principal ones being age and fitness - we decided last September that our cycling holiday must be classified as "easy" - short distances over a flat terrain. We chose Emilia Romagna - you all know where this is so I will not elaborate - and cycled for eight days in pancake flat country through vineyards, orchards and the Po delta.

There were four of us cycling together and we stayed for two nights each in two hotels, an agriturismo and a bed and breakfast guest house. Our first accommodation was in Ravenna where we were given our bikes and panniers, warned about snakes and enjoyed a demonstration on how to repair a puncture by a representative who could not remove a tyre.



*The Road Ahead*





*Supermarket Parking - Ravenna.*

The vast majority of the cycling was along straight, flat, traffic free roads crisscrossed by streams and drainage ditches. Not a place to visit for the scenery but none the less interesting for the variety of crops grown and the architecture of the farm houses, churches and occasional forts and palaces. The villages were generally small and extremely quiet but invariably there was a bar or cafe for refreshments. Some of the most interesting cycling was through the wetlands and protected landscape of the large Po Delta Nature Reserve; a haven for wildlife and a bird watchers paradise. Among other birds we saw heron, grebes, egrets and flamingo.

Of the towns we visited Ravenna was about the size of Bedford with old narrow streets and peaceful squares. It is famous for its Byzantine mosaics. Our initiative test was to find the cycle route out of town and the road for the next stop, Comacchio. Comacchio is the main and most important town in the Po Delta. It is known as 'little Venice' owing

to its network of canals and picturesque brick bridges which span them. The best known is the Trepponti - a triple bridge ingeniously designed to span three canals. To give ourselves a rest from the saddle we travelled to Ferrara by train. Ferrara is a walled town and world heritage site with many squares, palaces and monuments. A number of famous artists including da Vinci and Raphael spent time there under the ruling family's patronage. Nowadays Ferrara is a university town and is known as the 'Italian Bike Capital'.

Probably because of the good weather and the flatness of the terrain cyclists are numerous throughout the region. Both sexes and all ages ride around the towns often carrying children front and back, at a leisurely pace, on roads, pavements, through pedestrian areas and the wrong way down one way streets! Such cycling seems to be widely accepted rather than just tolerated. The cycles are of all types, makes and ages and repair facilities and sale outlets are many.

**The basic bits:** This was a package holiday offered by Headwater. Overall, it was of a good standard but the bikes could have been better serviced. We rode about 240 kilometres in eight days with seven punctures between four of us. [No further comment!]

On the trip we found a place and many piazzas and streets named after Giuseppe Garibaldi.

### Competition

Please send us (by e-mail or letter) the answers to the four questions below. For the winner pulled out of a hat containing all those with the correct answers we will make a donation of £10 to their nominated charity

- 1 Who was Garibaldi?
- 2 What is his connection with Bedford?
- 3 How will Bedford recognise this?
- 4 Which Football League Club were known as the 'Garibaldi's' and why.

[Not open to committee members or relatives]



## Sustrans Free Range Kids

One of Sustrans campaigns started last year was to see future generations of happy, healthy, bright and independent free range kids with the freedom, confidence, skills and opportunities to get around from their front door.

To make sure that politicians know what the issues are an Early Day Motion (EDM) 1954 has been called and signed by more than 100 MPs.

The Free Range Kids EDM calls on the Government to reverse the decline in the proportion of children walking and cycling to school; acknowledging the barriers which prevent children from being able to walk, cycle and play outside as a result of safety concerns; and urges Ministers across transport, health, environment and educational briefs to work in a joined-up way to inspire, encourage and support local authorities to invest consistently and coherently over the next 10 years to create safe and pleasant environments for walking and cycling which will not only benefit the health of children but also the environment and communities.

## New Transport Secretary

Justine Greening, the MP for Putney, was appointed the new Transport Secretary in October 2011 replacing Philip Hammond who was moved to the Department for Defense as Defense Secretary following the resignation of Liam Fox.

Justine is the ninth person in the role since 2001 and this has resulted in a lack of focus at the Department for Transport and robbed the department of clout in Whitehall.

Let us hope that she will put more emphasis on sustainable travel, public transport, walking and cycling than her predecessor who was very pro-motoring.

## Marston Vale Trust - New CEO

The end of last year saw the retirement of Tony Talbot as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Marston Vale Trust and the appointment of his replacement - Nick Webb.

The year 2011 was also the 20th anniversary of the Trust and the creation of the Forest of Marston Vale.

## Peter Knight - Farewell

Peter Knight, Cycling Development Officer, leaves Borough Hall at the end of March (not last October as in Newsletter No 61). CCNB thanks Peter again for all his input and wishes him all the best for the future.

# Pedal Power

Using the pedal power of a bicycle can take many forms. Just two examples are illustrated below.

## The Smoothie

One of the more popular recent trends with regards to health and healthy living has been the smoothie, which in essence is a blend of healthy ingredients which is blended to produce an enticing and appealing juice drink. A recent innovation which is proving extremely popular is to use the pedal power of a bicycle to operate a blender which is fixed to either the front or back of the bicycle.

The photograph below shows a typical cool green smoothie cycle but there are many types which can be purchased or hired.

Smoothies can be prepared in less than one minute with such a machine and they can be hired from a number of companies for a wide variety of events, such as corporate days, summer parties, fetes and exhibitions.

Using the machine is fun and gives the opportunity to talk to people about eating well and taking exercise



## Feats per Minute



An innovative Dutch designed bike (above) was shown at the London Design Festival Dezeen event held last October.

Called 'Feats per Minute' it offers a simple and handy solution of incorporating a turntable onto the rear wheel of a bicycle to enable you to play your old vinyl collection while on the move. The record spins as you ride and the sound plays out of a horn on the back. A few obstacles had to be overcome initially such as getting the record to play vertically and ensuring that the needle skipped as little as possible while riding. Obviously for the record to play correctly an even cycling speed has to be maintained.

A video of the bike in operation can be seen on [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCxylKYJ-xo&feature=socblog\\_th](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCxylKYJ-xo&feature=socblog_th)

A Google trawl of the web shows numerous other attempts to do this.

Another version of a bike playing a vinyl nearly two years earlier in December 2009 was presented on Radio 1 and introduced as "The first ever Carbon Neutral Record of the week".

# National Highways & Transport Survey 2011 Results

Last Summer for the third year running Bedford Borough Council participated in the National Highways & Transport Survey carried out by Ipsos Mori to collect public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, highways and transportations services in local authority areas.

Bedford was one of 70 local authorities taking part in last year's survey in which a questionnaire on the themes: accessibility, public transport, walking and cycling, tackling congestion, road safety and highways maintenance & enforcement was sent to some 4500 residents.

The results showed a response rate for Bedford of 17% (784 returns).

To the question on the use of transport type and frequency the following results were obtained for cycling frequency:

Daily	7%
2-3 times per week	8%
Weekly	7%
Monthly	11%
Less frequent/never	64%
Not stated	4%

The most significant observation is the comparison of the above results with those previously obtained from the 2009 survey. Whilst the number of residents cycling at least once per month is the same (33%) residents are **cycling more often** with the number cycling daily increasing by 16% over the two years (that is, 8% per year). This accords with the results of counts carried out by CCNB over the last few years in the town centre and at the railway station.

Aspects of the Borough's services which came out top for improvement were:

The condition of roads	25%
Pavements and footpaths	17%
Traffic and congestion levels	16%

Cycling routes and facilities came in 6th after safety on roads and local bus services.

A similar order was obtained for importance.

The provision of cycle routes where these are needed, condition of cycle routes, cycle crossing facilities at road junctions & traffic signals, cycle parking, direction signing for cycle routes, cycle route information (eg maps), cycle training (eg at schools), cycle facilities at place of work (eg racks, showers, etc) were all rated marginally better than in 2009.

Full survey results can be seen on the website:

[www.nhtsurvey.org](http://www.nhtsurvey.org)

# Traffic Signs Review

A new Transport Traffic Signs Policy Paper - Signing the Way was published last October aimed at increasing safety on the roads and reducing the cost of infrastructure but also paves the way for streets to be less cluttered with signs.

New signs and road markings for cycling make up a significant part of the report, in recognition of the fact that more people are now choosing to ride their bikes to get around, with a range of measures being implemented to try and improve cyclist safety. Some of the changes came into effect in November 2011 but others will still need special authorisation until 2014.

**Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs)** - This is the best way of ensuring that cyclists get through junctions safely. Current rules require that where there is a cycle lane, the cyclist is required to use that to access the ASL but from now on, the ASL area can be accessed as the cyclist sees fit. The measure is being introduced partly because of the danger posed to cyclists using cycle lanes of traffic turning left at junctions.

**“Trixi” mirrors** - These are aimed at improving cyclist safety at junctions, making it easier for HGV drivers to spot cyclists. There is to be an ongoing review with the DfT authorising Transport for London (TfL) to deploy them across the Barclays Cycle Superhighway Network to continue to assess how effective they are.

**Cycle lanes across junctions** - A new road marking will be allowed that indicates the cycle route more clearly than at present.

**“No entry except cyclists”** - This sign is one of the most frequently requested. Local authorities will now be able to put such instructions in place and introduce unsegregated contra-flow cycle lanes without having to go through the lengthy approval procedure.

**Cycle-specific signage** - Signs will be permitted to show estimated journey time by bicycle, instead of distance, in an attempt to encourage more people to use bikes for shorter journeys.

**Zebra crossings** - Trials are to be authorised to allow cyclists to ride their bikes across zebra crossings in circumstances where these might form part of a continuous cycle route.

Finally, cycle-friendly measures at junctions are proposed such as pre-signals for cyclists, or cycle by-passes.

See: <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/signing-the-way/signing-the-way.pdf>



# Cyclenation/CTC Autumn Conference 2011

The Cyclenation/CTC Autumn conference took place at Sheffield University on Saturday 15 October 2011 hosted by Cycle Sheffield with the theme - **Threats and Opportunities**'. Below is a summary of the presentations:

**Localism and planning reforms** - Matthew Brunt, Assistant Director of the Passenger Transport Executive Support Unit.

Matthew outlined the rationale about localism which is the transfer of power away from the centre, i.e. Westminster, Whitehall to empower local communities and generate civic responsibility. This lies behind the Localism Bill. *Localism* is a very elastic term open to many interpretations including, for example, aspects of devolved government, subsidiary, civic regeneration and so on. Localism presents a mixed picture including planning reforms which seem to favour corporate interests and the Bill gives priority to economic over environmental, social and cultural concerns. The Secretary of State, Eric Pickles, still retains the so-called *Henry VIII* clauses which retain reserve powers of executive discretion – in effect the Minister can override local planning decisions where he considers these in conflict with the 'national interest'. An example might be the widening, extension or construction of roads generating traffic levels, pollution and dangers harmful to localities.

**Social Mobility and Access: Cycling's Contribution** - Danny Dorling, Professor of Human Geography.

Danny outlined some very important findings of preliminary research based on 2001 data that will be re-examined when the results of the 2011 census become available. Cycling is not even a significant minority mode of transport but this may be changing. As recently as the early 1970s thousands of car workers used bikes to get to work. This gave the image of cycling as a second-class form of transport for those who couldn't afford a car. The 2011 evidence is likely to present a very different picture where the commuting cyclists is young, male and affluent expressing a life-style. Cycling is chosen, not a necessity.

A demographic map of the popularity of travel modes in the UK revealed that, for example, no areas of Scotland had 16-24 year olds using cycling as even a second choice of travel. Only in affluent and highly educated Cambridge did cycling manage second preference. Cycling seems to have become *embourgeoised* – a chosen mode for those displaying their physical as well as economic, social and cultural promise. For those aged 25-39 only Hull [where car ownership is well below average] and Cambridge showed cycling coming second. The car is predictably dominant in the 40-59 age group and evidence points to the younger males dropping out of cycle commuting from about 32



onwards. Fascinatingly amongst the over 75s males have at least one car whilst there are many women in this age cohort who don't and have never driven illustrating, perhaps, some social history as this generation came to maturity in the 1940s and early 1950s. The car was seen as a symbol of success its status symbol of masculine achievement being central to its popularity. The comparative immobility of women reflected their relegation to roles of domesticity or even servility. Cycling remains a function of inequality and social exclusion.

A parallel with smoking is illustrative – its decline began with the aspirational, the upwardly mobile and successful. Progress in reducing it among working class people has proved more challenging.

### **CTC Developments** - Roger Geffen.

Roger outlined a new accord strengthening support for local campaign groups. He welcomed the translation of Philip Hammond, perceived to be anti-cycling to the Ministry of Defence portfolio and his replacement by Justine Green, considered to be more sympathetic to environmental issues as she is opposed, for instance, to the expansion of Heathrow and understands the urgency of climate change recognising that environmental sustainability is as important as economic growth.

He also outlined the reconfiguring of the working relationship between Cyclenation and the CTC [a *Memorandum of Understanding* had been signed between the two organisations the evening before the conference] as a means of meeting the challenges of the localism agenda, that 'local authorities know best', involving more members in cycle campaigning, boosting capacity, skills, professionalism and the effectiveness of local campaign groups.

### **Sustrans Update** - Jason Torrance, Policy Director.

Jason outlined some of the big themes of local transport including changes in health policy, the resumption of road building programmes. He noted an ideological shift in areas of health, education and transport which may impact on cycling – especially moves towards deregulation and the relaxation of planning controls. The 29% cut in local transport funding is likely to have a negative impact on provision for sustainable means of travel including cycling. The focus must be on local transport plans and local authorities especially with the winding up of Primary Care Trusts imminent. He stressed the importance of promoting active life-styles in preventative health and indicated the need to connect health reforms with the sustainability agenda.

Recent research has concluded that Cycling Demonstration Towns such as Darlington and Worcester have produced a dramatic increase in both cycling and the use of public transport. However, research, monitoring and evaluation is lacking at the Department of Transport.

# Infrastructure and Cyclist Safety

A Transport Research Laboratory report (PPR 580) issued last November by the Department for Transport contains a literature review of the role of infrastructure in relation to the safety of cyclists and their interaction with other road users. The report was part of their wider research programme, Road User Safety and Cycling.

The conclusions which came out of the report were that the greatest benefits for increasing the safety of cyclists resulted from:

- reducing the general speed of motorised traffic through the wider use of 20mph speed limits and other measures
- managing vehicular conflicts at junctions, particularly in urban areas, where the majority of collisions involving cyclists take place

Other factors found to increase cycle safety were:

- use of restricted geometry 'continental' style roundabouts in place of multi-lane types which are particularly risky
- continuing coloured cycle lane markings through junctions
- Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) providing a priority for cyclists, particularly for those turning but are frequently not respected by other road users
- designs that manage the risk of left turning HGVs (low speed casualties are generally caused by positioning and lack of visibility)
- cycle lanes did not show any safety benefit but this was probably due to a lack of quality and continuity in their implementation
- off-road segregated cycle paths reduce risk, although this is outweighed by the high risk area where they intersect with the highway

Infrastructure that does not meet cyclists' needs may lead to using 'illegal' ways, thereby increasing their risk. One of the latter pieces of evidence cited were instances where cycle facilities:

- ended suddenly, leaving the cyclist having to re-join traffic
- were punctuated by drains and manhole covers
- required the cyclist to stop frequently
- were impinged on by traffic, or used to park cars

Other high risk areas for cyclists were slippery roads (due to weather) and poor or defective road surfaces.

Nearly all of these factors can be seen on the Bedford area cycle network although a lot of effort and expense is currently being made by the Borough Council to catch up with road repairs.

The full report can be seen on:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/infrastructure-and-cyclist-safety/>

## Pen Portrait - Veronica Brown

*In this newsletter we have the Beds CTC President who has been a CCNB committee member for a number of years.*

I didn't get a 'proper' bike until my early 20s, but since then I have spent most of my life exploring the countryside. My bike was a BSA 3-speed ladies frame which took me all around the country and Denmark.

Later I had an Allin cycle made to measure, and as this was much lighter, I built up a vast mileage. Much, much later, when I found I couldn't get my leg over the crossbar, I obtained a British Eagle ladies frame with 6 gears. In between these last two I bought a folding Brompton which opened up an area where the train could take me. My best years were 2005 and 2006 when my annual mileage was well over 5,000.

I moved to Bedford in 1973 and it wasn't long before I was involved in forming a CTC Section for families; my daughter was then on the back of a tandem. We started with two families and a few single people, and rides were once a month. Eventually more people joined us and we extended rides into every week plus some Saturdays for shorter rides to encourage new people out. In 1976 I was appointed as President of the Bedfordshire District Association, CTC, a position I still hold today.



In more recent years I have organised the Bedfordshire Section of the 40 Plus Cycling Club and for over 3 years I was National President of the 40 Plus. I also joined the CCNB Committee and have always attended many meetings to further the cause of cycling in the town.

I have four grandsons of which three have automatically taken to cycling. The other one is not a year old yet!

At the moment I enjoy cycling along Sustrans Route 51 from Bedford to Sandy as it is a lovely quiet meander. One problem we get at the moment is tree roots which keep raising the surface. Mustn't grumble too much, trees have to grow.

As I get older I find my annual mileage is dropping to about 3,500. However, I must keep the pedals turning so that I can forget my aches and pains.

See you all down the road.

## Diary

- Sunday 26 February 2012 - Green Borough Fair - St Mark's Church  
Brickhill  
Friday 27 April 2012 - CCNB AGM - Friends Meeting House  
See [www.ccnb.org.uk/diary.htm](http://www.ccnb.org.uk/diary.htm) for other activities

## Other Contacts

### Local Cycle Rides:

CTC - North Beds Section - (01234) 219148

### Bedford Borough Council:

Cycling and Walking Officer - (01234) 276328

Bikeability (Cycle Training) - (01234) 228336

Highways Helpdesk - (01234) 228661/e-mail  
[highways.helpdesk@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:highways.helpdesk@bedford.gov.uk)

# Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



## Our Vision

To see Bedford as a

**'Town of Cyclists' & 'Cycle Friendly Communities'**

## 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

Please contact us if you have any cycling issues or better still, consider becoming a member to give us added weight in our discussions with the relevant authorities. Write to:

**Membership Secretary, c/o 15 Dove Road, Bedford, MK41 7AA**

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

Single £3.00 (£13 for 5yr); Family £5.00 (£22 for 5yr)