

Cycle Bedford

**2016 Year
of
Anniversaries**

Issue 74
February 2016

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire

Make the
Borough a
better place
in which to
live/work/shop



ca **200**
years

Reduce
congestion/
pollution
by cycling/
cycling more

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

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cycle_bedford

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



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Editorial

Bedford in the 1970s had more cyclists in the town than in any other place of comparable size. The County Council therefore carried out a transportation study and in 1977 put forward a plan to provide routes for cyclists throughout Bedford but particularly, radial routes into the town centre. At the time it was believed to be the only study which included cycling as a quantifiable mode of transport and by the 1980s the Council was considered to be one of the leading authorities on cycling in the country.

A considerable amount of new cycling infrastructure has been achieved over the following three decades and in 2014 Bedford Borough was put on the national map with its innovative design for the upgraded Union Street roundabout.

Last year cycle counts continued the increase in the number of residents cycling to the town centre and railway station observed over the last decade.

It was therefore disappointing to hear in a background paper to the latest consultation on the Local Plan 2032 (page 12) that Bedford had now fallen behind the levels of cycling in similar sized towns. Two other papers said that for the town centre to be an attractive place for people to work, visit, shop and live there had to be significant reduction in the town's vehicle congestion and air and noise pollution.

The Paris Climate Change summit in December 2015 has been declared to have been reasonably successful with nearly 200 countries agreeing to limit the global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels and, if possible, to endeavour to limit the temperature rise still further to 1.5 degrees C.

Last December was the wettest month on record with severe flooding in the north west of England and also in Scotland. This type of weather is claimed to be one of the outcomes of climate change.

Fortunately Bedford Borough did not see the extreme rainfall seen in other parts of the UK this winter although in early January a flood warning was issued for the River Great Ouse which flows through Bedfordshire and the river did break its banks in some places (page 10).

Cycling will not solve climate change but can go someway in reducing congestion and pollution in the town centre area.

**Cycle
to reduce
congestion
and
pollution**

**Cycle to
keep
independent**

Cycling can be easier than walking, a way to keep independent, fit and healthy, a mobility aid, and a useful form of everyday transport. This means everybody should be able to cycle regardless of age, health condition or impairment (page 24).

2016 Year of Anniversaries

The Royal Charter

The Charter was given to Bedford in 1166 by King Henry II. It granted a number of liberties to the town including the right to set up courts of law, freedom from manorial dues and other tolls.

The Charter, the original which is in the Bedfordshire Record Office at Borough Hall, is said to be the second oldest in the country.

A range of events and activities are being planned throughout the year to mark the anniversary.



The Bedford Charity (The Harpur Trust)

The Charity was established by Sir William Harpur and his wife, Dame Alice, in 1566 to support free schooling, dowries for poor maidens and 'nourishing and informing poor children'. He was a Bedford merchant who became the Lord Mayor of London in 1561.



Today, apart from running a range of fee-charging private schools, the charity helps and supports in many ways people who live in and around Bedford.

A number of events are planned including a Run and Fun Day at Priory Park on Sunday 22 May 2016 at which CCNB will have a stand.

The Bicycle

Meanwhile, the 'Draisine' (*below left*) (or Hobby Horse/Dandy Horse) was invented by Baron Karl Drais in 1817. It is regarded as the archetype of the bicycle although the 'Rover Safety' bicycle (*below right*) with its diamond shaped frame designed by John Stanley in 1885 resembles the one we know today.



Great Barford Bridge Safety

Great Barford bridge across the River Great Ouse is a medieval bridge on both the National Cycle Network Route 51 and the National Byway cycle network. The safety of cyclists, particularly those with families, has been of concern for a number of years and this was made significantly worse following the introduction of a footpath across the bridge in 2012.



Late last year sensors were installed at each end of the bridge using the latest long range microwave/thermal imaging detection technology.

It is hoped that these measures by the Borough Council have now resolved the safety issues for cyclists. Please let CCNB know if there are still any problems.



Sensor on a separate pole at the south east end of the bridge. The one on the north side is attached to the traffic signal pole outside the Anchor Inn

Riverside North

The Riverside North development is now beginning to take shape as shown by this evening photograph of the site from across the River Great Ouse showing the progress on the new hotel and cinema.



A new 4 metre wide cycle/pedestrian bridge is due to be built over the next few months across the river to St Mary's Gardens. It however will not be opened until the whole development is completed around Spring 2017. In the meantime the cycle route along Queen's Walk and part of Charter Walk is closed while building work continues.

Union Street Roundabout

The design of the upgraded Union Street roundabout continues to attract considerable national interest and puts Bedford Borough in the limelight as a progressive authority in terms of innovation and encouraging active transport.

This year (2016), there will be a meeting of EEDET (East of England Directors for Environment and Transport) in Bedford to look at and learn about the roundabout. Additionally, the Borough of Ealing has expressed an interest in replicating the design for one of their busy problematic roundabouts.

Highways England

Highways England, the new name for the Highways Agency, issued a short document in January 2016 on their 'Cycle Strategy'.

The strategy outlines how they will contribute towards the development of an integrated, comprehensive and high quality cycling network.

It states that it is not just about building better cycling infrastructure but training and developing planners, designers, engineers and service providers to think differently about cycling infrastructure. As part of this they will update their design standards to raise the level of provision for cycling.

Their Delivery Plan makes a commitment to invest £100m of ring-fenced funding in 200 cycling schemes up to 2021.

As mentioned in Newsletter No 73 one of the first schemes to be awarded a grant in this region is a project to cycle proof the A421/A6 junction to improve the safety of cyclists on the direct route from the Wixams to the Interchange Park, hospital and Bedford town centre (see page 9).

The four page document can be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-strategy>

Power of Campaigning

In the middle of last year Eurostar announced without any consultation that from 1 November 2015 they would be amending their cycle carriage policy by making all people taking cycles on the international trains between London and Paris/Brussels to take them apart and put them in a box first.

Cycle organisations immediately went into top gear. CTC with the support of the European Cycling Federation and Belgian, Dutch, French and German cycle bodies and a 'Zero Stars for Eurostar' campaign which 9,500 cyclists (including some CCNB members) signed up to lobby the CEO of Eurostar.

On 13 November 2015 (13 days after the proposed change) Eurostar's Head of EU Public Affairs announced that they had decided not to go ahead with the requirement for all bikes to be carried in boxes and would continue to accept fully mounted bikes.

Did You Know?

In Coventry in 1868 when Rowley B Turner rode a new velocipede around the streets he caused as much commotion as the ride of Lady Godiva had 800 years earlier.

Schemes in Progress

Cycle schemes in progress which should see completion within the next few months include:

Great Denham Link

The riverside cycle track from the start of Great Denham through to the track alongside the Western Bypass as it passes over the River Great Ouse should be open shortly. This will enable all residents of the Great Denham and Kempston West developments to easily access Bedford town centre by bicycle completely off-road. For Kempston West residents this will be an alternative route to the one via Kempston Saxon Centre.

A4280/A6 Link

The A4280/A6 link road with a cycle track alongside the whole length of the south side from the Clapham Road roundabout (near Sainsbury's) to Bromham Road (Gold Lane roundabout) is nearly finished.

Bromham Road Junction

A part of the Bromham Road cycle track nearly opposite Biddenham Turn is closed while a new junction is created for the start of the first phase of the North of Bromham Road development.

(Old) Cambridge Street Link

The cycle track from the Cambridge Road/Wallis Way roundabout along the old Cambridge Road to Priory Business Park is currently being upgraded as part of the Travis Perkins warehouse developments. The section is closed while this takes place.

Station Cycle Stands

The addition of more than 150 extra cycle stands, mainly double deckers, are to be installed at Bedford Railway Station to cater for the increasing number of people who commute there by bicycle.

Other schemes expected over the next financial year include a signal controlled cycle route around the A421/A6 junction (see page 8).

Italian Cycle to Work Incentive

The town of Massarosa, just north of Pisa in Italy is piloting a scheme in which cyclists are paid 25 cents per kilometre travelled in a bid to get more people cycling to work. Even with a monthly cap of 50 euros, those who get on their bikes could earn 600 euros a year.

Councillor Stefano Natali said, 'The scheme will offer incentives to citizens to ensure the area becomes more liveable', adding it will mean less traffic and will have health benefits.

Flooding

2015 was claimed to have been globally the warmest year on record and predictions are that 2016 will be even hotter. One of the consequences of global warming is the occurrence of more stormy wet weather. This was the case last December which saw the wettest month on record with severe flooding in the north west of England and Scotland.

Fortunately Bedford Borough did not see the extreme rainfall although in early January a flood warning was issued for the River Great Ouse which flows through Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

In Bedford the river did break its banks for several days between the Town Bridge and Newnham Bridge causing the National Cycling Network Route 51 to be impassable.

Looking westwards to Town Bridge



Looking eastwards to Newnham Bridge



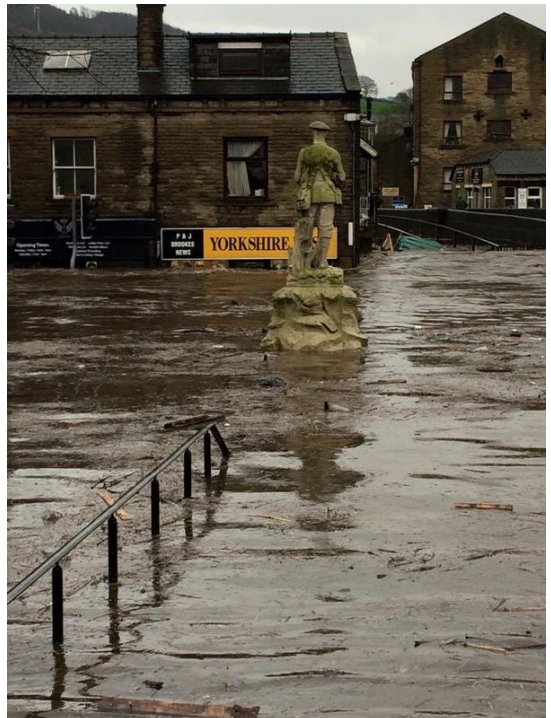
At Hebden Bridge in West Yorkshire the photograph above was taken of the bike shop and coffee lounge, The Bicycle Den, along the canal just weeks before floods hit the town on Boxing Day.

The premises was just one of around 1200 mainly independent or family run businesses in the Calder Valley which were devastated.

This included a number of other bicycle shops.

Residents have all got together creating a Business Crowdfunding Campaign for those effected.

The Bicycle Den hopes to be back in business in April 2016.



Bedford Borough Local Plan 2032

In the National Planning Policy Framework document issued by the Government in March 2012, it states that all local authorities must have a single plan in place which looks at least 15 years ahead, and clearly defines where growth and development is sustainable.

The current Borough plans are a suite of documents which go to 2021.

Consequently the Council started on the production of a new plan to ensure that sustainable managed growth takes place up to 2032. This resulted in an Issues and Options consultation in January/February 2014 which was reported in Newsletter No 68 (February 2014).

Since that time the Borough has completed some important studies which resulted in a further public consultation in November/December 2015 including a further call for potential sustainable development sites in addition to the 300 sites submitted previously.

The Local Plan 2032 will result in new development taking place; new housing and employment, new shops, schools and open spaces and new roads and cycle ways. Therefore it may affect the lives of most current residents and it is important that the right balance is achieved.

Studies to date have shown that there is a need for nearly 17,500 dwellings to be built between 2012 and 2032. On top of the number already built, approved or in the pipeline this requires sites to be found for at least a further 4,500 dwellings together with sites for employment.

The initial proposals are to place the sites in the urban area and key service centres with smaller numbers in rural service centres and individual villages.

Interestingly for cycling three of the background papers for the consultation said that to make Bedford town centre an attractive place for people to work, visit, shop and live there had to be

- a significant reduction in the level of vehicle movements to reduce the current congestion and air and noise pollution accompanied by
- a significant increase in sustainable transport (public transport, cycling and walking).

This is at odds with one of the plan's vision to improve quality of life for the town's residents and visitors by having a new bridge across the river at Batt's Ford. The scheme would divide the town centre in two with high levels of traffic between the suggested new shopping areas on either side of Greyfriars. It would also be at odds with one of the plan's objectives of reducing congestion in the borough, particularly around the town centre, by making journeys by public transport, walking and cycling more attractive to encourage an increase in more sustainable and healthy modes of transport.

Bedford Town Centre Topic Paper

The paper mentioned the following points:

- Air quality problems and congestion in the central area caused by the high level of road vehicles, particularly in the St Paul's Square, High Street and Greyfriars areas.
- Poor connectivity and poor quality in-town centre experience for people.
- The town centre road system is fully utilised - increasing road capacity would not lead to an increase in accessibility and would in fact be a further detraction from the quality of the town centre experience for shoppers and visitors.
- Two key development opportunity sites identified in Midland Road and Greyfriars would be compromised if the traffic in Greyfriars was kept as it is or increased (as a result of a new Batts Ford bridge)
- The town centre of the future would be better served by sustainable transport. Resolving the high degree of traffic saturation will inform the type of place the town centre can become.
- There would appear to be an opportunity to change how short distance trips to the town centre are made through place-making initiatives and a noticeable shift to more sustainable modes. In particular, it should be able to achieve greater levels of walking, cycling and bus use to the town centre, given its size and density.

Bedford Retail Study

Recent years have seen challenges to 'traditional' store-based shopping. These challenges will continue to grow and in order for Bedford to perform strongly and meet its local needs, it will need to adapt to, and embrace, these challenges. However, it is quite clear that there remains a role for store-based shopping - and for town centres.

It acknowledged that there was still much to do to meet one of the strategic policies of the 2008 Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan for the regeneration of the town centre, namely, to increase the connectivity in the town centre by improving non-car access, reducing traffic and upgrading the public realm.

The environmental quality of the High Street, St Paul's Square, Greyfriars and Midland Road is undermined by the dominance of vehicular traffic.

Accessibility and connectivity for non-car users within the town centre is constrained in some areas particularly between the town centre, the Cultural Quarter and the train station due to the heavy flows of vehicular traffic along the High Street and Greyfriars.

There has to be environmental quality improvements of certain areas if it is to survive and give visitors a good first impression of the town.

Bedford Benchmarking - Sustainable Transport Report

The report aimed to assess whether Bedford has the potential to tackle its current and future transport problems through traffic demand management and a modal shift towards sustainable travel; public transport, cycling and walking. In order to do so, it looked at towns of similar size and density around the UK and how they had tackled their transport problems. Eight towns were identified; Norwich, Ipswich, York, Lancaster, Maidstone, Lincoln, Worcester and Hitchin!

The benchmarking exercise indicated that the levels of sustainable transport in Bedford were lower than in the other comparable towns.

It stated that Bedford relied heavily on the car in comparison to the other towns. More people owned cars in comparison to the other towns with a similar economic profile, possibly indicating a poor provision of alternatives.

The report concluded that there was no clear reason why Bedford could not achieve a significant modal shift to sustainable modes.

All Bedford Borough Council reports on the Local Plan 2032 can be seen on the website:

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose/local_plan_2032.aspx

Bedford Town Centre Transport Study

CCNB was invited in September 2014 to a presentation by the consultants JMP who had been requested by the Borough Council to carry out a study of the transport problems in the town centre area.

Nothing had been heard since that time until parts of the report were revealed in the local press following a freedom of information request.

Most of the ideas put forward were designed to reduce traffic congestion and pollution in the town centre area. Those with a cycling input revealed were:

- improve the quality and consistency of cycle paths and footpaths and build more cycle lanes
- half of Bedford's workers travel less than 5km to work but the majority drive - provide personalised travel plans so they can cycle, walk or catch the bus
- require all state schools to develop and implement a 'travel plan'
- Encourage private schools to do likewise
- Require Bedford College to implement a sustainable travel plan as it is a congested area
- pedestrianise the High Street (and allow two way cycling).



*Proposed scheme
for Enfield town
centre*

*Could this be the
new Greyfriars in
Bedford?*

Energy Saving Lighting

Bedford Borough Council has launched a programme of works subsidised by funding from the Department for Transport which will replace all the Street Lighting in the Borough over a three year period. The first new streetlights were installed in November 2015, prior to which all the lampposts in the borough were checked for integrity; a process which takes place regularly and is continually underway. The new lamppost units will provide new low energy lanterns, replace old columns as required and introduce a central management system to control the lighting; these lanterns use less power to produce the same amount of light, which in turn reduces power consumption and the generation of CO₂ emissions.

One spot which has been of concern to members for some time is the poor lighting on Bromham Road bridge. CCNB has been promised that this will be programmed for the start of the Queen's Park area part of the project in June 2016.



Speeding - Motor NOT Cycle



Two types of letter appear frequently in the local media. One is from motorists in Bedford Borough complaining about why they should have to obey the speed limit if they can see that the road ahead is clear while the other is from pedestrians complaining about the number of cyclists who ride illegally on the pavement. But it is precisely because of the former that the latter occurs.

One of the main reasons always cited in surveys by cyclists for riding illegally on the pavement (although many pavements within Bedford are of legal dual use) is that the roads are unsafe due to the speed and irresponsible driving of many people.

Last year, 41,785 drivers in Bedfordshire were caught breaking the speed limit compared to 11,953 in 2010, this is an increase of 350%. One was caught speeding at 90mph in a 30mph limit.

A few years ago speed enforcement threshold measurements were carried out over a 7 day period of 24 hours on a road in Brickhill, a residential area in the north of Bedford. The threshold for a speed limit of 30mph is 35mph, that is, 30mph + 10% + 2mph. The results showed that 5631 drivers, 15.8% of the 35,645 vehicles which passed along the road, exceeded this limit. This agrees with a 2009 Department for Transport (DfT) speed survey which showed that 16% of motorists exceed the 30mph threshold of 35mph.

Speed does kill. If a driver travelling at 40mph hits a pedestrian or cyclist there is a 85% chance that the person will be killed while at 20mph this reduces to 5%, meaning that 95% will still be alive. This is the reason why speed limits should be obeyed and, if in an urban residential or shopping/school area, 20mph should be the maximum.

No wonder the Mayor on his visits around the borough a few years ago was told by residents that their number one concern was speeding traffic. This resulted in the start of the Mayor's speed reduction programme.

Speed limits have been reviewed at over 100 sites since this time. 20mph speed limits have been introduced over a wide area of urban Bedford and Kempston and many more in rural villages including additional 30 and 40mph limits. Average speed cameras have also been introduced at nine sites across the borough.

Much more still has to be done to ensure that all residents, and particularly vulnerable ones, are able cycle and walk safely.

It was therefore extremely disappointing to hear at the Executive Council meeting on 21 January 2016 that due to the Borough's severe budget deficit the decision was taken to fund no further speed limit reductions or average speed cameras from 1 April 2016 targeting a saving of just £20,000 per annum.

Two of the last 20mph schemes for the foreseeable future likely to be implemented will be in Harrold and Felmersham.

The DfT's latest report on costs of accidents to the economy based on 2014 prices and values show the cost of an accident where a person is killed as £2,066,732, seriously injured £235,791 and slightly injured £24,887.

£20,000 is a small amount to spend if it saves just one vulnerable person from being killed or seriously injured.

The full DfT reports on the costs of accidents and the methodology used can be downloaded from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254720/rrcqb-valuation-methodology.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras60-average-value-of-preventing-road-accidents>

Wide area 20mph limits are being adopted in most of the UK's iconic cities and there is pressure for 20mph to become the national default limit where people live, work, shop and learn. The recognition of benefits from setting such a standard now go far beyond road danger reduction to include a more attractive public realm, public health, active travel, noise and emission reduction, traffic reduction, etc. and are complementary to so many other public realm interventions.

20mph Council Myths

20's Plenty for Us campaign has recently issued a 20mph council myth buster which can be downloaded from

http://www.20splenty.org/council_myths

Particularly relevant to Bedford Borough is the UNTRUE '**NO 20mph if local police are unsupportive or 20mph limits are not enforceable**'.

The website states that '*In a democracy elected representatives set laws, police enforce those laws and an independent judiciary sentences offenders. Any police attempt to undermine this or for elected representatives to veto setting limits based on police funding / preferences is undemocratic. DfT guidance Para 85 says "To achieve compliance there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity." Forces in Lancashire, Merseyside, Thames Valley, Avon & Somerset, Cheshire, Cambridge, Metropolitan and City of London all enforce 20mph.*'

Cycling and National Government

A year ago after strong campaigning by national cycling organisations the government introduced a section to the Infrastructure Bill requiring it to produce a **Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS)** in England. This was brought into force in July 2015 as Part 2 (Cycling and Walking Investment Strategies) of the Infrastructure Act 2015 (Commencement No 3) Regulations 2015. This places a duty on the Secretary of State to review or replace the Strategy regularly (at least once every five years) and to report periodically to Parliament on progress towards meeting its objectives.

In December a paper was published by the Department for Transport on **Setting the First CWIS - Moving Britain Ahead**.

The document outlined the timetable and approach to developing the various elements required. It claimed that it was an historic innovation which can achieve the Prime Minister's ambition of a 'cycling revolution' and tackle the long term decline in walking to improve Britain's health, economy and quality of life.

The government's vision is that put forward in the draft Cycling Delivery Plan published in 2014, namely:

Walking and cycling becomes the natural choices for shorter journeys - or as part of a longer journey - regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

A first draft of the CWIS, put together with the help of a partnership group formed in 2014, is expected this spring for public consultation with the final version published in summer 2016.

The partnership group includes amongst others the AA, The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), British Cycling, CTC, Living Streets and Sustrans.

A few days after the above paper was published a statement was issued on **Working Together to Build a Safer Road System** which included as one of its key priority for road safety:

Protecting vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motor cyclists and horse riders, through infrastructure and vehicle improvements, promotion of safer behaviour and equipment and ensuring other road users are aware of the risks posed to these groups and adapt accordingly.

The raft of measures put forward for cycling included:

- a grant of £50 million over the next four years to support Bikeability cycle training in schools
- consulting on legislative changes to improve urban cycle safety to ensure sideguards and rear under-run devices are not removed from HGVs but remain permanently fitted.

The statement went on to say:

Behind each and every collision statistic there is an individual story. Certain groups of road user, such as pedestrians, motorcyclists, cyclists and horse riders, are clearly more vulnerable to the physical impact of a collision than those in an enclosed vehicle.

Despite the elevated risks for vulnerable road user groups, it is important that we recognise the benefits of these modes of travel. Walking and cycling have clear health benefits, assisting obesity reduction and increased life expectancy, and environmental benefits.

Others points mentioned were:

The coming into force during 2016 of the revised Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions although this is already some 12 months late. The DfT is working with local authorities that are keen to make use of these new measures, such as early start signals to provide better and safer facilities for cyclists, in advance of the new legislation. Bedford Borough, so far, is not one of them.

Making changes to the design and operation of junctions, where many collisions involving vulnerable road users and vehicles occur, is the responsibility of local authorities although the government supports them through the provision of legislation and guidance.

The continuation of the empowerment of Local authorities to set appropriate speed restrictions for their local areas, including 20 mile per hour zones and limits.

DfT claim that In the last five years from 2011/12 to 2015/16, its spending on cycling in England has increased from £1 per head to £3 per head. Local authorities also spend significant amounts on cycling and, over the same period, so the total spending on cycling in England has increased actually from £2 per head to £6 per head (and over £10 in 8 Cycle Cities and in London).

Unfortunately not much of this money has come to Bedford.

Bikeability

The government says it remains firmly committed to providing cycle training to school children in order to give the next generation of cyclists the skills and confidence to cycle safely on local roads. The funding to be given, representing a 6% increase over the last two years, will help to increase children's road awareness, encourage active travel and improve future motorists' empathy for more vulnerable road users. Recent research shows significant improvements in children's ability to perceive road hazards after Bikeability training

Since its inception, more than 1.5 million school children have received training through the Bikeability programme, and further 275,000 children are expected to be trained during 2015/16 (see page 20 for the piloting of Bikeability Plus).

Bikeability Plus

In the Department for Transport's document 'Response to the consultation on the draft Cycling Delivery Plan' published in March 2015 they announced that they were exploring expanding the Bikeability cycle training programme by piloting **Bikeability Plus**, a suite of additional cycling activities and extra training based around the core Bikeability course. Each module, such as led rides and using balance bikes, would be designed to address a specific barrier to cycling for both children and adults.

Following the success of the Bikeability delivery programme of Outspoken Training of Cambridge and Cambridgeshire County Council both organisations were approached to launch the pilot Bikeability Plus programme in five schools in south Cambridgeshire. As a result more than 1,000 pupils, teachers and parents took part in activities over 12 weeks to help ensure that they were given the opportunities, skills, support and guidance they needed to make cycling part of their everyday life. Ultimately the aim is to create a lasting cycling culture in school and raise the number of families commuting by bike to school.

Due to its success Outspoken were invited to deliver another trial to five schools within Peterborough in partnership with Peterborough City Council.

With some small changes the same activities were used as delivered in South Cambridgeshire. This resulted in the delivery of:

- 5 Bikeability Fun Time events - cycle try out shows attended by 1113 children, staff and parents/guardians
- Bikeability School Award - school competition where classes and schools competed to have the highest percentage of pupils cycling
- 145 Bikeability Balance training places - learn to ride training on balance bikes for pupils in reception
- 114 Bikeability Fix training places - bike maintenance training for pupils in Key Stage 2 to help them keep their bikes moving.
- 164 Bikeability Primer places - learn to ride training for any pupil unable to ride

The 6 week training despite a small budget was a huge success with an average of 29% cycling to school - fifteen times the national average.

At the Cycle Planning Awards on 14 September 2015 showcasing the best practice examples from local authorities, and innovation in products and infrastructure design, Outspoken was the winner of the Best Behaviour Change for its Bikeability Plus in Peterborough.

Outspoken Training of Cambridge since April 2014 has been the delivery partner of Bedford Borough Council for Bikeability cycle training.

Miscellaneous Cycle Photographs



Cycle stands in Canada's Toronto Kensington District with name spelt in bike chain



Cycle Fence in Lucca, Italy

Cyclenation/CTC 2015 Autumn Conference

The 2015 Autumn conference of Cyclenation and CTC was held in Liverpool on Saturday 24 October, hosted by Merseyside Cycling Campaign.

The three main themes of the conference were cycling and public health, cycling and creating space and cycle developments in 2016.

Delegates were welcomed by Cllr Tim Beaumont (Chair of the Liverpool Cycle Forum) and heard presentations from Simon O'Brien (Mayor of Liverpool's Green Advisor), John Ashton (President, Faculty of Public Health), Robin Ireland (CEO, Health Equalities Group), Robin Tucker (Oxfordshire Cycle Network), and Robin Lovelace (Leeds University).

One of the questions raised during the day in a number of different ways, was why, when the benefits of cycling are so clear and undisputed are decision makers still reluctant to make the changes needed.

Julian Huppert, ex Cambridge MP and co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group, discussed the lack of impact that cycling had had during the 2015 general election. He stressed that to increase cycling in the future there was a need to focus on the health benefits of cycling - pollution & obesity - as well as ensuring that all new highway infrastructure created adequate space for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Professor John Ashton CBE, President of the Faculty of Public Health, said that although there is a £120 billion bill for the NHS, there is not sufficient evidence yet on the impact that that spending has on public health! The NHS is facing a crisis and will fail if public health and prevention are not put at the centre of what the NHS is doing, so clinical commissioning groups must understand how best to increase exercise, and that is through walking and cycling. There is already some change in this direction.

Louise Ellman, Liverpool MP and Chair of the Government's Transport Select Committee, said that Liverpool's 20mph areas had been delivered through partnership with public health organisations. She added that an economic case had been made for cycling and it had to be treated as a normal mode of transport.

A recorded message for Robert Goodwill, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, said there would be an announcement on investment in the Autumn Comprehensive Spending Review, a consultation on a delivery plan in Spring 2016 followed by an adopted plan in Summer 2016.

Isabelle Clement, Director, Wheels for Wellbeing, stressed that people should not assume that every cyclist can walk their bike, lift their bike, have 2 wheels and have all working limbs. Therefore cycle infrastructure had to be designed for all types of people (see 'Access for All' page 24).

The above is only a brief summary of some of the topics from some of the speakers present.

Several of the presentations can be downloaded from:

<http://www.mersecycle.org.uk/wp/2015-cyclenation-ctc-annual-conference/>

The following day your editor visited Sir Antony Gormley's 'Another Place' installation on nearby Crosby Beach at Sefton. This features 100 cast iron figures spread out along three kilometres of the foreshore and stretching almost one kilometre out to sea.

A number of the figures have either temporarily or permanently had a variety of colourful clothes and hats added by visitors.



Access for All

Cycling can be easier than walking, a way to keep independent, fit and healthy, a mobility aid, and a useful form of everyday transport. Access for All, Inclusive Cycling, means everybody should be able to cycle regardless of age, health condition or impairment.

Isabelle Clement (right), Director of charity, Wheels for Wellbeing, gave a passionate presentation at the recent Cyclenation/CTC Conference held in Liverpool last October.

She said that when designing infrastructure for cyclists assumptions are nearly always made that:

- All cyclists can levitate
- All cyclists can walk their cycles
- All cyclists can carry their cycles/dependent/trailer/shopping/tools
- All cyclists can lift their cycles
- All cyclists can stand on their pedals
- All cyclists have 2 legs and 2 arms/hands in full working order
- All cyclists ride on 2 wheels.



These assumptions have influenced the design of:

- Cycle paths/lanes widths
- Segregated methods
- Cyclists dismount/no cycling areas
- No dropped kerbs at road closures
- Cycle parking design and location
- Traffic control methods such as barrier designs, gap widths and speed control measures

There is no such thing as 'I can't cycle', but there is such a thing as:

- I can't get through
- There is no safe way to secure my cycle at home/at my destination
- I can't get over this stepped bridge
- I can't safely stop and start in traffic (ASLs are not always the answer)
- I am being stopped from using my mobility aid on public transport/on pavements

Isabelle made the plea that cycle infrastructure design must be beyond the superfit cyclist and beyond the bicycle.

CCNB has for a number of years been trying to ensure that all new cycle infrastructure in Bedford borough meets the needs of all cyclists.

Isabelle uses a power assisted hand cycle which clips on to her wheelchair.

Many disabled people can ride ordinary bikes. All kinds of adaptations are available to suit individual's needs. Low step frame models are suitable for people who can not lift their leg over a cross bar or the saddle. Brake and gear controls can be fitted on either side of a handlebar if both hands cannot be used. It is even possible to pedal a cycle with one leg.

Apart from a hand cycle as used by Isabelle Clement there are numerous other types available for disabled persons from bikes, trikes to quads to use either alone or with an experienced cyclist either in front, behind or side by side:



Tricycle or Trike



Wheelchair with bike



Recumbent



Side by side bike

More information on cycling for disabled people can be found on numerous websites including:

- <http://www.ctc.org.uk/ride/inclusive-cycling>
- <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/disability/>
- <http://www.getcycling.org.uk/disability-cycling/>
- <http://www.wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/>

La Digne Photomontage

La Digne is the third largest inhabited island of the Seychelles in terms of population. The island, only 6 miles across, lies east of Praslin and west of Felicite.



Only 15 vehicles are allowed on the island so ox carts and bicycles make up the main modes of transport.





*Thanks to Kim Wilson
for permission to use
her holiday photos*



Cycling's Renaissance - Madrid/Cambridge

In the last newsletter we stated that all around the world cities and towns are realising the benefits of cycling (and walking) by converting roads into cycle tracks. In the article the cities of Seville, Paris and London were mentioned. This article continues the story with Madrid and Cambridge.

Madrid

A few years ago Madrid was described by Lonely Planet as a city devoid of cyclists due to the absence of cycle lanes and the lack of encouragement by the city authorities for cycling. This is now rapidly changing.



Madrid Palacio Real

Last Autumn when your Editor visited the city a significant amount of cycle infrastructure was seen all over the city from on-road protected cycle lanes and cycle signs along quiet roads to significant amounts of off-road two way cycle tracks to wide dual use paths in green areas and parks. All of them seemed to be well used by tourists as well as the local Spaniards.

The jewel in the crown, however, was the completion only two-three years ago of the Rio Madrid project. This was the creation of a linear park with 30 kilometres of cycle and pedestrians paths along both sides of the Rio Manzanares (Manzanares River) which flows at a lower level around the south side of the city. To enable this to be done the old M30 motorway was moved underground.

The new park with up to 31 kiosks, cafes and restaurants along its length shows off gems such as the old Puente de Sogovia and Puente de

Toledo bridges which had previously been choked with traffic and new urban landmarks, like the Puerto Monumental bridge in Arganzuela Park and the city beach.



↑
M30 motorway going underground next to river

↑
Wide cycle/pedestrian paths along river side

→
Puente Monumental de Arganzuela bridge



Just over a year ago in December 2014 the city council approved a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) also called the Madrid 2020 Mobility Plan to reduce traffic and improve air quality in the city.

The plan is to make Madrid even more cycle and pedestrian friendly by keeping cars out of almost 500 acres in the core of the old city. It suggests 95 measures including replacing car lanes by cycle lanes in 24 major streets and planting trees along the streets to connect all the green spaces across the city.

By 2020 they estimate traffic to be reduced by six percent corresponding to a saving of 135,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, 400 tonnes of nitrous oxides and 26 tonnes of particulate matter.

The plan will be financed by added taxes, government credits and fines.



Monument Alfonso XXII in Parque De El Retiro, a favourite weekend and holiday spot for entertainment, walking and cycling

A video on the Rio Madrid project can be downloaded from:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOgo4o_afnU



Contraflow in Calle Mayor near Sol, the heart of downtown Madrid



Suburban off-road cycle path



Two way off-road cycle track crossing busy road at signals



Roof garden in Atocha railway station



Bike hire at the hanging garden on Paseo del Prado



Cycle signs and symbols on suburban quiet road

Cambridge USA

When your Editor regularly visited Cambridge up to the late 1990s, that is, Cambridge Massachusetts, USA, not Cambridge UK, very little cycling was observed.

Today this has drastically changed with the city being one of the top ten in the USA for making efforts to improve cycling safety.

This Cambridge, across the River Charles from its larger neighbour Boston, is the home of Harvard University and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) as well as the Divisional Headquarters of the American Chemical Company for which I worked at their European Technical Centre in St Neots UK for many years.

Currently around 7% of people over the age of 16 use a bicycle to commute to work, a similar level to that found in Bedford.

The city has numerous bike paths including one along the River Charles and the Cambridge Linear Park. Many of the streets now have protected cycle lanes although some transfer onto the pavement in some areas. Cyclists are not allowed on those pavements where there are heavy pedestrian flows.



Protected cycle lane

Cycle parking at Alewife, a local subway station, where three cycleways intersect



For more information on cycling in Cambridge see:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Transportation/bikesincambridge>

Nigel Brigham Farewell

At the end of January 2016 Nigel Brigham, East of England Regional Director for Sustrans, said farewell after nearly 21 years with the organisation. Based in Peterborough Nigel started his involvement with Sustrans when he briefly lived in Bedford.



Over the years Nigel has worked closely with CCNB on cycling projects in the Bedford area, particularly on the Queen's Park Riverside Improvement Lottery Project in 2003.

One of the lasting features of the project was the design and creation by local Bedford artist, Susannah Oliver, of a number of sculptures entitled 'Bulrushes', the larger one being installed as the gateway entrance to The Slie off Ford End Road .



*Gateway Opening - The Slie Queen's Park on a wet December day
(17 December 2004)*

On behalf of CCNB, your editor has wished Nigel all the best for his future. He will always be remembered as the man on the Brompton bike.

CCNB Annual General Meeting

This will take place on Friday 22 April 2016 at 7.30pm
Friends Meeting House, 5 Lansdowne Road, Bedford, MK40 2BY

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

Please put the date in your diary.

Local Cycle Rides Contact:

CTC - North Beds Section - (01234) 219148

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)