



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

**Issue 90  
June 2021**



**Harpur Square New Secure Cycle Stands**

# CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

*Founded 1992*

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@cyclebedford



cycle\_bedford

## **Campaigning Representation**

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group (disbanded July 2018)

Bedford Stations Travel Plan Steering Group

Bedford Hospital Bicycle Users Group

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

Bedford Green Wheel

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

It is affiliated to



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# Editorial

With summer now with us CCNB would like all members and recipients of this newsletter to encourage all their friends, neighbours and colleagues to get out that bike from the back of the shed or garage - pump up the tyres, check the brakes and oil the chain - and start to enjoy all the benefits that cycling can bring.

Bedford is and has always been a 'Town of Cyclists' and over the years an extensive reasonably safe cycle network has been created with many routes completely off-road and others using a mixture of off-road paths/tracks with quiet residential roads.

It is possible to cycle from every residential area in the town to all the main destinations without going on any busy main road - yes there are some gaps and improvements still to be made but if cyclists ever feel unsafe it is no hardship to get off and walk through a section.

Cycling not only improves a person's fitness and health but by using a bike instead of a motor vehicle for short journeys also helps reduce Bedford's traffic pollution and congestion. It also goes some way to preventing irreversible climate change which is rapidly approaching if no action is taken NOT tomorrow but today.

The belief that someone else will take the action to save the planet and ourselves is not true - Everyone MUST do their bit no matter how small.

At the beginning of last year's Covid-19 lockdown a fall in motor vehicles on the roads saw a significant increase in cycling nationally but with the easing of lockdowns this has now fallen back as traffic returns to near normal levels.

With an ambitious target of 'net zero' carbon dioxide emissions by 2050, and transport contributing to 36% (41% in Bedford) of carbon dioxide emissions, cycling and walking have a pivotal part to play.

Although a long way from the UK the Solomon Islands in the Pacific have already seen five of their islands disappear under the ocean in the last two decades with at least a further six under threat.

Last year the world's carbon footprint fell by 2.2 gigatonnes (7%) but to reach the 2015 Paris Agreement to keep global average temperatures well below 2 degrees C (preferably 1.5 degrees C) above pre-industrial levels will require cuts in carbon of 1-2 gigatonnes per year for the rest of the decade.

Commentators have said that at the current rate of progress we are on target to reach an increase of 3.3 degrees C by the end of the century with its adverse consequences. It is therefore extremely important that we meet the above deadline.

Cycling UK, the national cycling organization, has recently said:

*"We believe it's time to move up the gears and take steps to ensure cycling is for everyone – from a child learning to ride using a balance bike, to an older person visiting friends on an e-bike; from a disabled person hand cycling to work, to a family having a day out at the weekend."*

Bedford's cycling policies can not be faulted but they tend to fall down when schemes are to be delivered on the ground.

The three outstanding major gaps in the cycle network which have been waiting for more than 20 years and missed opportunities are the Bromham Road railway bridge and the A421/A6 junction for safe cycle crossings and the High Street, currently being improved with a single carriageway and wider pavements and a predominance of extra loading/unloading parking bays, for the absence of two-way cycle facilities.

In a video introduction for the High Street work -

[Transporting Bedford - Improving Bedford High Street - YouTube](#)

- it claims that when completed cyclists will be encouraged with fewer vehicles and better access at junctions and the street will have a café culture.

In addition to the above larger schemes there are numerous smaller schemes which have been missed, for example, the absence of a safe crossing of Barkers Lane at Goldington Green, a cycle crossing and infrastructure at the Goldington Road/Perkins Road junction, a safe crossing at Fairhill, etc.

In the Borough's 2013 Allocations & Designations Plan Cycle Network Background Paper, still current as one of the documents in the latest local plan, Local Plan 2030, 54 items are listed for improvement. Today, eight years later, around 46 are still outstanding.

Cycling UK have recently issued a report on local authorities spend on cycling and walking in 2020/21, In it they say that based on a freedom of information request to all local authorities Bedford is recorded as being in the bottom 10 of the 59 LAs that responded.

This is in contrast to what has been said at a recent council meeting that **"100s and 100s of thousands of pounds were being spent on active travel in the Borough"**.

A huge amount of money has been recently given in grants for active travel improvements but this is expected to come out of 2021/22 expenditure.

CCNB would like it to be spent wisely and on schemes which will make the cycle network even safer for new or less confident cyclists to get around the town.

# Borough's 2021 Cycling Report

The Borough's 2021 cycling report was presented to the 4 March meeting of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Matthew D'Archambaud, Chief Officer for Transport, Highways and Engineering (COTH&E).

The report centred on the increased opportunities for improving the cycle network to encourage more residents to cycle.

## Schemes currently planned or under construction

**Goldington Road Protected Cycle Lane** – Funding from the Accelerator, Active Travel Fund and Local Transport Plan will be used to install a protected cycle lane along Goldington Road from Perkins Road to Norse Road. This project will include a Toucan crossing on Norse Road. Following a borough wide consultation, 67% of respondents (191) were in support of the protected cycle lane. We are currently tendering for monitoring of the area before and after the lane is constructed.

**Signing of the Bedford Cycle Network** – Access Fund and Town Deal Accelerator Fund have funded the signing of the 26 routes leading into the town centre and the Green Wheel. Completed by April 2021. Proposing a borough wide launch of the Bedford Cycle Network to raise awareness of the cycle routes. [As of June a number of routes have still not been signed - See also page 10]

**Secure Cycle Unit** – a secure cycle unit is being constructed in Harpur Square as part of the Town Deal Accelerator Fund. This unit will allow electronic access via a smart phone app to residents who sign up to use the unit. It is hoped that safer parking in the town centre will encourage residents to access the shops and facilities using their bikes. [The unit opened on 8 June - See also page 12]

**Barkers Lane** – Ward Funds are being used to update the pavement markings which will help to raise awareness of both cyclists and pedestrians on the shared use path.

**Bedford to Stewartby** – a pedestrian and cycle link from Bedford to Stewartby is being constructed by Highways England.

## Proposed schemes

**Town Deal Cycle Infrastructure bid** – Bedford have bid for ~ £5m from the Towns Fund investment to deliver a package of network improvements, including links and improvements to the 'Green Wheel' which circles the town and cycle links to Bedford Midland Station.

The Green Wheel will provide greater cycling connectivity around Bedford, including between nearby settlements and routes to the town centre. It will present a safer means of travelling around and into town for cyclists and pedestrians who will be able to use mostly traffic free

routes. The Green Wheel will also provide an appealing network of cycle paths for recreation, particularly as it will connect residential areas to open spaces and local community facilities. The Green Wheel encircles Bedford, capturing the majority of the Town Deal Area and also connecting to surrounding areas which will enable a wider range of benefits.

Bromham Road Bridge provides vehicular connectivity between the town centre and Bedford Midland Station and residential areas to the west of the railway line. Network Rail recently demolished and rebuilt Bromham Road Bridge to accommodate overhead line equipment, however, new walking and cycling infrastructure could not be accommodated at the time which restricts usage by pedestrians and cyclists living in the residential areas to the west of the station. Towns Funds will fund a cycling link from the bridge into Bedford Midland Station which will improve accessibility for both cyclists and pedestrians.

The project will address existing issues and deliver the required infrastructure to enable a more connected cycling environment suitable for all - beginners, family cycling and regular cyclists. A decision on our outline business case is expected in early March and should we be successful we will be invited to develop this package of measures into formal designs for sign off in in early 2022. [See also page 18]

**A6/A421 junction** – initial feasibility design to be completed by April 2021 and if a viable design is identified, and subject to available funding, construction might commence during 2022/2023. Developer contributions to funding would increase the viability of the project and have been identified for ~ 300k from proposed future development.

**Route 51** – The route of National Cycle Network 51 is under consideration with the creation of an alternative route through Wootton. Work is being undertaken with Highways England to link up Kempston and Wootton.

## Other cycling development work

**Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)** – the first draft has been completed and the Department of Transport have provided feedback. Work now needs to be undertaken to incorporate their comments and update the document so the Council are in a good position for applying for future funding.

**Big Issue eBikes** - Joint venture between The Big Issue and Share Bike, a Norwegian micro-mobility company with 20 years' experience delivering high-quality, affordable and reliable bike sharing schemes. The scheme being considered will recruit and retrain local people who were previously unemployed and support them back into work to run eBike schemes in communities across the country. Employees will be paid a living wage and supported with access to services and support to help

improve their lives.

**Behaviour Change Work** – Sustrans are working with schools and businesses across the borough to run a number of activities to promote active travel and help encourage people to travel more sustainably. The Covid pandemic has had an impact on the type of work they can do but they have creatively adapted their work to include providing recycled bikes to key workers, running small group Nordic Walking sessions, run the Autumn Walking Challenge, promoting active travel to key workers; Royal Mail, Bedford Hospital, supermarkets, delivery companies. The School's team have run outdoor balance bike and scooter sessions during school holidays, created treasure hunt trails around parks in Bedford, produced curriculum based home learning packs for teachers, run various promotions and challenges and much more. [The Department for Transport's latest reports on Travel Behaviour can be seen on page 30].

**E-Cargo Bikes** – Six electric cargo bikes have been delivered to the Council. One is in use by Flamme Rouge and the others are awaiting to be used. This was delayed due to the current lockdown as the riders need to have Bikeability training before they can ride them. Once delivered they will be used by the Sustainable Transport Team (x2 bikes), Harrold Country Park staff and volunteers, Street Cleansing Team and the University of Bedfordshire. [The latter will no longer have one].

**Bikeability** – the training of bike skills in school has been badly hit by the Covid pandemic. Our Bikeability contractors are working in schools where possible but sadly training targets have been unable to be achieved this year. [See the government's latest grants for Bikeability on page 27]

**School Street** – Cauldwell School has been selected as a trial school due to the nature of the road layout and the level of commitment the school has shown towards encouraging active travel. Consultation with the residents, school and nursery are currently underway and the proposed date for the start of the trial is the 8th March 2021. [See also page 15].



# Parklets

A **Parklet** is a very, very small park which can transform a street into a vibrant community activity by providing a place for people to relax, rest as well as cycle parking. In High Streets they can add a touch of greenspace.

They have been popular in the US since the 1990s. In the UK, one of the first of its kind appeared in Hackney, London in 2015, with others now popping up in Leeds and Manchester.

Nearer to Bedford, Huntingdonshire District Council has recently started to look for funding to install parklets, as a pilot project, in three of their market towns; Huntingdon, Ramsey and St. Ives.



Their introduction can also:

- increase footfall and support active travel.
- be used as places to show case local businesses
- clean the air by reducing car parking spaces and pollution
- help make people safer by reducing the speed of traffic
- improve the look and feel of the High Street
- bring the taste of the park into the High Street and help people feel proud of their area

Living Streets has a guide to creating a pop-up parklet in your street -

[parklets\\_tool\\_kit.pdf](https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/parklets-tool-kit.pdf) ([livingstreets.org.uk](https://www.livingstreets.org.uk))

Short videos on 'How to create a pop up park on your street' and 'People Parking Bay in Hackney' can be seen at:

<https://youtu.be/XD7mHOEBFTM> and <https://youtu.be/1tKUh-kuysY>

# Cycle Network Signage

In the last newsletter an article on 'Outstanding Cycle Infrastructure' described the Bedford Cycle Network (BCN) as a network of 27 strategic radial routes focussed on the town centre and an inner and outer orbital routes, The Avenue and Green Wheel (GW), linking up with many existing paths and quiet roads to give variable cycle network.

Some routes but not all have been signposted over the years. In 2017 all the radial routes were given a BCN route number and more recent signage has shown the route number alongside the destination.



Over the last two months much of the remaining routes have been signposted using £380,000 of the £1m grant awarded to Bedford from the government's town deal accelerator fund.

The Borough's published network however is basically a dual network with routes varying in type and purpose from

***quieter more safer routes using paths and mainly 20mph residential roads for new/less confident cyclists***

and

***fast direct routes using main roads for experienced/confident cyclists willing to share their ride with fast and sometimes heavy traffic.***

If you are a child or adult beginners CCNB recommends before using any part of the cycle network that you learn how to ride a bike by starting with balancing, steering and braking control at low saddle height following by pedalling to gain confidence. There are many open spaces where you can do this, for example:

Bedford Park

Russell Park

The Embankment

Jubilee Park

Allen Park

Waveney Green

Mowsbury Park

Priory Country Park

Addison Howard Park

For most new cyclists CCNB would advise until they become more confident that they only use the following routes:

***Nearly all off-road***

- BCR 1 - Great Denham via river
- GW - Outer orbital route
- NCN 51 - Willington/Sandy (east) - Kempston/Wootton (west)

***Substantially off-road using shared cycle tracks***

- BCR 4 - Bromham
- BCR 12 - Elms Farm
- BCR 13 - Goldington Rd - **Only** from Polhill Av/Newnham Av
- BCR 15 - Russell Park/Barkers Lane
- BCR 17 - Priors Park/Cardington
- BCR 19 - Fenlake/Shortstown
- BDR 24 - Wixams via Ampthill Rd - **Only** as far as A421/A6 junc.
- BCR 26 - Hastingsbury/West Kempston
- Avenue - Kimbolton Road to Riverside Square (clockwise)

***Mostly using quiet residential roads***

- BCR 3 - Biddenham
- BCR 6 - Manton Lane
- BCR 7 - Brickhill/Woodlands Park
- BCR 9 - Putnoe/Mark Rutherford School
- BCR 10 - Putnoe/Woodside
- BCR 14 - Castle Road/Riverfield Drive
- BCR 20 - Meadowsweet Drive/Shortstown
- BCR 22 - Abbeyfield
- BCR 25 - South Kempston

CCNB would not advise new or less confident cyclists to use the following routes from the town centre part or all of which are on busy roads or main roads until they become more confident:

- BCR 2 - Great Denham - as far as Old Ford End Road
- BCR 5 - Clapham/Oakley - as far as Manton Ln & from Green Ln
- BCR 8 - Kimbolton Road - whole route
- BCR 8A - Putnoe Lane - whole route
- BCR 11 - Church Lane - whole route
- BCR 13 - Goldington Rd as far as Polhill Av
- BCR 16 - Riverfield Drive - whole route
- BCR 18 - Priors Industrial Estate - from Longholme Way rdbt
- BCR 21 - London Road - whole route
- BCR 23 - Elstow Village & Wixams - whole route
- Avenue - Kimbolton Road to Riverside Square - anticlockwise

# Harpur Square New Secure Cycle Stands

The cover picture of this issue shows the new secure cycle stand compound just prior to being opened in Harpur Square south on 8 June..

The facility containing 28 secure cycle parking spaces replacing the previous 26 spaces has been introduced using part of the grant from the government's town deal accelerator fund awarded to Bedford. It will allow cyclists visiting the town centre to go about their business without the fear of returning to find their bicycle stolen.

The facility is accessed by registering for an app which can then be downloaded from their smart phone.



## Steps for Access:

1. Sign up by emailing your full name, contact number & address to: [sustainable.transport@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:sustainable.transport@bedford.gov.uk)
2. You will receive an email with login details within 7 working days
3. Download the Okey app to smart phone

## Once Signed Up:

1. Launch the Okey app on your smart phone
2. Sign into app and find **cycle FalcoWR03** and press open
3. The door will automatically open

Please ensure you close the door behind you

One negative aspect of the new set-up is that the spacing between stands does not comply with the Borough's cycle parking guidance so that bicycles with panniers or child seats may find it difficult or impossible to park if there is an adjacent bicycle already in place.

# Town Centre Cycle Thefts

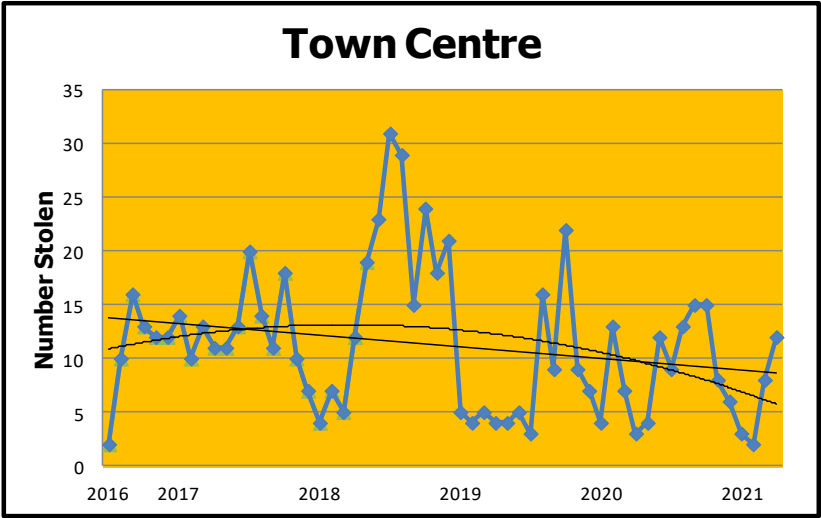
During April there were 12 bike thefts reported in the town centre;

Riverside Sq (3), High St (2), Silver St (2), Harpur Ctr (2), Harpur St (1), St Peter's St (1) and Tavistock St (1).

The figures are expected to be higher than this as not all thefts are reported to the police.

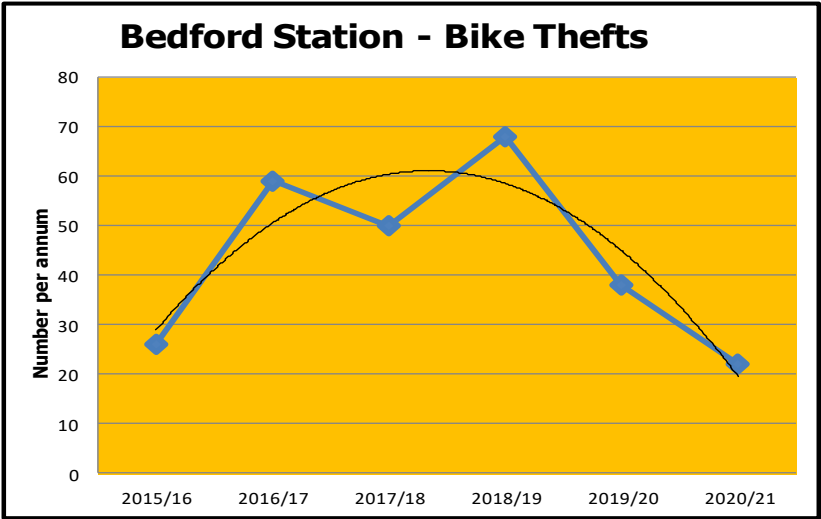
Reported thefts have declined since the high of summer 2018 (see figure right) although this is most likely to be associated with the fall in cyclists visiting the town centre since the start of the Public Spaces

Protection Order (PSPO) banning cyclists from riding in the pedestrianised areas of the town during shopping hours with a fine. This has precluded many residents, particularly the elderly, who rely on a bicycle for mobility visiting the central area.



## Bedford Station Cycle Thefts

Even though there were only around 15% of the previous year’s bicycles parked at Bedford station the number of thefts was unusually high.



# Goldington Green Academy Accreditation

After three years hard work Goldington Green Academy has been awarded a silver accreditation through **Modeshare STARS** for promoting cycling, walking and scooting sustainable travel.



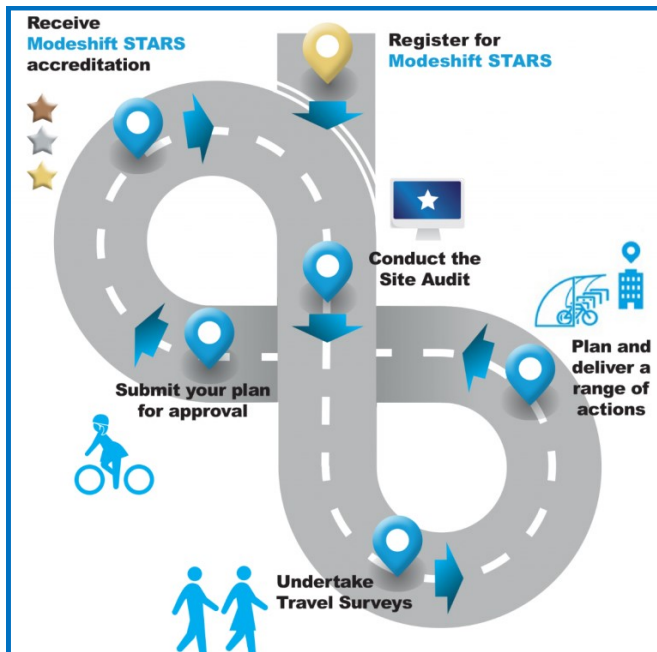
Modeshift STARS is the Centre of Excellence for the delivery of Effective Travel Plans in Education, Business and Community settings. The scheme recognises schools, businesses and other organisations that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel.

First launched in 2008 to support the development of School Travel Plans the scheme was extended in 2019 to cover businesses and the community.

In November 2018 St Thomas More School in Brickhill was awarded a bronze level accreditation for its School Travel Plan and in 2019 Shortstown Primary School obtained a gold one.

For further information of Modeshift STARS see:

<https://www.modeshiftstars.org>



# Cauldwell School Street Initiative

School Streets schemes were first introduced more than 30 years ago in Italy and in the UK in 2015. Their aim is to transform roads outside schools so that pedestrians and cyclists can use them at school start and finish times.

Removing vehicles outside the school gates makes the space safer, less polluted and more pleasant, making it easier and safer to walk and cycle to school. They create a more pleasant environment for everyone, whilst making sure that residents, businesses, pedestrians and cyclists can still use the road.

A school street initiative involves temporarily closing the road at set times in the morning and afternoon. Vehicles are not permitted to enter the street between these times unless they have been granted an exemption, although some schemes block the road all together restricting all traffic movements.



With the approval of residents and the school Bedford Borough Council has selected Cauldwell Priimary School and Peter Pan Nursery in Edward Road for a trial this summer term. The scheme will be made permanent based on the results observed.

Edward Road off Kempston Road is a short narrow no-through road with parked cars on either side along its whole length and no turning circle at the end except in the small car park in front of the school entrance.

To encourage more cycling and walking along the road for pupils and parents from the Britannia Development CCNB believes a Toucan crossing is required in the vicinity of Edward Road/Victoria Road.

CCNB has been requesting such a crossing for many years to improve the safety of cyclists emerging from Victoria Road trying to cross the busy Kempston Road. Victoria Road is part of the town's Avenue route as well as the route from Ampthill Road. The scheme is one of the actions in the town's Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCVIP).

# No Vehicle Idling Signs

Rule 123 of The Highway Code states that drivers must not leave the engine running unnecessarily on a public road. Nevertheless research carried out by the RAC has found that 26% of drivers are seen with their engines idling outside schools. Local authorities have the power to issue £20 fixed penalties for emission offences and stationary idling under The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.



Harmful particulate matter from idling engines is among growing general concerns about air quality and climate change. It has been estimated that more than 40,000 deaths per annum are linked to outdoor air pollution, with children, the elderly and those with respiratory conditions being the most vulnerable.

Last year the Borough erected their first 'No vehicle idling' outside Bedford Girls School on Cardington Road. This has now been rolled out to most schools..

# Cycling Levels

After the trebling of cycling seen nationally during the first Covid-19 lockdown in March and April 2020 due to the reduction of traffic on roads making them safer to use the situation has now reverted to pre-lockdown levels.

This is not the case with cycling to the railway station. To date an average of 77 spaces have been used this summer, a slight rise over last summer but still only 18% of the spaces taken up in summer 2019.

Cycling to the town centre is better with levels currently up to 58% of summer 2019.

# Amphill Road Improvements

The end of May 2021 has seen the start of the latest scheme under the Transporting Bedford project - The Southern Gateway - between Cow Bridge and Britannia Road.

The scheme, planned to be completed in early 2022, is to reduce traffic congestion and enhance road safety and consists mainly of improved traffic signals and road widening.

The road will be widened to create a second northbound lane between Elstow Road and Britannia Road. One of the lanes for use by buses and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) enabling people to continue benefiting from the bus lane and encouraging the use of electric vehicles as they become more common.

There will also be improvements for vehicles turning right into side roads off Amphill Road, helping traffic flow better and easing congestion.

In terms of cycling the existing **Toucan** crossing for the town's cycle network 'Avenue' route near Victoria and Sandhurst Roads will be moved slightly further north to enable the bus lane to be extended and will become a staggered signalled crossing. The recent newsletter sent out to all residents with the plan stated that this will be a **Puffin** for pedestrians only. CCNB has been ensured that it will be in fact a **Toucan** crossing for both pedestrians and cyclists as quoted in a prior public notice.

The existing **Toucan** near Sexton Road is to be removed and become a uncontrolled crossing.

The cycle route on the east side of Amphill Road will be curtailed at the current Pelican crossing at Technology House, which is to be upgraded to a staggered **Toucan** crossing. This will link cycle traffic on the east side of Amphill Road to the main cycle route from the Park & Ride (and beyond) on the western side of Amphill Road. This crossing will be the only formal crossing point between Aspley Road and Elstow Road.

The crossing will also link to the long awaited 'Villa' cycle route scheme from the Sandhurst Road railway bridge via Mabel Road to emerge onto Amphill Road from Maryville Road. The Villa route was originally to join the existing shared path route at the Sexton Road toucan crossing

In addition air quality monitoring will be installed as part of the project. New electronic message signs will also be installed to provide journey information to drivers, and average speed cameras installed to improve road safety.

# Allhallows Improvements

The major project to improve the appearance of Allhallows which started in August 2020 is now nearing completion with the photo below taken in April 2021.

'Sheffield' type cycle stands have been installed to give a total of 18 stands to accommodate 36 bicycles replacing 24 previously available; 6 in front of Nationwide, 4 opposite outside Our Move, 4 in front of the entrance to Peacocks and a further 4 on the south side of the store, to the right of the entrance

The two rows of stands (4+6) in Greenhill Street near McColls have not been replaced although 2 new ones have been placed in the undercover alcove to the left of the closed bank, a net loss of 16.

Overall this has given a **net loss of 4 spaces**.



## Town Centre Investment Plan Update

It was announced by the government in early June that Bedford will receive £22.6 million (90%) of the £24.99m requested.

One of the seven projects put forward is £5m for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

# Silver Street Square Improvements

As part of the High Street project the east end of Silver Street has been revamped to create a more open square by removing the raised flower beds.

Unfortunately this has also involved removing the popular row of 12 cycle stands alongside the now closed Debenhams store which CCNB had the Borough increase in 2013 (right) to meet the demand in this part of the town for secure cycle parking.

The revamp has also resulted in the removal of a further 5 stands on the north side.



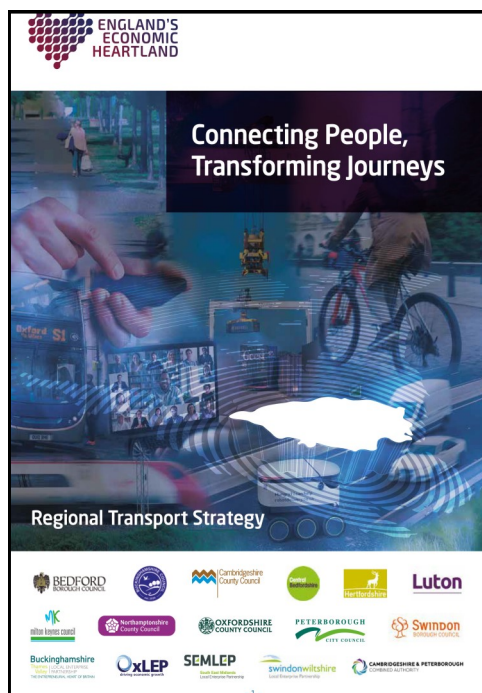
In their place are just 6 stands (see photo below) alongside the JD store, previously Burtons.

Together with the removal of the railings at the High Street junction with Mill Street opposite means at the present time that the number of spaces for bicycles has been significantly reduced from 48 spaces to just 20, **a current net loss of 28 spaces.**



It has been promised that some additional stands will be installed at the entrance to Mill Street when this phase of the project is carried out shortly.

# Economic Heartlands Transport Strategy



The final version of England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) Regional Transport Strategy was sent to the Secretary of State for Transport in March 2021 for approval.

In a separate summary document it states that the existence of a Regional Transport Strategy for an area which encompasses the entirety of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, one of the Government's national economic priorities, is a unique opportunity to transform its transport system.

The scale of the challenge cannot be underestimated but the need is irrefutable if the UK's commitment to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 is to be realised.

The ambition of the Regional Transport Strategy is to achieve a net zero carbon transport system by 2040, 10 years earlier.

One of the main steps is to reduce reliance on the private car in a region where average journeys are longer, and car use higher than the national average.

In 2017 transport emissions equated to 47% of the Heartland's total carbon dioxide emissions, compared with 37% nationally. In addition transport emissions between 2012 and 2017 increased at a faster rate than elsewhere (9.4% compared to the UK average of 4.9%). There is therefore a clear need for action as evidenced also by the number Air quality Management Areas in the region.

***[In 2017 transport in Bedford Borough represented 41% of total carbon emissions, a 15% increase between 2012 and 2017].***

The approach taken in the Transport Strategy builds on the Government's policy as set out in the Department for Transport's Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge in which the Secretary of State sets out that:

*"Public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for our daily activities. We will use our cars less and be more able to rely*

*on a convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network.”*

It also builds on the fact that the majority of local authority's in the partnership have passed resolutions declaring a 'climate emergency' and have targets to deliver organisational net zero emissions by 2030.

One of the 5 point plans is to champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport to improve local connectivity to ensure that everyone can realise their potential.

Current patterns of travel and consumption of resources are not compatible with ambitions to achieve net zero carbon emissions ahead of 2050, nor with the need to ensure the long-term sustainability of the region. It is necessary to effect a change in travel patterns; both by reducing the need to travel and by achieving changed travel behaviours and patterns of demand, including reducing reliance on the private car.

Active travel is one of the five policies of the strategy:

*We will work with infrastructure owners and operators to ensure that proposals brought forward for the development of the transport system reduce reliance on the private car by considering the needs of users on the basis of the following Travel Hierarchy:*

- i) Active travel modes (pedestrians and cyclists)*
- ii) Enabling access to services and opportunities without the need for motorised travel*
- iii) Public transport & shared modes (bus, scheduled coach and rail)*
- iv) Low emission/ zero carbon private vehicles, and two-wheeler vehicles including motorcycles*
- v) Other motorised modes.*

*All proposals to be prepared on the basis that they provide inclusive and accessible travel options for all users and **take account of relevant national and local design standards – for example, walking and cycling.***

Additional measures over those being taken forward are required to decarbonise our transport system. Measures are also required to both reduce the need to travel and reduce the reliance on the private car.

Through the Travel Hierarchy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, work will be carried out with partners to ensure walking and cycling levels continue to grow across the region.

Improvements will be carried out to the National Cycle Network and urban cycleways, including the development of the Varsity Way, a high-quality cycleway to form the backbone of a strategic cycleway across the region.

See:

[Transport Strategy - England's Economic Heartland \(englandseconomicheartland.com\)](https://www.englandseconomicheartland.com)

# Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

In May last year the government announced a £2 billion package to ‘create a new era for cycling and walking’. Of this, £250 million was allocated for an ‘emergency active travel fund’, to include the likes of wider pavements, pop-up bike lanes and cycle-only corridors.

People were reluctant to use public transport during the pandemic, and this led to ‘unprecedented levels’ of walking and cycling across the UK.

As a result many Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) were created in the UK. These are usually groups of residential streets, bordered by main or ‘distributor’ roads (the places where buses, lorries and non-local traffic should be), where “through” motor vehicle traffic is discouraged or removed.

Most LTNs use so-called ‘modal filters’ to stop vehicles driving beyond a certain point. These are placed at strategic points around the neighbourhood to stop drivers using the streets as ‘rat-runs’. Over the last few years traffic on minor roads and residential streets has increased, as drivers moved from major roads to avoid congestion aided by traffic based navigation systems and apps.

There are many forms of modal filters, including bollards, gates, planters, opposing one-way systems, bus gates and width restrictions.

LTNs have been shown:

- increase physical activity through more walking and cycling
- benefit local businesses through an increase in sales and higher spend in people who walk or cycle to a high street
- create new public space
- improve air quality
- lower car-use for shorter trips
- increase social interactions between neighbours and strengthen communities.

There has however been a number of adverse reactions by residents to some schemes and a number have been cancelled.

## Bedford

At last February’s Climate Change Committee meeting a member of the public raised the question as to what proposals there were to introduce LTNs in Bedford.

The Mayor responded that there were no current plans to introduce LTNs in the borough. The Council was watching with interest a number of other areas across the country where councils had introduced LTNs, but had subsequently faced a backlash from residents in nearby areas due to traffic being displaced onto their streets. The Mayor commented

that a suitable solution might be found in time, but currently it was not clear that LTNs represented a net benefit to residents.

LTNs outside the town centre are however not new in Bedford.

There are a number of single streets which have gates or barriers to prohibit motor vehicles except cyclists. Example are:

- Locked barrier between Westrope Way in Brickhill to Ashmead Road in Woodlands Park
- Bus gate between Ford End Road in Queens Park and Greenkeepers Road in Great Denham
- Bus gate Wilstead Road and Bedford Road in Wixams
- Bus gate between The Highway and Carmichael Drive in Shortstown

together with a proposed new bus gate in Wilkinson Road Kempston.

## Wilkinson Road - Bus Gate

Bedford Borough Council issued a public notice in February 2021 proposing to make part of Wilkinson Road in Kempston between Woburn Road and Ridge Road a 'Bus Only Gate' enforced via the use of an ANPR camera. This is intended to give buses priority through the local estate, encourage public transport usage, and encourage drivers to use more appropriate roads rather than this estate road as a short cut. This is anticipated to achieve a reduction in the overall number of vehicles using this road, thus improving road safety for all highway users, including cyclists and pedestrians.

The location of the closure is between Baldwin Walk and Oliver Close, that is, midway between where the off-road cycle track from Bedford via Kempston Challenger Academy (Hastingsbury) meets Wilkinson Road and then turns off to the underpass of The Branston Way on its way to Bedford Logistics Link business park and eventually Wootton.



*Location of 'bus gate'*

*As of mid June it had not been implemented*

# King's Bridge Reopens

Kings Bridge over the River Great Ouse on the cycle/pedestrian route between Oasis Beach Pool and Aspects Leisure Park reopened to the public in mid April.

The bridge was closed in October 2020 to undergo a £600,000 maintenance programme which involved refurbishing some of the steelwork, overseeing the replacement of worn timber deck panels with new steel decking and high grip surfacing. To complete the work the whole bridge was repainted.



## Public Spaces Protection Order Update

The current three year Public spaces Protection Order (PSPO) banning cycling during shopping hours in the town centre's pedestrianised area is operational until 2022. Last November enforcement of the Order was awarded to District Enforcement replacing one held by Kingdom Services since January 2018.

In a report presented to the Borough's Environmental Committee's April meeting it was stated that 147 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) had been issued in the first four months of the new contract for cycling in the town centre.

Not included in the PSPO and therefore not fined are the increasing number of fast e-scooters seen in the town centre and elsewhere which at the present time are illegal everywhere in the UK except on private land.

# DryCycle

Bedford's DryCycle four wheeled enclosed e-bike originally launched at the 2019 Cycle Show was featured on the cover together with an article in CCNB's Newsletter Issue 85 of October 2019.

Since then the DryCycle has been extensively improved with version VIII and is white instead of the original yellow.



*White DryCycle Version VIII*

Steady progress has been made over the last few weeks with the first batch of 20 DryCycles being assembled for sale. They can now be ordered for delivery or collection. The full price is £14,995 plus options and delivery.

A three minute launch video can be seen on:

[DryCycle - Commuter Vehicle - Launch Video! - YouTube](#)

A review by Electroheads on a trip around Bedford ending in Bedford Park can be seen here:

[WTF? This electric car is technically a bicycle - YouTube](#)

A look around the working parts of a DryCycle to find out what lies beneath the shiny plastic bodywork:

[Look around the working parts of a DryCycle to find out what lies beneath the shiny plastic bodywork - YouTube](#)

# Norse Road Mobile Phone Masts

A new round of mobile telecommunication masts have been springing up around the town mainly for the new G5 network.

It has been noted that one mast recently installed in Norse Road in Goldington (see photo below) has been placed with its many cabinets onto the dual use pedestrian/cycle path near the Hookham Lane roundabout reducing its effective width by at least one third and even more if the cabinet doors have to be opened for maintenance work.



Norse Road is on Bedford's Cycle Network outer orbital route known as the Green Wheel (see top right).



As a result CCNB asked the Borough Council what their policy was with regard to allowing telecommunication equipment masks/cabinets to be placed on footpaths.

In their reply they said it should not have happened and they have internally reviewed their procedure and issued advice to make sure it does not happen in the future.

At the same time a Stage 2 Complaint Order has been issued.

# Cycle Training - Bikeability

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps on 9 April announced a £18 million grant for cycle training across the country to ensure children and their families have the confidence to choose active travel, as the government encourages everyone to choose to walk or cycle where possible.

The funding, managed via the Bikeability Trust charity, will go toward delivering high-quality, practical on-road cycle training as a modern day equivalent of the 'cycling proficiency' scheme many parents will themselves have undertaken during their school days.

Bikeability at different levels of the scheme, allows children to learn to:

- develop early cycle handling and awareness skills (Bikeability Balance)
- master pedalling (Bikeability Learn to Ride)
- prepare for on-road cycling (Level 1)
- cycle on single-lane roads and simple junctions (Level 2)
- handle busier streets, complex junctions and roundabouts (Level 3)



For families looking to improve their confidence cycling together, many local authorities offer bespoke Bikeability Family training sessions with an instructor, to help them feel confident in a range of scenarios ranging from weekend rides to commuting & taking children to school.

The new investment will help ensure children and families are road-ready on their bikes to cycle to school and enjoy the summer holidays.

Physical activity like walking and cycling is proven to have numerous benefits, both in terms of fitness, wellbeing and attentiveness in school, and research into Bikeability cycle training specifically also shows that, after taking part, parents are more likely to feel confident in allowing their child to cycle independently.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

*"Cycling is such a fun and healthy way for pupils to get to school, and we want as many as possible to make it their choice of transport. But we know not all children, or parents, feel bike-confident. Today's funding will kick-start our plans to provide Bikeability training to all children by 2025, giving the next generation of cyclists a life skill and the confidence they need to choose a more active way to travel.*

*Since its launch in 2006, more than 3.5 million children have taken part in Bikeability training, learning basic cycle handling skills, risk assessment, and how to ride safely and confidently on the road."*

# Manton Lane Path

One of the conditions for the development of a large warehouse on the old reservoir site in Manton Lane (planning application 19/01860/MAR), and one requested in CCNB's response to the application, was for a dual use cycle/pedestrian path from the site to linkup with existing path st the Manton Lane/Brickhill junction to encourage employees to cycle to work.

The path would also be potentially used by pupils going to the new Bedford Greenacre Independent School on the other side of the road when it is built and opens in 2022.

The condition called for a route 3.5 metres wide (or the maximum width possible within the existing highway), minimise crossing distances of vehicle accesses on Manton Lane, maximise the conspicuousness of the crossing points, introduce cycle priority where practicable and include a safe and convenient transition back onto the carriageway at the end of the shared use route.

Unfortunately the path is to the recommended width of the Government' new Cycle infrastructure Design guidelines in front of the site but quickly reduces to a narrow 1.8 metres at Brickhill Drive (top photo) in spite of sufficient green space, presumably not highway land.



# St Neot's Road Path

During March the dual use pedestrian/cycle path in St Neot's Road between the Norse Road roundabout and the Pegasus crossing has been re-kerbed and surfaced. From Norse Road it was widened to the minimum recommended width of 3 metres but after around 50 metres was narrowed to 2 metres and then 1.5 metres, insufficient for two cycles to pass each other. Except for a short stretch over the bridge for the Renhold Brook there appears to be sufficient land to maintain three metres.

The Pegasus crossing allows cyclists (and horse riders) to safely cross the busy road from the Salph End bridleway and the outer orbital cycle route (Green wheel) to the National Cycle Network Route 51.



*Three metres path  
from Norse Road*



*Two and finally one  
and a half metres  
path to Pegasus  
crossing*

# Travel Behaviour



Wave 4 of the Department for Transport's research into the travel behaviour of people during the COVID-19 pandemic was published on 21 May 2021. Its aim, conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the DfT is to:

- understand the longer-term social, attitudinal and behavioural effects of Covid-19
- identify how lower-carbon behaviours could be maintained following the peak

As part of the 'All Change' longitudinal study, 30 in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted exploring how a range of people in England made decisions about how they travelled. Interviews

which took place during September/October 2020 were qualitative and aimed to supplement the findings of two quantitative surveys that had already been conducted as part of 'All Change'.

The report can be downloaded from:

*[Travel behaviour, attitudes and social impact of COVID-19 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/944442/Travel-behaviour-attitudes-and-social-impact-of-COVID-19.pdf)*  
([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

The motivations of those participants who took more active travel were to avoid the risk of Covid-19 and to get more exercise. There was a strong feeling that the environmental and health impacts of commuting via active travel were insufficient to outweigh the barriers of time, distance, personal safety, and poor weather. Fears about road safety and a lack of confidence were key barriers to cycling specifically, and participants highlighted improved cycle infrastructure as a potential motivator.

Winter weather became a bigger factor in decision-making resulting in less active travel and more driving.

Participants observed positives and negatives to the national lockdown. Positives included exercise, community spirit, and increased disposable income. Negatives included declining mental health and wellbeing caused by social isolation.

Environmental impacts such as cleaner air and reduced traffic emissions were seen as positive initially, during the initial phase of lockdown due to reduced travel. This changed as people noted increased personal car use and countryside littering as lockdown started to ease.

# Travel Attitudes

Wave 5 of the Department for Transport's National Travel Attitudes Study (NTAS) was published on 27 May 2021. The study is based on responses of people who had previously responded to the National Travel Survey (NTS).

This release conducted in early 2021 centred around attitudes towards cycling with a special focus on:

- barriers to cycling or cycling more
- barriers to walking or walking more
- confidence when cycling
- interest in cycle training courses
- attitudes towards dedicated cycle lanes
- attitudes towards e-bikes

It also covered travel behaviour during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic across all modes of transport.

## Main findings

Off-road and segregated cycle paths (55%), safer roads (53%) and well-maintained road surfaces for cycling (49%) were chosen most often when respondents (who didn't state that cycling is impossible for them due to their disability) were asked about things that would encourage them to cycle more.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the sample supported the creation of dedicated cycle lanes in their local area, even if this meant less road space for cars.

58% of respondents reported to feel confident when riding a bicycle. Men (74%) felt more often confident than women (43%).

Of those respondents who didn't feel confident about their cycling skills, 14% displayed interest in attending a cycle training course. Interest was highest in the age group 35-44 (29%).

51% of respondents agreed that e-bikes were too expensive, with only 4% disagreeing with the statement. Nearly two in three indicated that they know very little about e-bikes.

Similar to the trends displayed in the previous wave, respondents reported substantially decreased usage of all travel modes compared to before the pandemic with the exception of the active travel modes walking and cycling.

The full report can be downloaded from:

*National Travel Attitudes Study: Wave 5 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))*

# 20mph Latest News

CCNB is pleased to see the continued proposals to introduce 20 mph speed limits in residential areas to help provide a safer road network for all road users, in particular for motor cyclists, cyclists and pedestrians.

During February Proposed Orders were made for further roads in the Harpur and Putnoe Ward areas.



## Harpur Ward

Roads in the Gainsborough Rise and Turner Way Manton Heights area:  
Turner Way, Kneller Close, Constable Hill, Reynolds Close, Rowlandson Way, Lely Close, Hogarth Close, Gainsborough Rise, Haden Close, Ramsey Close, Tate Close, Wedgwood Road, Cotman Close, Morland Way and Slade Walk

## Putnoe Ward

Roads in the Putnoe Heights area:

Putnoe Heights, Hartop Close, The Graylings, Arrow Leys, Braeside, The Furlong, Uplands and Putnoe Street (between Nos 150 and 164)

## UN Global Road Safety Week

The sole call of this years United Nations Global Road Safety Week held on 17-23 May was for legislators to make 20mph/30kmh normal where people mix with motor vehicles. See below for one of the posters for the week.



A myth and facts leaflet on 20mph/30kmh can be seen at:

[Myths\\_and\\_Facts.pdf \(d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net\)](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/Myths_and_Facts.pdf)

# E-Cargo Bike of the Future

It is claimed by many commentators that with so much development currently happening in the bicycle industry mobility is on the cusp of change. Over the coming decades, the car will take a step back and two-wheeled mobility will be given a further push towards centre stage to help reduce pollution and congestion.



The cargo bike of the future will be electrically assisted or fully electrically powered. More and more parents are using a cargo bike to transport their children. A sturdy construction, clear turn signals and integrated rain protection make the cargo bike both safe and comfortable.

There will be a revolution in ‘last mile delivery’ over the next few years. Four-wheel covered cargo bikes will deliver packages from cargo hubs to densely populated urban areas. They will find their way to the customer quickly and safely thanks to the installation of high quality cycle infrastructure.

The cargo bike will be available in a multitude of variations with two, three or four wheels. As well as for the carriage of goods, it will also be able to transport one or more people with or without space for luggage.

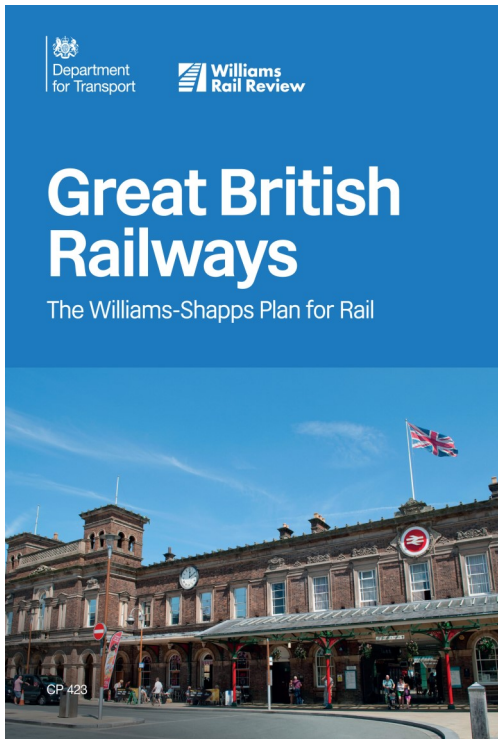
Increasingly, last mile deliveries will be more visible, particularly in the urban areas, by bike couriers and automated guided vehicles (AGVs) and drones fitted with parcel lockers. It is predicted that autonomous vehicles will account for 80% of all parcels delivered by the middle of the decade.

Cycling UK has a good guide (although now 6 years old) on Cargo Bikes on:

[\*A guide to cargobikes | Cycling UK\*](#)

# Great British Railways

The Minister of State for Transport on 20 May 2021 announced the biggest change to the railways in 25 years, ending the fragmentation of the past and bringing the network under a single national leadership - **Great British Railways**. This will bring brand and identity for the whole system. See -



*Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail (web version)*  
([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

In the document it states that getting to the station on a bike and taking it on a train will be made easier by investing £2 billion of new money to dramatically improve cycling. A bike can make clean and sustainable transport journeys door-to-door when combined with a train, bus or light rail, matching the convenience of the car. The government will invest substantial sums on safe cycle routes to stations, particularly in commuter towns and increase cycle storage at stations, including at city-centre termini, where it is currently limited.

To be able to take a bike on board makes a train journey even more convenient, yet the railways currently have reduced space available for bikes on trains. Great British Railways will reverse that, increasing space on existing trains wherever practically possible, including on popular leisure routes. It will also make it easier to reserve bike spaces online and without reservation on quieter trains. All future train fleets will need to include more bike spaces relevant to the markets served although operators will continue to restrict bikes on peak-hour commuter trains, where the space is needed for passengers.

The document concludes by saying that without the railways cities could not function, critical freight connections would be cut off, carbon emissions and pollution would rise, and mobility would fall – not just for the millions of people without cars, but for drivers too, as the roads became clogged.

# Phil Lund 1933-2021



Long serving CCNB founder member, Phil Lund, passed away on 22 January 2021.

Phil was also a member of Cycling UK (previously CTC) and until ill health in recent years stopped him cycling was a regular participant on their weekly rides.

Condolences on behalf of CCNB were sent to his family and wife Katie.



*Phil (right) with Veronica Brown and Ian Osborn in 2012*



For further information see:

[cleanairday.org.uk](http://cleanairday.org.uk)

### Local Cycle Rides Contact:

Cycling UK (CTC) - North Beds Section - (01234) 214958

## 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)