



The Voice
of
Cycling Campaign
for
North Bedfordshire

Issue 96
July 2023

HEATWAVES

WILDFIRES

DROUGHTS

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

STORMS

POLLUTION

FLOODS

Help TODAY by using sustainable travel & for
short distances
Active Travel (Cycling & Walking)

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

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Treasurer
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@cyclebedford



cycle_bedford

Past Campaigning Representations

CCNB has been represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group (disbanded July 2018)

Bedford Stations Travel Plan Steering Group

Bedford Hospital Bicycle Users Group

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

Bedford Green Wheel

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

and was also affiliated to .



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Editorial

With the effects of climate change at the present time being felt in many parts of the world including Europe (see page 8) it is extremely disappointing that increasing active travel, one of the actions that can be taken in the UK both nationally and locally to help reduce the cause, the emissions of greenhouse gas, is not being taken seriously enough.

The government's funding for active travel although never adequate took a turn for the worse when they announced in March the budget would be cut by £200m (page 25).

This means that it will be almost impossible to meet the target set out in the government's Gear Change vision of 2020 that by 2025 46% of all urban journeys to be walked, wheeled or cycled and by 2040 to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey.

Locally, opportunities to improve Bedford's cycle network have been missed over the last few years and that many completed schemes have been poor value for money and in at least one instance potentially unsafe.

When more active travel has to be encouraged to improve the increasing poor health of the population and help mitigate the global climate emergency, the Borough's sustainability team was abolished at the end of March (page 6).

The recent local elections has resulted in a change in the Executive Council (page 6).

Your chair has already made contact and has had a meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Highways and Transport who has promised to resume regular cycle meetings with the borough.

There still has to be a huge cultural change and a need for people to understand that cycling is for children, women, the elderly, the disabled and not just for those who are on racing bikes and sporty. In short, wear what you like while riding your bike.

The introduction of 20mph speed limits continues across the borough (page 28) but motorists must ensure that they keep to the speed limit and not wait until somebody is killed or seriously injured (page 30 for latest government statistics and recent measurements on a road in Brickhill) and not wait for the introduction of yet more expensive average speed cameras.

One of the potential safety hazards of cycling is the wind created by close passing traffic and particularly heavy goods vehicles of which a longer length has now been approved by the government for use on all roads (pages 16 & 17).

A further ban on the carriage of e-scooters on trains has come in force due to fires from substandard batteries (page 32).

In the meantime the EU in July has reached the final stages of bringing out new battery regulations which in the future will improve their quality and safety (page 32).

It was disappointing for residents of Amptill to hear that this year's Women's Tour had to be cancelled at the last minute due to lack of sponsorship (page 26).

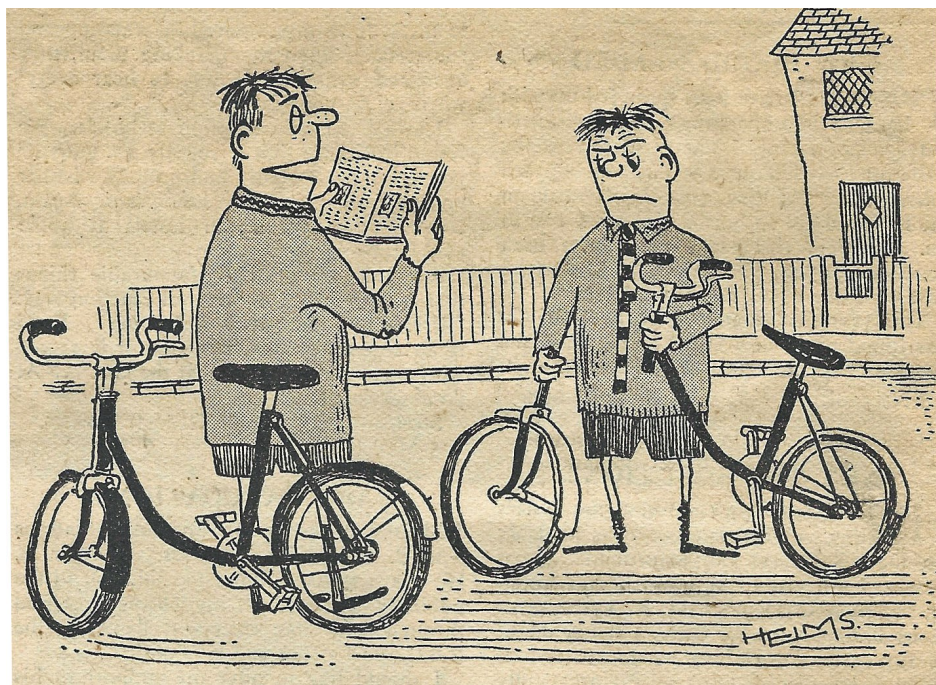
At the end of May the route of the new east west railway line between Bedford and Cambridge was announced although a statutory consultation still has to take place in 2024.(page 12).

In February an unusual cycle ride took place metres below London - a sewer ride (page 24).

CCNB's AGM took place in June (page 20).

Finally it was delightful to see the Prince and Princess of Wales on their bikes to celebrate their 12th wedding anniversary last April (page 7).

1950s Cycle Cartoon



"It's good job I've got my "Cycling" Book of Maintenance' with me"

Bedford Borough Council Changes

The May local elections saw the town's long serving elected Lib Dem Mayor, Dave Hodgson, being replaced by Tory Tom Wootton.

This has brought changes in the Council's Executive Group and possibly changes in the promotion and action on Active Travel.

Executive Members who could influence cycling are::

Cllr James (Jim) Weir, councillor member for Great Denham Ward, was elected - Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Highways and Transport with responsibilities including:

- Carbon Reduction
- Transport Policy
- Traffic Operations
- Highways
- Refuse and Recycling
- Waste and Resources
- Grounds Maintenance
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Engineering Services
- Fleet and Transport Co-ordination
- Major Capital Projects (Environment)

Jim replaced Cllr Royden, member for Brickhill Ward.

Cllr Andrea Spice, councillor member for Wixams & Wilstead Ward - Portfolio Holder for Town Centres and Planning with responsibilities including:

- Building Control
- Heritage and Compliance
- Development Management
- Town Centres Economic and Strategic Development

Andrea replaced Cllr Henry Vann, member for De Parys Ward.

Borough's Sustainability Team Demise

CCNB was extremely disappointed to hear that all members of the Council's Sustainability Team heavily involved with active travel; walking and cycling were made redundant at the end of the financial year in March 2023.

This is at a time when the council should be doing more not less for active travel to encourage residents to cycle or walk short distances to help reduce pollution for their health and combat global warming.

We were pleased to hear that team leader, Yo Higton, has quickly found a similar position with the Cambridge and Peterborough Partnership.

Prince and Princess of Wales Anniversary

The picture below of the Prince and Princess of Wales on their bicycles was taken in Norfolk last summer and has been posted online to mark the couples 12th wedding anniversary a few weeks ago in April.



Climate Emergency Latest

Climate change is now having serious effects throughout the planet.

Last year (2022) was the hottest in the world and fears intensify as lethal heat threatens fresh devastation.

Already this June has been the hottest month on record and the first seven days of July have hit even higher levels.

Scientists believe that climate change is now reaching uncharted territory and that the increased heat from anthropogenic global heating combined with the return of El Niño - a sporadic weather pattern last seen in 2016 - will lead to more record breaking temperatures.

In early July temperatures above 40 degrees C swept across much of Europe including Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Spain and Poland.

Severe floods were seen in northern Italy and wildfires in Spain and Croatia and excessive storms and winds in The Netherlands and northern Germany.

Extreme heat is related to illnesses and death, exacerbation of chronic medical conditions (particularly heart, lung and kidney disease), mental health impacts, pregnancy complications.

Last year it was estimated that there were around 62,000 heat related deaths with the highest recorded in Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal. In England and Wales the figure was 3,271 with 10 deaths estimated to be in Bedford Borough (cf 90 deaths per year also in the Borough due to air pollution).



*Saddleworth
Moor wildfire
2019*

Climate Advertisement

Businesses are starting to be concerned about the climate.

An example from e-on

**"Time isn't on our side
There's a climate crisis, and we
need to act.
Not by 2030. Not by next year.
Today.
It's time to all live more
sustainably
..."**

CCNB Climate Cyczine 2019

**The Greatest
Threat to our Planet
is**

**'The Belief
that someone else will save it'**

**Everyone MUST do their bit NOW
no matter how small**

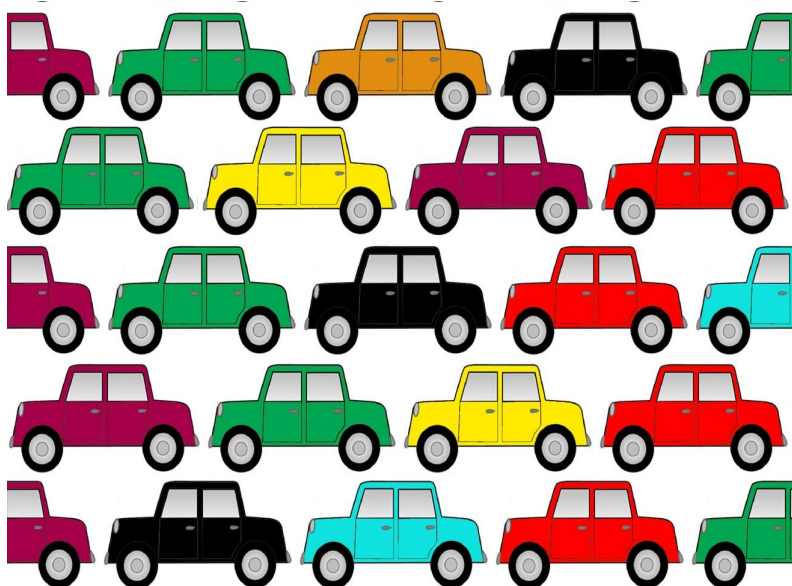
By 2030 it will be too late

**The Use of
Motor Vehicles
for short journeys has to
be curbed wherever
possible and sustainable
modes used instead**

Walking
Cycling
Public Transport



NOT



East West Rail

At the end of May the government and the East West Rail company published their chosen route for the new line between Bedford and Cambridge following the recent public consultation.

The route chosen was Alignment 1, the most northerly of the various routes which passes through Bedford Station with a station at Tempsford rather than St Neots before going on to Cambourne and Cambridge South to Cambridge. Disappointingly they also said that in Bedford there would have to be 6 tracks and not the current 4 resulting in the demolition of a number of properties and businesses and the reconstruction of Bromham Road bridge.

This means that the proposed and budgeted cycle bridge across the tracks is not likely to materialise for a number of years.

The construction of the new line will lead to a comprehensive redevelopment of Bedford Midland Station paid for by the government.

This will run parallel to the borough's success in securing Towns Fund money, which includes over £5 million for the Bedford Station Quarter project and £6 million for improvements to the Midland Road area as a gateway into Bedford.

The Station Quarter regeneration will deliver new public spaces and improve the approach to the Station and promote and prioritise sustainable travel modes such as cycling and walking through the upgrade of cycle routes and walking routes.

Last November your editor attended a virtual meeting on the need to ensure that there is sustainable access to all the new stations. Following on from the meeting an **Active Travel Strategy** is being compiled in conjunction with the consultancy Arup but has not yet been published.

The vision and objectives of the strategy is to create a seamlessly integrated network from origin to destination, which acts as an enabler for the integration of active travel with every aspect of the railway, removing barriers to active travel for all customers and ensuring no adverse effects are felt because of the delivery of the EWR railway infrastructure.

The key outcomes/themes discussed in summary were:

- The definition of 'Active Travel' and relation to all modes including equestrians
- Re-think the term 'non-motorised users (NMU)' to be inclusive of walking, wheeling and cycling
- Timescales for completion of the Active Travel Strategy. [still outstanding]

- Suitable lift sizes for those with cycles
- The need for ongoing consultation and engagement
- Suitable and appropriate design of routes to accommodate all users and the specific details of the infrastructure that would lead to greater uptake in use
- Car parking provision – assumptions, how this is calculated and details on what will be provided
- Cycle parking provision – how this is calculated and what quantity and quality will be provided including provision for oversized and non-standard cycles
- Expectation that designs be based on latest guidance where possible [Cycle Infrastructure Guidance LTN 1/20].

Areas being considered are:

Stations - general design principles to be considered for all new and upgraded stations, guidance related to access, space requirements and cycle parking needs.

Platforms - platform facilities and access for those using mobility aids, and cycles of various types through the station.

Rolling Stock - consideration of the rolling stock and how infrastructure provision on the train carriages will enhance the appeal of active travel. As part of this, we are working closely with Customer Experience and in parallel collaborating on original market insight and research on active travel and the rail experience.

First Mile. Last Mile - This will set out the key, specific, requirements and best practice to follow when designing for journeys made by customers to and from the station, as part of the first or last part of their rail journey by any mode of transport. Focus will be on walking/cycling to stations and public transport-active travel interchanges and is considered supplementary to First Mile Last Mile.

Access Routes - This will set out the key design requirements and principles to consider for people walking, wheeling and cycling and other forms of mobility for access routes to and from new and upgraded rail stations, planned new development sites and masterplan and other relevant infrastructure.

Level Crossings - This will discuss the key design requirements and principles for where level crossing closures or design modifications are proposed, including potential route diversions & the retention of Public Rights of Way.

The design guidance will aim to ensure modifications due to the railway infrastructure will not result in a worsening of the current conditions for people using active transport modes across the line.

Neighbourhood Plans - Ravensden

The Neighbourhood Plan for Ravensden was formally adopted by Bedford Borough's Executive at their March 2023 meeting.

In a residents survey the volume and speed of traffic, especially through-traffic not originating in the Parish ("rat-running"); heavy goods vehicle movements; the absence of roadside footways along principal routes such as Bedford Road (B660) and Oldways Road; road safety concerns; the paucity of public transport; the lack of sustainable connections between different parts of the Parish; and the use of private vehicles for even relatively short journeys.

Speeding on Cleat Hill and at Ravensden Crossroads are a significant issue which are likely to be exacerbated by increased traffic from the Graze Hill (Ravensden Park) development.

There are currently no cycleways in the parish making the area heavily reliant on private vehicles with resultant parking issues. Where footways are available they have limited width/standard of repair, giving serious road safety concerns.

One of the main objectives of the plan is therefore:

Travel and Transport - To encourage safe and sustainable movement across the whole parish.

Policies in the plan include:

Policy RNP2: - Ravensden Park and Country Park Extension Land at Graze Hill calls for the development of 165 dwellings with the provision, retention and ongoing maintenance of footpath and cycle links to the surrounding area including Graze Hill, Freemans Common, Woodlands Park, Brickhill Country Park, and the wider countryside;

Policy RNP10 - Developer Contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) calls for income received by the parish to be spent on the following infrastructure to improve local connectivity:

- Creation of a continuous footpath/cycleway alongside B660 (on roadside verge or field edge as appropriate) between Ravensden Crossroads and the top of Cleat Hill.
- Creation of a continuous footpath/cycleway alongside Oldways Road (on roadside verge or field edge as appropriate) between Ravensden Crossroads and the Parish boundary at Ravensden Road, Renhold.
- Surface improvement of BOAT61 (Green Lane) for walkers and cyclists, and downgrade status to Public Bridleway to prevent damage and disturbance caused by vehicles.

Neighbourhood Plans - Stevington

The Stevington plan was approved by the Borough's Executive board at their meeting on 9 June 2021

Stevington is served by narrow, rural roads from the north west, south west and south east, which converge on the 13th Century Stevington Cross in the centre of the village. These roads provide access to local highways, primary routes and rail travel. As a result there are no cycleways in the village or its vicinity.

To access the national transport routes that cross the region, personal transport is essential although a fit and experienced cyclist should have no problem in accessing nearby villages.

Most people therefore travel to work by car (71%), commuting by train (6%) is high, and 3% of those in employment cycle to work. Only 1% use public transport and 3% walk to work. The level of households without a car (10%) is slightly above the average for all Bedford Borough rural parishes, probably a reflection of the higher than average proportion of the Village population who are elderly and/or disabled.

There is no planned development in the village but Policy T11 gives the requirements needed for any application.

Policy T11: Traffic Impact - In considering planning applications for new development or the intensification of development, particular regard will be made to ensuring that:

- a. existing problems of traffic capacity are not exacerbated, especially on existing pressure points in Silver Street and Church Road;
- b. there is no adverse impact on the character, appearance or setting of heritage assets by reason of traffic disturbance or congestion or the impact of necessary highway works;
- c. there is no significant adverse impact on traffic safety, including ensuring there is no restriction on the visibility for ingress/egress of existing dwellings.

Policy T12: Cycling and Walking - New dwellings must:

- a. include secure, covered storage for cycles within their curtilage;
- b. front an existing pavement or include provision of a new section of pavement linking to the wider pavement network where appropriate.

Interpretation of this policy ensures that all new dwellings cater for the needs of cyclists and pedestrians, ensuring a balanced approach to transport and avoiding a narrow focus on car users only. It also ensures that new dwellings front existing pavements or include new pavements, linking into the existing network.

Longer Lorries

A few weeks ago the government announced that following an extensive eleven year trial longer lorries would be permitted on Great Britain's roads from the end of May 2023.

Many campaigners have raised concerns that this move could cost the lives of pedestrians and cyclists. Companies such as Morrisons, Stobart, Royal Mail, Greggs and Argos are also expected to use LSTs having been some of the 300 companies who took part in the trial.



The longer semi-trailer combinations known as LSTs at 18.55 metres are 2.05 metres longer than the previously permitted length.

It is claimed this will bring a £1.4 billion boost for the UK's economy supporting productivity and saving 70,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere.

The new lorries will move the same volume of goods, but will use 8% fewer journeys than current trailers. This will take one standard-size trailer off the road for every 12 trips.

The lengthy trials were conducted to ensure that they could be used safely on roads and operators are being encouraged to put extra safety checks and training in place.

The trials demonstrated that LSTs were involved in around 61% fewer personal injury collisions than conventional lorries.

CCNB has asked Bedford Borough Council as the local highway authority to ensure that for the safety of vulnerable, cyclists and pedestrians, restrictions will be put in place to only allow the LSTs on the Borough's trunk roads and not on the arterial roads with cycle lanes leading through and into the town centre and in particular Bedford High Street.

Cycle Safety - Effect of Wind

Recent research has found that strong winds are a major problem for cyclists together with inconsiderate motorists and poor road infrastructure.

This research has looked specifically at the wind from passing vehicles and come up with the following findings:

A truck passing a cyclist generates winds sufficient enough to blow them over at speeds over 25mph. Any vehicle passing less than 2 feet away can blow over a cyclist. Wind is a problem, but from close passes is extremely dangerous.

Cyclists must withstand significant wind force from passing vehicles.

The study analysed the magnitude of wind force generated by different vehicle types (sports utility vehicle, pickup truck, single unit truck, and semi-trailer truck), vehicle speeds (25, 40, and 60 mph), separation distances (2 ft, 4 ft, and 6 ft), and cyclist riding positions (racing and touring).

Three research methods were used: field tests in controlled and natural environments, computational fluid dynamic simulations, and scaled-model wind tunnel experiments.

The analysis focused on assessing longitudinal and transverse wind forces that are directed at the cyclist in parallel and perpendicular directions, respectively.

All three methods showed the expected trend—that wind force increases with an increase in vehicle muzzle bluntness, vehicle speed, and cyclist proximity. Selected measurements and various models are provided.

The wind force to knock a cyclist over (i.e., the flipping moment) was calculated for each test scenario (vehicle type, speed, and separation distance) and compared with the recommended limit (17 N) found in the literature. The semi-trailer truck generated flipping moments that exceeded the limit for all scenarios except 25 mph and 6 ft separation. All the vehicles, at all the speeds tested, exceeded the limit at 2 ft separation. This novel use of simulation and wind tunnel experiments provides groundwork for future research. See:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/03611981231159126>

Apart from the wind created by passing vehicles the wind which cyclists hate is the natural head wind a common feature in the UK.

For a 2020 video on 'How To Cycle in The Wind' see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JChfYZGxTJ4>

Oxford to Cambridge Cycleway

At last November's annual England's Economic Heartland (EEH) conference held in Milton Keynes a report commissioned by EEH was launched on plans to improve the Varsity Way cycle route between Oxford and Cambridge to boost tourism and active travel.



The report made possible by funding from the Department for Transport marked the first step towards its reality.

Analysis by active travel charity Sustrans shows there are opportunities to improve nearly half of the existing route 51 to address issues such as narrow shared paths, safety, poor signage and deteriorating surfaces.

Making these improvements to deliver the Varsity Way would:

- Create a leisure and tourism attraction for the region
- Improve local connectivity to cities, towns, villages and tourist attractions
- Enable better 'first mile, last mile' connectivity to transport hubs such as railway stations, including several which will be served by East West Rail
- Act as a catalyst for improvements to the wider national cycle network across the Heartland
- Realise health benefits that arise from increased levels of walking and cycling.

For full story see:

[: \[https://eeh-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Introducing_the_Varsity_Way_v1.1.pdf\]\(https://eeh-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Introducing_the_Varsity_Way_v1.1.pdf\)](https://eeh-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Introducing_the_Varsity_Way_v1.1.pdf)

The section on Bedford Borough (page 11) makes all the right noises for encouraging sustainable active travel.

LCWIP Latest

In reply to a request to the Borough Council for the status of this document they stated that they were still working on the LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) with the consultants Systra and had reached stage 4 of the process as set out in the guidance which includes evidence gathering and route selection.

The guidance states that there are six stages in total.

Stage 4 Network Planning for Walking - Identifying key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determining the type of improvements required.

Stage 5 Prioritising Improvements - Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment.

Stage 6 Integration and Application - Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans.

It was stated it was their intention to complete these and start public consultation on the new document around September (6 years late).

Isle of Wight Beach Bike Photograph



CCNB AGM

CCNB's AGM for the year 2022/2023 was held at the Friends Meeting House in Lansdowne Road Bedford on Tuesday 27 June 2023 with 17 members in attendance.

Prior to the AGM itself CCNB chair, Peter Blakeman, showed a **Miscellany of Cycling Films including an Update on the Status of Cycling in Bedford.**

Most of the films were related to the urgent need to ensure that, despite a minority of vocal objectors, the installation of good high quality cycle infrastructure was required to entice people to abandon their polluting vehicle and to use sustainable transport and in particular cycling and walking for short journeys.

CCNB counts in the town centre during the year have continued to remain static since 2020 at around 30% below those for 2006 after seeing a 40% rise to 2016.

Slides were presented for cycle counts in the town centre and at the railway station and cycle thefts at both locations.

Carbon dioxide and nitrogen dioxide emissions were also shown which effect air pollution and resultant climate change and residents health.

Mention was made of the poor value for money of many recent and proposed new schemes.

It was stressed that to stop runaway climate change over the next few years actions must be taken not by the end of the decade, not by next year but today.

The main reason for the decline in cycling numbers to the town centre was believed to be due to the introduction of a PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order) in the pedestrianized areas in 2016 and the subsequent fines, followed by the closure of several large shops and the Covid-19 lockdowns. The decline was confirmed by the Government's Active Living Survey results for 2020/21 compared to 2016/17.

CCNB counts at Bedford railway station continue to rise slowly since the 'work at home' recommendation for the pandemic but are still only 45% of what they were in 2019.

AGM

The Chair and Treasurer's reports for the year ending 31 March 2023 were given out and copies placed in CCNB's minute book. A copy of the Chair's report can be seen on CCNB's website.

The current committee was proposed and seconded on-block for the new year with the addition of two new members; Ben Foley and David Fisher.

2023 Cycle Show

The 20th edition of the Cycle Show was held at London's Alexandra Palace from 20-22 April, 2023 and welcomed 15,000 visitors across the 3 days.

Industry representatives present at the show all said that the UK e-bike market was on the rise but was being slowed down compared to that in Europe due to the lack of safe cycle infrastructure.



It has been stated that e-bikes in the UK now have a 7.6% share of the market selling 155,000 during 2022.

Manta5

One of the novel bikes on show was the Manta5 all new hydrofoiler SL3 on which you can cycle across water.

See:

<https://manta5.com/>

Gone are the cycle lanes, the navigation of traffic and trails.

Gone are the wakes, emissions and noise of combustion engines.



Cycling Index - England

In April the Department for transport published a new monthly cycling index showing the change in cycling levels in England compared to a 2013 baseline. The data gives a rolling annual index to allow changes to be compared to previous months and years.

As from May 2023 the COVID-19 cycling series previously covered in this newsletter will no longer be updated as part of the domestic transport use by mode.

In the year ending December 2022:

- longer-term trends show that cycling levels have been increasing. The latest provisional data shows that cycling levels have increased by 23.7% since December 2013
- in March 2021, cycling levels peaked during the coronavirus (COVID- 19) pandemic. There was an increase of 63.0% since December 2013. COVID-19 restrictions were still in place during this peak and impacted travel patterns across England
- cycling levels have been decreasing since this peak, falling by 24.1% between March 2021 and December 2022 but remain 11.1% above pre-pandemic levels (December 2019)
- In comparison, provisional road traffic estimates showed that motor traffic levels have decreased by 4.9% between December 2019 and September 2022
- cycling levels have decreased by 3.2% since the previous year (December 2021). The provisional road traffic estimates have shown that motor traffic levels have increased by 12.6% over the period September 2021 to September 2022
- cycling levels have decreased by 1.0% compared to the previous month (November 2022)

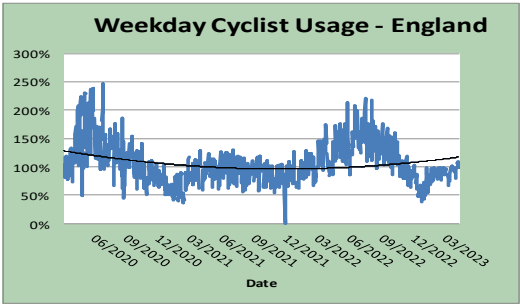
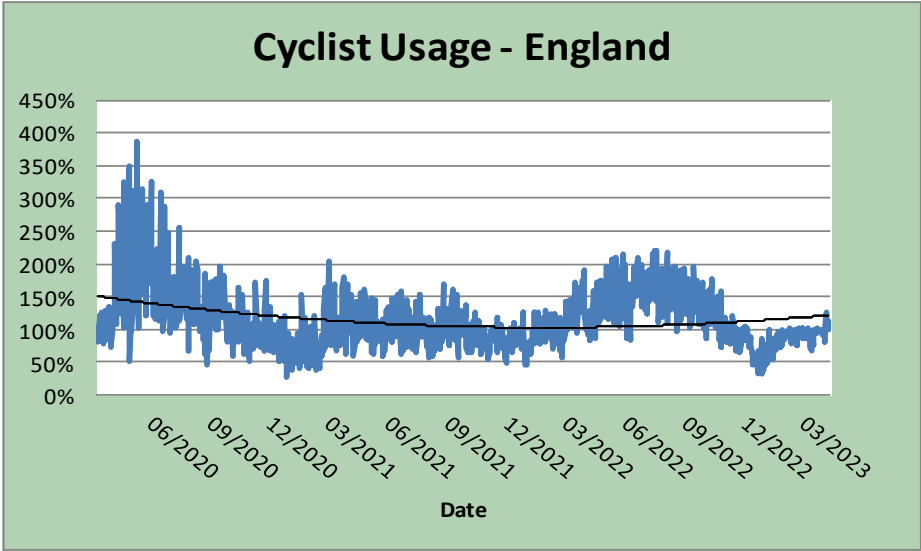
All information on this topic can be seen on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cycling-index-england>

This monthly index is less impacted by factors that commonly influence cycling data, especially at a granular daily level, such as seasonality and weather, allowing us to look at changes beyond these factors. This is because numbers represent cycling during a 12 month 'rolling annual' period, helping to smooth out large differences between months caused by seasonality and weather impacts. This means it is easier to see changes caused by other factors, such as the large increase in cycling during the pandemic. The new methodology has been designed to be able to accommodate additional traffic sensor data from a wider range of locations and sources as they become available to the Department.

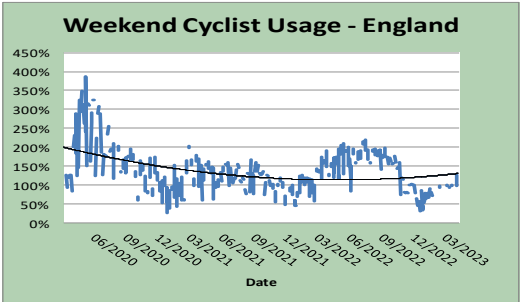
Change from...	Last month	Last year	Pre-pandemic	5 years ago
Year ending	November	December	December	December
	2022	2021	2019	2017
Percentage change	-1.0%	-3.2%	11.1%	14.5%

The Cycling Index replaces the daily count of UK cyclists below.



*Weekday usage from
09 March 2020 to
07 April 2023*

*Weekend usage from
09 March 2020 to
07 April 2023*



Sewer Cycle Ride

In February a group of six cyclists took an unique cycle ride along London's new 'super' sewer the 'Thames Tideway Tunnel'.

The tunnel is 25km long and between 40 and 66 metres underground.

The 'super' sewer is being constructed by Tideway London for Thames Water. Construction began in 2016 and is on track to be completed in 2025. The large sewer will remove 95% of about 40 million tons of untreated wastewater that currently spills into the River Thames every year.

Tideway London employees working on the project were given an opportunity to buy raffle tickets to win a chance to take their bikes down into the new sewer. A total of 360 raffle tickets were bought, raising £1,535 for charity.

The group rode from Battersea, the lowest point on the tunnel, up to Blackfriars and back again.

The cyclists had to ride a little way from the bottom due to a small amount of water that collects there.



A Tideway photo of the ride can be seen below.

A video on what it is like in the sewer can be seen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHtl3TS6fc0>

Active Travel Funding Cut

After the Government's announcements of a £32.9m fund for active travel in January this year followed by a further fund of £200m in February (see CCNB's Newsletter - No 95) cycle groups were devastated to hear in March that £200m had been cut from active travel funding.

This represents a two-thirds cut to promised capital investment in safe infrastructure for active travel and will make the Government's promised target of 46% of all journeys in English towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2025 unattainable.

Meeting this target has been estimated to take 14.6 million vehicles off the road and save 2.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

A strongly worded response to these cuts has been sent to the Government by organisations representing the Walking and Cycling Alliance and Women in Transport.

Active Travel - DfT Priorities

Contrary to the above, Transport Minister Richard Holden at the annual conference of the British Parking Association (BPA) in early May then stated that the Department for Transport (DfT) wants to enable more people to make their everyday journeys on foot or by wheeling or cycling. Active travel is central to many government agendas including green growth; health; the cost of living; regenerating high streets; and levelling up. The department remains committed to the ambitious vision that by 2030 half of all journeys in towns and cities are walked or cycled, as well as to the objectives outlined in the second statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

He went on to say that over the course of this Parliament, the government will be investing around £3bn in active travel from a wide range of funding streams, despite the challenging financial climate.

The government's new agency, Active Travel England, will support local authorities to develop and build new high-quality walking, wheeling, and cycling routes across England. It will also have a statutory consultee role in the planning system.

The government recognises the importance of active travel in unlocking multimodal journeys, which can reduce congestion, improve safety, and improve air quality, in particular in our town and city centres. As a result, Active Travel England provided £32m funding to local authorities earlier this year through the Capability Fund, to increase capability to plan good active travel infrastructure and integrate it effectively with other modes, including train, bus and park and ride/walk schemes.

The Women's Tour

The 2023 edition of the UK's leading international women's five stage cycle race, The Women's Tour, was to start in Warwickshire on Wednesday 7 June 2023 and finish following a spectacular circuit race around the centre of Birmingham on Sunday 11 June.

The Women's Tour continues to form part of the prestigious UCI Women's WorldTour series of events

Central Beds Council were therefore extremely excited when it was announced in early March that the second stage would finish in Ampthill on Thursday 8 June and become the biggest sporting event that the town has ever seen.

Northampton was to host the start of the stage, which would then head through Daventry and across the Pitsford Reservoir on-route to the finish line in Woburn Street Ampthill.

Last year's race averaged a daily roadside attendance of 60,000 spectators and delivered an economic boost of over £1 million to local economies.



They were therefore equally extremely disappointed when it was announced at the end of March that the award winning and trailblazing race would have to be cancelled.

The reason given was due to a combination of increased running costs (approximately 20% higher in comparison to the 2022 race), a reduced level of commercial support, and challenges in finding a vehicle partner to replace ŠKODA to help create a safe racing environment for riders and spectators alike, it has proved impossible to deliver the event.

Bedford

It was nine years ago that The Women's Tour came to Bedford.

On Thursday 8 May 2014 at approximately 14.00 The Embankment saw the end of the 2nd stage of The Women's Tour, a five day women's elite international stage race which had started from Hinckley in Leicestershire.

Although the day was very wet several thousand residents, including hundreds of school children braved the weather to line the route throughout the town.

The stage winner was the young Italian Rossella Ratto, fittingly for a town with a significant Italian population.



Women's Race Series

Bedford is considered by many involved with cycling as being the home of women's racing in Britain through its hosting for many years of the Bedford Classic for Women, part of the Women's Team series. The 2014 3 day, 5 stage road race event had taken place the previous weekend.

During the morning of The Women's Tour a one day supporting event was organised with 16 short laps taking in a route along the High Street, The Embankment, Newnham Road and Mill Street with the final along The Embankment. The race was said to be ideal for women wanting to try out racing in a supportive environment without committing to the full 3-day event.

The winner was Jennifer Crouch of the London Dynamo.

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 cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists.

The following new orders have been made over the last few months:



Wixams

A Public Notice was raised in February 2023 for the following roads:

Brooklands Avenue,	Bittern Lane,
Bluewater Quay Knoll Gardens,	Kingfisher Road Green Lane,
Moorland Close Teal Close,	Greenside Close Dove Lane,
Fieldfare View Ladybird Way,	Partridge Place Eagle Mews,
Brambling Gardens Harrier Leys,	Little Causeway Avocet Road,
Millbrook Close Nightingale Court,	Lakeside Way Thistle Lane,
Mallard Court Lesser Avenue,	Peacock Gardens
Hummingbird Way,	Little Owl Lane Dane Lane,
Bluebird Gardens Bedford Road,	Wren Terrace
Wagtail Gardens,	Piper Lane The Rosary,
Parkview Terrace Kestrel Gardens,	Woodpecker Gardens
Pheasant Grove	School. Lane

Thurleigh

A Public Notice was raised in February 2023 for the following roads:

High Street (extending in an easterly direction from its junction with Church End to its junction with The Close) and Vicarage Green.

Great Barford

A Public Notice was raised in March 2023 for the following roads.

Silver Street Southview, Bereford Close, Goodwins Yard, Pym's Close, The Spencers, Hunts Field and Silver Street Loop.

Pertenhall

A Public Notice was raised in March 2023 for the following roads.

Wood End Lane, Chadwell End and Green End.

Manual for Smart Streets

Following on from the success of the Manual for Streets published more than five years ago the Transport Technology Forum (TTF) has published in early May a Manual for Smart Streets. See:

<https://ttf.uk.net/manual-for-smart-streets/>

The manual provides help to Local Authorities in identifying and using technology to deal with traffic and transport management challenges. It identifies a range of technologies that will deliver efficient and safer mobility, quickly and cost-effectively, and provides use cases and real-world case studies of the solutions.

One section is on **Supporting Active and Sustainable Travel** - walking and cycling safer, easier and more attractive, directly by

Air quality management, VRU safety, public transport, Transport payment and MAAS (Mobility as a service).

and indirectly by

Signal control, Traffic management, Parking management, Transport data and EV charging.



KwikFit - Fettle Partnership

KwikFit, the UK car servicing and repair company is also in The Netherlands with franchises in Italy and Hungary.

The formerly Scottish company specialises in tyres, brakes, exhausts, MOT testing, car servicing, air conditioning recharge and oil changes.

As mentioned in Newsletter No 94 (November 2022) KwikFit announced in April 2022 that it had opened its first e-service branch in Amsterdam as a test bed for the servicing of various types of electric vehicles such as e-bikes, e-microcars and LEVs (Light Electric Vehicles).

In April 2023 KwikFit in the UK teamed up with the London based 'bike repairer, Fettle, who will install their servicing and repair workshops for all types of bikes within the KwikFit centre.

The first centre opened is based in Bristol. This location was chosen due to the potential increase for cycling in the city.

Other centres are expected to open over the next few months.

See Fettle's website here:

<https://www.fettle.cc/blog/bristol-gets-into-gear-with-first-fettle-at-kwik-fit>

Speed Limit Compliance

When people are asked why they do not cycle one of the main reasons given is always that the roads are too dangerous.

When Borough residents are asked for the main concern they have in the area where they live one of the top ones is always speeding.

In the Bedford and Kempston urban area virtually all its residential roads now have 20mph speed limits with just the through roads still 30mph.

How compliant are motorists in keeping to either the 20 or 30mph limits?

The DfT has recently published its vehicle speed limit compliance statistics for 2021. See:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/vehicle-speed-compliance-statistics-for-great-britain-2021>

The results showed that In 2021:

- speed compliance was similar to previous years and has remained broadly stable since 2011, with the exception of 2020 which was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic
- 48% of cars exceeded the limit on motorways
- 11% of cars exceeded the limit on national speed limit single carriageways
- 51% of cars exceeded the limit on 30mph roads
- 87% of cars exceeded the limit on 20mph roads

Brickhill in Bedford

Towards the end of last year Brickhill Parish Council was informed that Hertfordshire Constabulary Traffic Management Unit had carried out during the previous August a 7 day, 24 hour speed check on Avon Drive, one of Brickhill's 30mph through roads linking Kimbolton Road to Brickhill Drive.

They reported that '*compliance with the speed limit was generally fairly good*'.

Over the week 16,772 vehicles had travelled eastbound and an average speed of 35mph calculated. Westbound 16,270 vehicles were checked and an average speed of 37mph calculated.

The threshold speed which would trigger a fine for a 30mph road is 35mph (30 + 10% +2).

As these averages were on or above the threshold value more detailed information was requested.

This was obtained in February 2023 through the Freedom of Information

Act 2000. Tables were given which showed the number of vehicles counted in 10mph bands between 10 and 100mph for each hour over the week.

A summary table gave the speed of the first 85% of the vehicles as being 39mph eastbound and 41mph westbound.

An analysis of the data disturbingly showed that 29816 (**90.0%**) of the vehicles **exceeded 31mph** (above the 30mph speed limit) and 4798 (**14.5%**) **over 41mph**. The information did not allow the exact percentage of vehicles exceeding the 35mph threshold limit to be calculated.

A similar exercise on the same road in 2011 had shown 5631 (15.8%) of the 35645 vehicles checked to have exceeded the threshold.

Brickhill Parish Council does not consider this level of speeding to be '*generally fairly good*' as concluded by the police.

Even more disturbing were the results that one vehicle exceeded 81mph, 3 over 71mph, 35 over 61mph, 275 over 51mph and 4798 over 41mph.

This level of infringement is unacceptable in a residential area where there are a high number of vulnerable people including the elderly and children at a time when residents are being encouraged to be more active (to walk and cycle) for their health and the climate.



Further E-Scooter Ban

In the last CCNB newsletter (Issue 95) it was reported that from December 2022 e-scooters, hoverboards and e-skateboards had been banned on all East Midland Rail (EMR) trains.

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) have now introduced a similar ban on the whole of their network from June.

The decision follows a number of incidents on both the rail and tube network where lithium-ion batteries have been associated with overheating causing fires, explosions and the release of toxic gas.

The reason is because many e-scooters, etc are cheaply made and unregulated posing a higher risk to passengers and staff on trains and stations.

E-bikes and mobility scooters however are still allowed on-board, as they meet minimum legal standards.

Southeastern and South Western Railway have also introduced a ban on the same day.

New Battery Regulations

At the beginning of July the European Council announced that the adoption process of the new European Batteries Regulation had entered its final stage. The approval stage has now been closed following the vote on Monday 10 July by the European Council.

The new regulation is aimed at strengthening sustainability rules for batteries and waste batteries. The regulation will regulate the entire life cycle of batteries, from production to reuse and recycling, and ensure that they are safe, sustainable and competitive.

This means the e-bike industry will have to offer the opportunities of individual cell replacement as mentioned in Article 11.

At the moment it is uncertain how well prepared the e-bike battery industry is to comply with this requirement as the concept text of the regulation came as a surprise last December.

The regulation introduces a dedicated collection objective for waste batteries for light means of transport. 51% needs to be collected by the end of 2028 and 61% by the end of 2031 and will have to be replaceable by an independent professional.

It also introduces labelling and information requirements, among other things on the battery's components and recycled content, and an electronic "battery passport" and a QR code. In order to give member states and economic players on the market enough time to prepare, labelling requirements will apply by 2026 and the QR code by 2027.

Yamaha E-Bike

Although the Japanese company Yamaha produced its first e-bike in 1993, the beginning of 2022 saw an announcement of an all new era in the design and production of the next generation of electric vehicles including the all new **Booster Easy** e-bike below.



The new Booster Easy e-bike as well as a Booster speed-pedelec have been developed in Europe aimed to meet demand for a clean, quiet and accessible means of urban transport. Both models come with the well-known Yamaha drive unit and feature a rugged and timeless chassis design. Both the Booster Easy and Booster look virtually identical and are technically very similar, sharing the same lightweight chassis design. The difference is in their performance. The Booster Easy has a maximum pedal assisted speed of 25km/h, while the Booster is a speed-pedelec or electric moped that can power to a maximum pedal assisted speed of 45km/h.

The contemporary and minimalist design features an exposed diecast aluminium front frame as well as spoked wheels with fat 20 x 4-inch tyres, and a classic U-frame configuration that makes getting on and off easy. The front end of the bike features Yamaha-exclusive fork covers, a front plate cover and front mudguard as well as a Supernova headlight. Cables are hidden away behind ducts for cleaner lines, and a chain cover and engine covers underline the Booster's quality of finish. The rear carrier provides plenty of carrying space, and both models feature an adjustable Royal Orbis seat and Integrated Koso LED taillight.

A video on the bike can be seen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9tPyjnsBQA>

BYCS Reports

BYCS is an Amsterdam based global NCO in partnership with the Bernard van Leer Foundation supporting community led urban change through cycling.

It has active projects on all 5 continents, and a global network of civil society leaders supporting, and being supported by their activities and takes a local approach to global impact to ensure grassroots participation and high level change.

See their extensive website at:

<https://bycs.org>

Their long term vision for human-centric cities is:

Riding on four wheels is more stable than two. Sitting on a saddle is less comfortable than an armchair. Rolling through the streets can be more dangerous than taking a metro under them.

We don't cycle (or roll or walk) because it's easier in the short term, but because we see the long term benefits of moving in better ways.

For a caregiver feeling joy at a child's first cycling wobble, for a community greeted with smiles by the local hand-trike rider, for a neighbourhood with trees fluttering in a breeze unclogged by private vehicle pollution, and for a city with safe streets for everyone as rolling replaces driving.

Although care journeys account for up to 30% of trips taken by adults they are often not well considered in transport literature and policy agendas. Very little research to date has provided a detailed account of people's experiences completing care trips with young children by bicycles, leading to cities struggling to accommodate young children and families in their cycling strategies.

The first critical step in this mobility of care project was a global survey in Turkey, India, Mexico and others that sought to better understand the mobility patterns and barriers of caregivers, especially related to riding a bicycle, as well as potential solutions to address these barriers.

In May an insight report of the work carried out was launched at the 2023 Velo City meeting in Leipzig ‘**Supporting Cycling Update for Care Journeys**’.



The insight discusses:

- Why mobility of care and why cycling
- Caregiver mobility & cycling: benefits & barriers
- Behavioural approaches: lessons from pilot programmes

The report may be viewed on:

https://bycs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/MobCare_PolicyBrief_1.6.pdf

In early July the above was complemented by the Guide and Toolkit for ‘**Increasing Access to Cycling Mobilities of Care**’.



The report may be viewed on:

https://bycs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/MobCare_PolicyBrief_1.6.pdf

Keep Cycling & Keep Safe

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)