



'Camden Cyclist' Newsletter: Jun/Jul 2002

News for cyclists from the Camden Cycling Campaign (LCC), London.

Newsletter editor: Meade McCloughan

An arresting meeting?!

The next CCC meeting takes place on Monday 10th June at the Castlehaven Community Centre, Hawley Road, NW1. We are very lucky to have as our speaker for the meeting Chief Inspector Ian Brooks from the Metropolitan Police, who will be talking about raising the standards of cycling and related issues. Come along with your questions! The main meeting starts at 7:30, with CI Brooks due to speak at 8.

Bike Week Events

- a. ■ Sunday 16th June: Afternoon mystery ride round some of the best cycle routes in Camden and Westminster - possibly. Suitable for families and pets. Start 2 pm, Hampstead Old Town Hall, Haverstock Hill. Two-three hours of slow cycling, with refreshment stops en route. Contact David Arditti: 020 7431 2964 / david@darditti.com
- b. ■ Wednesday 19th June: Free Cyclists' Breakfast. Munch & mingle at this popular & sociable event now in its seventh year, and keep a look out for one or two celebrities who will be dropping by. 8.00am - 10.00am, Ossulston Street outside the New British Library (by Euston Road).
- c. ■ Sunday 23rd June: Bloomsbury Bikefest (in association with Bikefix, CTC and Camden Council) - a hands-on expo of all things bike! Try out recumbents, trikes, load-carriers, rickshaws and all kinds of unusual human-powered vehicles round a historic central London square which will be closed to traffic for the day. Put your kids on the cycle-training obstacle course, and get a free Dr Bike checkup for your machine. Take a pedicab ride round the area, or go on a guided tour of the best cycle facilities in central London. 11am - 5pm Queen Square, WC1.

Urgent Request

We need around 40 (yes, that's forty) volunteers to assist with our Bloomsbury Bikefest event on Sunday 23rd June; it will be held in Queen's Square, which will be closed. This is the largest central London event in Bike Week. We are looking for anyone who can donate their time, preferably for one of two 4 hour shifts: 10am - 2pm, or 2pm - 6pm. If you cannot manage as much as 4 hours we'd still like to hear from you.

Duties will be onerous, such as lolling around (in the sunshine?!) at one of our road closures chatting to passers-by and participants, and hence acting as a deterrent to opportunists from taking off with one of the whizzy human powered machines. The plan is to rotate volunteers (who will work in pairs) onto a different activity every hour in order to keep your stint as interesting as possible (and reduce the risk of sunburn).

E-mail or 'phone Dianne if you are able to give us a hand for CCC's biggest event of the year: 020 7624 1376 / richardsdianne100@hotmail.com

St Pancras CTRL: Battle required, cyclists behaviour slammed.

We have just received a letter from Rail Link Engineering in response to our request for improved cycle parking and routes around the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus. The letter does not offer any hope that RLE are prepared to consider modifying anything around St Pancras to further improve matters for cyclists, so it looks like we have a bit of a battle on our hands here.

The letter goes on to state: "I would like to draw to your attention the particular problems which we have been experiencing with cyclists riding through our traffic management schemes in the Camden area. When we close roads to enable the construction of the realigned roads and to undertake utility works, we provide routes for pedestrians. Cyclists may use these, if they dismount. Invariably, cyclists do not dismount, ignore signed requests to do so and are very abusive to our staff and contractors if asked to dismount and walk. A particular concern has been that the routes through our road closures are used by "crocodiles" of children to and from the Camley Street Natural Park. I must therefore bring it to your attention that should this continue, we will in the interests of public safety have no choice other than to close all pedestrian routes through our works to cyclists."

Whilst cyclists are clearly out of order if they are putting pedestrians in actual or perceived danger, its a sad reflection upon RLE that it appears to be unable to consider the possibility that the routes they are providing are inadequate, and could be improved to allow cyclists to actually cycle along them.

Cycle scheme progress painfully slow

Following very detailed design feedback 7 weeks ago from CCC on the Gordon Square to Tottenham Court Road section of the Seven Stations Link (SSL), we are still awaiting feedback from the council as to what they plan to do. Some of the design problems clearly need urgent attention, and we remain very concerned that a cyclist will have to be seriously injured before the council treats this as a high priority activity.

We were told back in March that the council had commissioned a report on the options for routing the eastern half of the SSL. Its conclusions were not particularly helpful, and we have yet to be sent a copy of this report. [If the council was truly effective in its 'partnership' with CCC we really shouldn't even have to ask for a copy - it would be sent automatically.] We will have to press the council to move towards making a decision on which route the SSL will follow.

We understand that consultants are looking at the cycle route link from Somers Town to Waterloo Bridge; CCC has not been involved in this phase, so we trust that the brief has been sensibly constructed. [The last time consultants were engaged in such an exercise the council admitted it had proved a waste of money.]

Following our annoyance last year over the public consultation for extending the Royal College Street cycle track (the council forgot about the design we had given them, and came up with one which just wouldn't work), we had understood by now that we'd have seen preliminary designs for the Royal College Street/Agar Grove physically segregated cycle track.

Hopefully our forthcoming liaison meeting with the council on 29th May will flush out progress on all these issues.