

The "Camden Cyclist"

Apr/May '05 Newsletter of Camden Cycling Campaign

Camden
Cycling
Campaign

Editor: Jean Dollimore

Web site at: www.camdencyclists.org.uk

Mailing list: CamdenCyclingCampaign-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Dates for your diary

Members meetings: April 11th and May 9th

In the Castlehaven Community Centre, Hawley Street, NW1 at 7.30 pm on the second Monday of each month. You can bring your bike inside.

AGM and talk by David Dansky: 11th April

7.30 pm: AGM. A brief report from the coordinators on the year's work and a statement from the treasurer. Review of committee membership.

7.45: David Dansky staff manager at Cycle Training UK
Cycle Training UK's activities and partnerships supporting cycling in London

Cycle Training UK is London's largest independent provider of on-road cycle training and was influential in developing national standards for cycle training. You may have seen David Dansky recently on BBC1, teaching presenter Sumit Bose how to cycle assertively on some of London's busiest roads including Park Lane, round Hyde Park Corner, and Parliament Square.

CTUK cycle workshop: 9th May 7.30pm-8.45 pm

Bi-monthly self-help cycle maintenance workshop run for Camden Cycling Campaign by Cycle Training UK. Free. Contact: James Brander. Telephone 020 7267 3585

Cyclists tea and Dr. Bike: 7th April 5 pm - 6.30 pm

CCC will be holding a cyclists tea and Dr. Bike session in Byng Place – on the SSL almost opposite Malet Street. Please stop for a chat and refreshment on your way home and if necessary, have your bike checked. You could even make a special diversion so that you can join in this convivial event.

Ride through Chiltern Beechwoods Sun 15th May

A moderate grade ride of about 30 miles with a lunch stop, starting and ending at Henley-on-Thames. Meet at Paddington at 8:45 for the 9:00 train, changing at Reading for the 9:35 train to Henley-on-Thames. Contact Sela, linked2allATyahoo.com. Tel. 020 7625 3094 mobile 07900307025. (See the news item describing Sela's last ride on the CCC web site whose web address is above.)

Green Fair and Bikefest Sunday 5th June

New committee members needed

The AGM is an opportunity to get new people to participate in CCC. If you feel you would like to become more involved in our campaign, then why not join the committee? The committee needs help with organising events, attending meetings, responding to consultations and editing or writing articles for the newsletter. If you think you might like to join, or to help us in other ways, then please talk to Stefano or Jean whose contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

Personal opinion: pedestrians first



Photo Stefano Casalotti

Please post your responses (agree/disagree) to the following on our mailing list (see above). Stefano Casalotti writes:

Every day, as we cycle around town we are reminded of our vulnerability to motor vehicles. It is mainly due to the skill that each of us has developed that we reach our destinations safely. However, sometimes, as we concentrate on our safety we forget about one group of road users that is even more vulnerable than us and is equally eco-friendly: pedestrians.

Because we move faster we should give priority to pedestrians, just as car drivers should give us priority. The fact that we rarely get this courtesy from drivers is no excuse for cyclists to disrespect the rights of pedestrians. I would like to highlight a particular situation: when we turn left at a junction we should always give priority to pedestrians going straight across the road (unless there is a pedestrian-only green phase). It takes only a few seconds for them to cross, but it has a tremendously positive effect. Just try it and you will get smiles and thanks. Although pedestrians have a natural right to cross first, it is also in our interest to improve our general image, especially with non-cycling pedestrians.

The photo above shows the junction of Mabledon Place with Euston Road that many of us go through on the Somerstown route. Although cyclists have a green light for the left turn, pedestrians do not have a red light so we should let them cross first (unlike the photo). I chose this example because it represents the extreme of our potential kindness to pedestrians (given that there is a green light) but we should certainly do it at any non-signalled junction. Try this for a few days; you will get used to it and will have positive feelings about it.

Safer neighbourhood schemes

Stefano Casalotti writes: A new scheme has just been introduced in the St Pancras-Somertown ward and will soon be reproduced in all Camden wards (and many others nationally). A police/community officer unit is assigned to each ward (while retaining current police units). In addition to

traditional on-the-beat policing, the unit is to be the focal point of any intervention to improve the quality of life in the ward. Actions can include removing offending graffiti, tackling drunken disorder and traffic offences or garbage collection. The targets for the police units are to be set at a meeting with a panel of residents and other interested parties.

CCC participated in the first meeting of the St.Pancras-Somerstown ward and two items on the target list are of interest to us. First, monitoring of the activities of youths in the streets. (A police-operated CCTV is being installed in Polygon Street on the Somerstown cycle route.) Second, provision of safe cycle parking for residents. The latter has a secondary (longer term) priority but is an example of the potential these schemes have for the promotion of cycling.

It is important that at least one of our members is included in the panel of each ward. CCC member Colin Murphy has kindly agreed to attend the next few meetings in Somerstown and to report to us on progress. I would strongly encourage other CCC members to join their local Safer Neighbourhood Schemes and promote cycling issues. If you do become a panel member, please let us know so that we can coordinate our approach and requests. Given that the overall target of these panels is to improve the quality of life, CCC has a lot to offer and also to gain

LIP consultation

Camden council is currently consulting groups including CCC, as well as individuals, on its five year transport plan. This Local Implementation Plan (LIP) specifies how the council intends to implement the mayor's transport strategy. CCC will reply to the group questionnaire on behalf of its members – see the news item on the LIP on our website, which gives access to the group questionnaire and includes some of our ideas for our response. It would also be very helpful if cyclists would fill in the council's individual questionnaires at www.camden.gov.uk/lip.

It is encouraging that the LIP includes proposals to develop all of the remaining LCN+ links in the borough, as well as working on the local links we requested from West Hampstead to Camden Town via Swiss Cottage.

We believe that some more radical ideas would be useful. For example, Camden Town could be improved enormously by the reinstatement of two-way working in place of the gyratory. The council is already considering something similar for Tottenham Court Road and Gower Street. Please contact Jean with your suggestions as to our response.

Link 27 CRISP coming soon

Link 27 is the next LCN+ route to be implemented in Camden. It will link Tufnell Park to Tottenham Court Road, via Kentish Town and Camden Town. Only the northern part will be considered in this CRISP. Please let us know:

1. Would you prefer LCN+ funding to be spent on small improvements (e.g. ASLs) to a main road route or more extensive cycle facilities on a possibly longer back street route?
2. If you do use any substantial part of the main road route for cycle journeys, tell us how you use it and where the worst problems are.

A discussion of alternatives for this link and a map showing a main road route and an alternative back street route can be found on our website at: <http://tinyurl.com/6h9ya>

Report on February talk by Richard Lewis



Photo George Coulouris

Richard Lewis, an active member of Hackney Cyclists and an officer at Brent Council spoke about how he is using the principles of the Road Danger Reduction Forum (RDRF) in transport planning for Brent Council. Brent's Road Danger Reduction Plan seeks to achieve road safety, together with the encouragement of walking and cycling. He pointed out that traditionally there is a conflict between road safety and sustainable transport – making roads safer has been achieved by reducing the number of pedestrians and cyclists, whereas sustainable transport requires more people to make their journeys by walking or by riding bikes.

Richard referred to Bob Davis' book *Death on the streets; the mythology of road safety* as a background for RDRF. He also referred to Mayer Hillman's early work with John Adams relating the decrease in child casualties after 1970 to the decline in independent travel by children. Mayer added to the discussion by saying that he is advising TfL on new ways of measuring danger on the roads (e.g. volume x speed of traffic). Richard reported that Brent is starting to resist TfL's traffic management approach in its pursuit of road safety.

He said application of RDRF should alter peoples' perception that roads are dangerous, thus making them more willing to walk or cycle, citing the proposals for Exhibition Road. He advocated a planning hierarchy of road user groups with the needs of pedestrians, and cyclists considered first, and private motor cars last, in the context of 'self explaining' streets.

The idea is to create uncertainty and a sense of 'risk' – so that drivers actually behave 'safely', and pedestrians and cyclists have the confidence to use the whole street rather than being herded into allocated areas. Examples of self explaining streets in London include the Strand with its central island strip and Trafalgar Square. Richard said that traditional solutions, including guard railing and anti skid were placed at the bottom of the hierarchy of solutions, but would still be necessary in some situations, such as on the North Circular.

We were encouraged by the possibilities of Brent's RDR plan and hope that Richard will be successful in getting it implemented.

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