



Newsletter: Feb/Mar '99

Editorial

There are a number of laudible cycle proposals in the council pipeline, with the potential for considerable levels of protection for cyclists; Camden is clearly trying harder than many London boroughs.

However, for every traffic scheme implemented which make conditions for cyclists safer, there is another going in which makes matters worse (see our [responses to recent traffic schemes](#) about cyclists' needs). The latter is often because only lip service has been paid to cyclists' safety.

Camden says it wants to meet its target of doubling cycle use from 1997 levels by 2002, and I believe this. But unless from '99 onwards the vast majority of schemes are tailored with cycle safety much higher up the agenda, this target has absolutely no chance of being met. 18 months ago we prepared a 3 year strategy for cycling in Camden ([Bike 2001](#)) - much has yet to be done!

So my New Year message to the council is "you've made some progress in the last couple of years, but there's no room for complacency".

Paul Gasson, Camden Cycling Campaign Coordinator

Red Routes

As we go to press a meeting with the Traffic Director's department is imminent. We'll be asking why the Traffic Director says he'll fund cycle facilities where the London Cycle Network (LCN) crosses Red Routes, yet has only offered enough to pay for one of reasonable quality. There are eight LCN crossing points on the Camden Town Red Route.

Even worse, changes in the road layout due to the Red Route programme have recently been made on Camden Town's LCN, thus making life more dangerous for cyclists.

Eight km of Red Routes now cut 3 separate swathes (Hampstead Road to Camden Road, Euston Road, and Finchley Road) through Camden's cycle network, and there is only one tolerably safe two-way cycle crossing. The vast majority of cyclists cross at least one Red Route on their journeys, so this is becoming a major issue ... and one which Camden appears unable to do anything about.

At the council's request, we started in February to design cycle facilities ... see [designs for cycle schemes](#) we have started on. We are trying to push for physically segregated routes where we feel road conditions warrant this.

Government Transport Statistics

- London bus use rose by 5% in 97/98 to 4.4bn passenger kilometres. London Underground passengers made 830m journeys in 1997/98. Average daily total vehicle flow on major roads in Gtr. London rose 2% from '91 to '97 to 29.2 thousand vehicles/day. This increase is mainly due to cars, which represent over 80% of total flow. Central London traffic speeds are now 10mph during the day. Average inner London traffic speeds in 1998 ('95 figs in brackets): morning peak 12mph (13.4), Day time off peak 14.8mph (15), Evening Peak 11.4mph (13.2).

See these and other [transport statistics](#) on our website.

Double standards

Following the introduction of controlled parking, Primrose Hill Primary School converted part of the children's playground to teachers' parking places. The school governors claimed they needed to provide the parking to attract good teachers, & had no better way to spend £3,000.

Meanwhile the children returned to school (and a smaller playground) after the holidays, and were given a letter from the chair of the Governors. It began

"Once again it is time to ask all parents who bring their children to school and collect them at the end of the day, to do so by foot or by public transport. This is good for the environment & childrens' health..."

Steve Outerson

100% Proof...



... that not all our December Xmas party revellers were under the table. Thanks to Jane for the surprise chocolate medal award ceremony ...modesty prevents your editor from revealing who had the biggest!

Lock Tavern Pub, Camden Lock, Dec 1998

Cycling Clips

Ideas for an unusual event for Bike Week (12-20 June)? Able to help with organising a ride, run a stall, or handle press & publicity? Come to our 9th Feb meeting (further details in **Campaign diary**), or call Paul on 0171-482-6692. A cyclist reported the 'gratifying sight of a motorist being nicked by a policeman on a mountain bike' in Southwark in December. Has anyone spotted Camden's cycle powered parking attendants in action yet? Bi-monthly CCC meetings at the Lock Tavern for rest of 1999: 12th April, 7th June, 9th Aug, 11th Oct, 13th Dec. But we're wondering whether to make our meetings monthly on the 2nd Monday of each month. We could also alternate the current campaigning plus debate format with evenings more centred on socialising & pure frivolity - what do you think?

- The Spanish government intends to amend traffic law 'to improve safety for cyclists'. Helmets & reflective clothing will be mandatory, and some roads will be closed to cyclists. If this goes through then the number of cyclists will plummet. Complain to Excmo. Sr. Federico Trillo Figueroa, Presidente del Congreso, Palacio del Congreso, Calle Fernanflor, 1 E-28014 Madrid, Spain (or take that spanish holiday now, before its too late!)

b. ■ We plan a CCC membership drive starting in April. If you can lend a hand with leafletting, give Jane (0171-794-9708) a ring.

More two way segregation?

A visit to Royal College St. with two Camden planners early in January explored the potential for extending the 60 metre section of two-way segregated cycle route for 500m down to the Crowndale Rd cycle crossing. This forms part of the north London/West End cycle route.

There are a couple of interesting problems to be solved due at the junctions with the one way street, but we are reasonably confident that we deliver a safe design solution.

Cycle Planning Briefs

Key traffic management schemes which affect cyclists in Camden

There has been a flurry of traffic planning schemes in recent weeks, perhaps due to the approach of the financial year end.

Advisory cycle lanes for Avenue Rd (southbound only), and mandatory 8.30am - 6pm lanes in Prince Albert Road. But Westminster's boundary runs along much of this route, & despite encouragement from Camden they won't provide lanes on their half of the roads. Another 17 cycle parking stands are due along High Holborn & Lincoln's Inn Fields, taking the total installed in 12 months to 100. The council's consultants came up with what can only be diplomatically described as a half-hearted proposal for a Tufnell Park to Goodge St. cycle route. We objected to it as the design defects were so serious we couldn't justify the waste of more govt. money. Questions will be asked at our next council meeting. The same consultants drew up plans for Torriano Ave which was not only dangerous for cyclists, but also omitted a segregated cycle route which the Traffic Director has been discussing for 6 months. Finally, following bad publicity over traffic jams in & around the new O2 retail complex in Finchley Road, the developers have been spurred into action. The cycle & pedestrian link they were supposed to build through the rear of the site to Blackburn Road will be completed shortly.

Its a fair coppice, guv?



These Camden council employed tree surgeons (Brophys) demonstrate the art of damaging flagstones via pavement parking in Maitland Park Villas. Another of their vehicles was parked full across the pavement 50 yards away. Both could have easily been parked legally on the road.

Road Rage

Channel 5's "Road Rage" series got off to a predictably sensationalist start by focussing on the highly illegal & dangerous antics of 2 cycle couriers. Two other (normal & law abiding) cyclists also featured, but many viewers will have been left with the impression that cyclists are total nutters who deserve to be run over. Thanks Channel 5!

Swipe a Bike in Camden?

'Time Out' magazine reports that Camden is one of 10 London councils vying for a free 'bicycle' scheme funded via sponsorship; not clear in the TO article is that these bikes are powered by an electric engine. Registered members use a swipe card to unlock a bike from a 'docking station'; when docked, the engine's battery is recharged.

Streets & Transport Committee Chair Cllr. Gerry Harrison, who after encouragement from us last year now pedals all over Camden, told 'Time Out': "... it sounds like a brilliant way of persuading people to get out of their cars."

A similar scheme is already running in Rennes in France. 1500 residents passes have been issued, with 200 electric cycles located at 25 sites; so far only three bikes have been stolen. The theft rate in Camden might be a tad higher, but nonetheless it's a great idea.