



Newsletter: April/May 1999

Editorial

The political spotlight has now moved to council plans to make huge changes to its decision making process. Many believe this will reduce accountability, and there's fear of weakened links with local communities & pressure groups such as ourselves.

Whatever the long term impact, yet again attention has been diverted from an issue which affects every Camden resident each day: transport & our environment.

Few would argue that enough effort & funding is invested in effective accessibility & safety improvements to encourage walking & cycling. Meanwhile, motor traffic continues its relentless upward trend. Radical solutions are needed, & we'll continue to be a catalyst for change!

Paul Gasson, Camden Cycling Campaign Coordinator

Focus: Red Routes

The council will soon have to decide whether to make the experimental Camden Town Red Route permanent. The objective for the Traffic Director's Red Route network is to carry through traffic; and this it does, but with no economic or social benefit to the borough.

We pay a high price for Camden's Red Routes, which deliver an alienating environment, & split Camden into 4 islands with few attractive 'bridges' to encourage walking and cycling.

The Traffic Director's influence extends far beyond Red Routes themselves. His powers to reject traffic calming measures on many other roads means the council often plays safe with less effective 'cosmetic' schemes. This under-mines

Camden's policy to discourage driving, & encourage a switch to sustainable transport.

There is little point in the council pushing green transport solutions, if it fails to tackle the intrinsic conflict from imposed road corridors designed to encourage through traffic.

In fact the Red Route objectives were modified last year to give higher priority to pedestrians, cyclists & buses. No one would claim that pedestrians have high priority in Camden Town, and the £60,000 currently allocated for Red Route cycle facilities will certainly not deliver that for cyclists either!

More information on the issues & our delegation to the council in Mid March is

The revolution's starting on

Monday 12th April, 7pm

Join us tonight to find out why! Our meetings are for members to get the latest news, meet each other, and through very lively debate, determine what the Campaign's priorities should be.

And following popular demand, from now on we meet monthly, on every 2nd Monday. So see you again on ...

Monday 10th May, 7pm

We'll give you the usual briefing with questions & answers on what's going on, but these second meetings may lean more towards the concept of having fun.

All Welcome: We meet upstairs at the popular Lock Tavern pub (opposite the Stables Market). Safe cycle parking in garden from 6.45pm.

If you're not into meetings, why not try one of our [rides](#)?

Cycle Clips

- a. **Shifting Priorities:** Our last members' meeting voted to scale back on Bike Week, to target effort on more 'partnership' work with Camden (eg cycle facility design), plus a focussed membership drive. Background story [here](#).
- b. **Bike Week:** Weds 16 June, Cyclists' Breakfast outside New British Library,

8 - 9.30. Thanks to Magda & Debbie for agreeing to organise this. Sat. 19th, Dr Bike at West Hampstead Library, 124pm. And David is hoping to organise a Treasure Hunt; call him on 0171-431-2964 if you have any good ideas. See our [Campaign diary](#) for details.

c. **■ Council pothole initiative:** Dugald Gonsal, Deputy Environment Director, has launched a '[name & shame](#)' campaign against utility companies. If one fails to repair a pothole the council has told them about, up goes a billboard with their name!

- **Queens' Crescent:** Many members rang us after the Queen's Crescent/Prince of Wales Rd junction [cycle gaps vanished](#). They'll return soon, with a better design; but the 6+ week delay is hardly cycle friendly. **Cyclist Killed:** In late January a 31 year old cyclist died in Camden following a collision with a lorry at the Farringdon Road/Clerkenwell Road junction. Fuller story [here](#). **New cycle link:** Thanks to efforts by Cllr. Gerry Harrison & architect Tom Young, a [pedestrian/ cycle path](#) between Spring Place & Regis Road has been approved. **Pavement Cycling:** Camden & the police started a pavement cycling crackdown in January. It is a problem, and we urge adult cyclists to stick to the roads, or push their bikes on the pavement. But we now look forward to a blitz on more dangerous & environmentally damaging activities ... eg speeding, pavement & other illegal parking. Next month will do! See [pavement cycling news article](#).

On The Ground: Cycle & Traffic Schemes

- **Cycling: £280,000!:** Camden has a provisional £280,000 allocation for 1999/2000, to be spent on Camden's part of the Seven Stations Link (SSL), other cycle facilities, and auditing & improving the existing cycle network. Go to fuller [description of spending plans](#).
- a. **■ Tufnell Park/W. End Cycle Route:** We objected to this poorly designed scheme from Camden's consultants, and its now on ice until we come up with better plans. See our [analysis](#) of this almost scandalous scheme.
- b. **■ Controlled Parking Expansion: Congratulations to the council on their plans to extend controlled parking to Kentish Town and Camden Sq.** We strongly support this, but urge the council to consider cyclists' needs. See our concerns in detail: [East Kentish Town & Camden Sq](#).
 - **Primrose Hill Rd Traffic Calming:** We were disappointed by the plans near the King Henry's Rd junction, which failed to incorporate any badly needed measures for the 3 strategic cycle routes which meet here. Our formal response is [here](#).
- b. **■ Traffic Reduction:** The London Planning Advisory Committee's plan for a 35% cut in Camden's traffic by 2005 has been hotly debated in council meetings. Our

own Peter McKay has now drawn up an impressive **Campaign response** which is supportive, but questions the reliance on road pricing. We suggest the emphasis should be on physical roadspace reallocation, and should be backed up by national traffic reduction targets.

Interested in summer weekend cycle breaks in the country?

We could group book with the London Bicycle Tour Company (p.25 of the Dec/Jan "London Cyclist"), and get a reduction on their rates, or plan our own trip. What's your price range? David: 0171-431-2964, darditti@zetnet.co.uk

Web Update

We're developing an email network amongst 'online' members, to allow us to quickly deliver local cycling developments & other news. So, for example, members can feedback on traffic schemes planned in their area. Visit our home page and give it a whirl.

We're continually expanding our website to cover practical and strategic cycling issues, and as well as many **news & other updates**, have added new web pages since the last newsletter:

Our **cycle facility designs** for troublespots

Road closure inventory: is there one you use which needs upgrading?

Camden's cycle network analysis: phase I

Getting to & around Camden by bike

Apologies to those of you without email or internet access, but this medium offers us an unsurpassable campaigning tool.