

The Camden Cyclist

Dec 2008/January 2009 Camden Cycling Campaign Newsletter

Camden
Cycling
Campaign

Website at: www.camdencyclists.org.uk

Mailing list: CamdenCyclingCampaign-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Photo Gallery: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/camdencyclists/>

Cycle Route maps: <http://maps.camdencyclists.org.uk>

Dates for your Diary

We hold **Monthly Meetings** at 7.30pm on the second Monday of every month at Primrose Hill Community Centre, 29 Hopkinsons Place (off Fitzroy Road), NW1 8TN. An hour before the main meeting, at 6.30pm, we hold a business/committee meeting to which all interested members are welcome.

Festive Fare

Our next meeting, on **December 8, 2008** will celebrate the end of the year with live music and Indian eats. Join us! We'll be back to 'Business as Usual' on **12 January 2009**.

Boris, Bikes & Bus Lanes

As of 5 January 2009, motorcycles will be allowed in all bus lanes on London's TfL roads (Red Routes). This is an 18-month 'experiment' implemented by the Mayor without consulting the most vulnerable road-users. Details here:

www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/finesandregulations/10151.aspx

You may email your views and experience of this to: STEngagement@tfl.gov.uk between 5 January and 5 July 2009.

Following our deputation to the Council Meeting in September, Cllr Maya de Souza's motion, to prevent powered two-wheelers (P2Ws) using bus lanes was deferred and addressed by the Executive Committee. Their full response is on: <http://tinyurl.com/6eh8v7>. Camden does not wholeheartedly welcome P2Ws in bus lanes, wishes to evaluate their effects over an area and wishes to work consistently with other Boroughs.

Background information on our bus lane campaign is on: <http://tinyurl.com/57w7yv>

Brent Cross

Just north of Camden's borders there are plans for a massive expansion of Brent Cross Shopping Centre coupled with major redevelopment in Cricklewood. Consideration of non-motorists' needs has been scanty. It seems that the integrity of LCN+ Route 5 (the A5) has been forgotten; southbound cyclists would have either to use the top of the flyover or to have a massive diversion into the complex, as the roundabout between the A406 and A5 at Staples Corner would be removed. Our colleagues in Barnet and Brent Cyclists have worked hard to remind planners of cyclists' needs.

Full details are on: <http://www.brentcrosscricklewood.com/>

Alan Bennett & Regents Park



Robert Workman

'There's plenty of room for everybody on the Broad Walk,' said Alan Bennett. The writer, Camden cyclist and National Treasure joined Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC) on Regent's Park Broad Walk where there's a Shared-Use scheme on trial for 18 months. An earlier three-month trial was deemed inconclusive because not enough cyclists had used the route. Regent's Park is the latest of London's royal parks to permit cycling. Mr Bennett, who has expressed the modest ambition to see cyclists allowed to pedal through Primrose Hill and Regent's Park in his lifetime, welcomed cycling access to the Broad Walk which he uses on the way to the BBC in Portland Place. 'I'm a very gentle cyclist anyway, so speed limits don't apply to me. I hope they'll do the last bit through Marylebone Green' (which would allow cycling as far as Marylebone Road).

He has cycled in London for forty years ever since he commuted by bike to perform in the smash hit revue *Beyond the Fringe* with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Jonathan Miller. These days he always wears a helmet and admits to finding city cycling more dangerous.

'It seems to me the cars are getting faster,' he told CCC. 'Even the traffic on the Outer Circle round Regent's Park is often speeding.' There are no speed traps on the Outer Circle. Yet a friend of his who cycled across the empty park at 7.30 a.m. had been stopped and fined. 'It's monstrous and inequitable,' he said.

He would like to see a 'less grudging, more imaginative attitude' from London transport authorities towards cyclists. In a recent visit to Sweden, he was amazed by 'the primacy given to pedestrians and cyclists'. Cycling in Regent's Park has had ministerial approval and Government policy is to encourage cycling through the parks, but stringent trial criteria must still be met before Alan Bennett and fellow cyclists are entitled permanently to ride on the Broad Walk.

Literary Launch



Lionel Shapirio

Dervla Murphy spoke with great warmth and humour at our October meeting, signing copies of her new book 'The Island that Dared - Travels in Cuba'.

Answering questions about nearly half a century of travelling, sometimes with a young daughter, later with grandchildren, some trips on a bicycle, we gained insight into some very different worlds. There's a full report of the evening on: <http://tinyurl.com/5vp5po>

Way To Go

The Mayor's vision for the future of London's transport is outlined here:

www.london.gov.uk/mayor/publications/2008/docs/way-to-go.pdf

Amidst the lavish colour pictures and smooth talk, it appears Mr Johnson wishes to improve traffic flow. While this superficially sounds admirable, I fear that pedestrians and other vulnerable road-users might suffer when 'a couple of seconds' are shaved off the red phase at traffic lights. Pedestrian phases are already short enough and the proposal to allow cyclists to turn left at red traffic lights appals me as a wheelchair user.

Mr Johnson would like to do away with speed humps; so would I! Problem is that some drivers move far too fast in their absence and illuminated signs are of limited use in slowing down traffic in the long term.

The proposed tram to Peckham is to be cancelled.

TfL's new Business Plan has just been published here:

www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/10231.aspx

London Freewheel



Stefano Casalotti

The London Freewheel, under its new sponsors, BSkyB was again a great success. Under brilliant September sunshine, Camden Cyclists led a large group of cyclists of all ages and varying machines, to Central London, where the roads had been closed to motor traffic for the event. There were some queues getting across Hyde Park corner. Many thanks to all our volunteer marshals. We are hoping to arrange some training for potential marshals in the future.

MILE-A-MINUTE MURPHY

'As cycling became more popular across Europe there arose the problem of compatibility with one's profession. ...In 1896 a Dutch commissioner of police forbade his men to cycle, even in their free time, and yet in other parts of that country bicycles were being introduced for police work.

'Once policemen were put on bicycles they could, at last, chase and apprehend errant cyclists, although the cycling world buzzed with rumours of other methods, such as a large net to be thrown over cyclists in Amsterdam. Theodore Roosevelt, who was a New York City police commissioner in the mid 1890s, recalled that his bicycling policemen 'frequently stopped runaways, wheeling alongside of them, and grasping the horses, (and) they managed not only to overtake, but to jump into the vehicle and capture, on two or three different occasions, men who were guilty of reckless driving, and who fought violently in resisting arrest.' The New York Police also hired the speed-cycling star, Mile-a-Minute Murphy, to catch transgressing cyclists.'

From *On Your Bicycle: An Illustrated History of Cycling* by James McGurn, John Murray Ltd, p. 96; available in hardback and paperback from Amazon.