

Minutes of Camden Cycling Campaign meeting on 12th January 2004

Present: Jane Boardman(chair), David Arditti, James Brander, Jean Dollimore (minutes), Daniel Glaser. Helen Vecht. Apologies: Paul Gasson, Stefano Casalotti

Definitions of a coordinator role

We listed all the tasks that CCC needs to do (see item 2) and then decided on those essential to the role of coordinator:

- Acts as a point of contact for the press and for all other enquiries concerning the group
- Acts as the official spokesperson for the group
- Coordinates activities
- Oversees the group's strategy

Tasks that CCC needs to carry out

James suggested a list of tasks. We refined it to reach the following:

- Web site update, maintenance and design
- Taking minutes at CCC monthly meetings
- Attending meetings on cycle facility planning (LCN, CPEG, LBC ('Apolitical'), WCRSAG)
- Consultations
- Newsletter
- Events (breakfasts, BikeFest, stalls)
- Dr Bike/ cycle maintenance
- Ride organiser
- Liaison with LCC, other boroughs, universities. Borough coordinators meetings.
- Press: monitoring and getting letters written
- Membership and speakers
- Treasurer

We then assigned some of these tasks. James will continue to be treasurer. Jane will continue to arrange events, but we will ask for additional help on this. Jean will continue with the newsletter and other assorted news and take on consultations but with need help from others on the latter. Helen agreed to deal with the press. Meade McCloughan has offered to take over the minute taking task (he confirmed this offer at the subsequent members meeting and will start in February).

The list of tasks will be in the February newsletter with a request for volunteers, but omitting the tasks we can cover.

Newsletter dates and announcements

Paul's leaving party will be on 8th March at the Stag's Head at 7.30 pm. We will invite Paul's friends and all CCC members. Jane confirmed that she will book the pub and organise snacks.

The AGM will precede the party at 6.30 pm in the Community Centre. Tell members: "We will nominate and if necessary vote on committee members. Please look at the list below as a guide to the tasks to be assigned." This is the list from item 2 with some added explanations: Jane agreed to be the contact point for any offers to help.

Cyclists Breakfast will be on February 17th from 8-10 am in Byng Place. James will ask Caroline Scott at the council and police. Daniel will organise tables, food and drinks – Jane might shop on 16th if asked. Jean will turn up on the day.

Dr. Bike James will be Dr Bike on 13th March from 12-4 at West Hampstead library.

How can we make the best use of help offered (Jane)

When people offer help, they should be allocated tasks as soon as possible. For each particular task area, a committee member should know about what volunteers are doing and keep them busy.

Bob Spellar, school keeper of Hampstead Parochial School had contacted Paul Gasson about the Hampstead Safer Routes to schools consultation and also suggested that CCC should do something jointly with the school. We discussed possible events e.g. something on the Heath. Daniel will contact Bob Spellar.

We have an offer of help with campaigning from Will Reading, who will be coming to the members meeting.

James suggested a sponsored 'Round the Borough ride'

Jane said we should have fewer events in Bike Week and more at other times.

WCRSAG

As a bit of light entertainment, James told us about a proposal for a 'smackies' card to be handed out to miscreant cyclists

Groundwork funding (James)

Alix Stredwick had suggested that CCC might like to join her in a funding application on behalf of WDS. CCC had responded with a few ideas e.g. funding a demonstration of cycling with children at Bike Fest, funding cycle maps of Camden. However, James said that Groundwork funding is really for improvements to the environment. We agreed that it would be better for WDS to go ahead without including CCC. However we might apply for a separate grant e.g. for hardware (i.e. a stand) to support cycle workshops for teenagers (e.g. in Somerstown). Daniel will pursue this idea by contacting one of the street wardens who are interested in cycle workshops for potentially delinquent kids.

Brent Cross (David)

David gave us a brief overview of the new proposal for Brent Cross. This a massive development supported by Barnet Council. There is to be a consultation. There is a possibility of a new road for buses and cycles across the North Circular road. David offered to respond to the consultation on behalf of CCC.

Cycle helmets (David)

David reminded us of the forthcoming private members bill on cycle helmets. This wants to get Parliament to introduce legislation to enforce the wearing of helmets by all cyclists in the UK. David has written to local MPs asking them to oppose it. Glenda Jackson disagreed but Rudi Vis who is Dutch agrees with CCC. (The bill now applies to under 16s).

Members Meeting

Present: the above plus Danny Berry, John Chamberlain, George Coulouris, Meade McCloughan, Will Reading, Lionel Shapiro, Robert Spellar, Geoffrey Thomas. Apologies: Mayer Hillman

WCRSAG Agenda/ GroundWork Grants

James asked for agenda suggestions: Lionel suggested that CCC should ask the council to write to local police, asking them to drive at a legal speed. James asked for suggestions for projects that need funding: nothing was suggested

AGM and requests for help

Jane announced that we will have an AGM on March 9th and that we need volunteers to help carry out many of the tasks in item 2. Meade volunteered to take over the minute taking.

Kevin Mayne (CTC) Camden and the national Context for Cycle Campaigning

(for a fuller account of KM's talk and the discussion, see the January news update on the CCC list)

Kevin arrived by bike but equipped with a computer and data projector and a fine set of PowerPoint slides.

After 125 years, CTC's objectives are more recreational than those of LCC but many of them are shared. 50% CTC members commute more than 3 times per week – a shift from purely recreational cycling over the last 10 years. The emphasis is on the people who cycle. Recently CTC is interested in the linkage to social inclusion and health.

Who is cycling: Kevin showed figures: indicating a decline over the years in total kilometres done by cyclists in the UK, showing the percentage of cycle journeys in UK (2%) and elsewhere e.g. Germany 11% and Holland much higher still. Cycle use for children in the UK is much higher than that of adults (with primary higher than secondary). But not all cycle use is for making journeys. Other countries demonstrate that where many children cycle, then many adults do too.

Training and education: the UK has a tradition of cycle training (RoSPA) and there is the Safer Routes to School initiative. Training works, but the problem is that only 14% is training on the road. Only 4% of children cycle to school. People think they are learning to do something dangerous, for example, they hear of casualty reduction.

Conclusion: Most cycling is not about making journeys. There is a perception of danger. Parents don't cycle – there is a loss of a sense of cycling being normal. Therefore there is a poor chance of reaching the target numbers.

What can we do? English Regional Task Force audit of local authorities.

Stop people building ridiculous facilities. Link cycling with health and pleasure and reduce the perceived danger.

Relative risks for cyclists: Causes of death – fewer deaths are due to cycling accidents than to accidents in the home, or heart disease.

Priorities: training of young and adult cyclists to national standards, decouple cycling from road safety, link it to health, enjoyment and travel. Improve the infrastructure, propaganda about on road leisure cycling.

Some points from the discussion

David: LCC priorities are i) infrastructure, ii) training.

KM: Routes will never go from door to door. Parents should be involved in cycling to school, children should be taught to cycle on their local roads – and walk the big roads or to a feeder route to school.

- We should support 20 mph in residential areas and home zones.

- Graz is a good example, it has four main roads and all the rest is at low speed. Cycle routes become redundant.

- Age 10-11 is ideal for training so that children will be ready to ride to secondary school. It gives them independence to make journeys without their parents.

- When cycling exceeds 4%, the roads become safer for cyclists. Unfortunately segregation takes cyclists off the roads.

Meade: Why insist on going via the route of training children? How about adult training? From experience of running the CCC mentoring project, adults do take up cycling.

KM: Child training is a future investment, but it is hard when the parents don't cycle.

George: Students will be 50% of the population, cycling is a cheap option. But jobs lead to cars and they stop cycling.

KM: Oxbridge makes cycling cool. CTC work with BSM to convey a message about cycling when the driving test passed.

Daniel: Boroughs underspend. There must be a bike-parking infrastructure.

KM: As well as parking, people need to be taught about cycle security.

Bob Spellar: concern about road narrowing in the Hampstead Safer Routes to Schools proposal.

KM: Work on road narrowing by Robin Field on CTC website.

The official meeting ended at 9.15 pm when some of us moved to the Stag's Head.

Next meeting: Monday 9th February.

JD 14/1/04