

Camden Cyclists Meeting Minutes 18 January 2021



19:30-21:30

On Zoom

Attending - John Chamberlain (Chair), Paul Allen (Minutes), Jean Dollimore, George Coulouris, Luke Pearson, Alex Santacreu, Susan Seymour, Linus Rees, Eilidh Murray, Helen Vecht, Stefano Bertolotto, Steven Edwards, Steve Kattress, Jon Marks, Linus Rees, Jean-François Paris, Keith MacFarlane

1. Introductions

2. Minutes of 21st December 2020 meeting

[The minutes](#) were read through and approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

None

4. Update on infrastructure

JD gave a summary of all the [infrastructure gains of 2020](#) in Camden. The positives included:

- the length of protected cycle lanes almost trebled from 3.5km to 10km, including some TfL roads
- we made a dozen permeability gains
- the first two LTNs and a dozen other useful road closures appeared
- as well as a dozen school streets
- and 70 new bikehangars

There were a few negatives:

- Some bollards for permeability have been knocked down
- The TfL Tottenham to Camden project is on hold

5. Camden Consultations, Commonplace Feedback and Engagement

Eilidh from Islington asked whether Camden had been getting similar levels of anti-LTN protests as Islington. Thankfully the answer is no, although a proportion of the negative comments on Commonplace and Nextdoor may be from cabbies or people who aren't from the area.

JC: Camden council seem to be “doubling down” against problems for example closing additional roads such as Harmood Street, which was being used following the Prince of Wales Road / Ferdinand Street no left turn.

6. Alex Santacreu - Progress on pop-up cycle lanes in Paris

Alex Santacreu is a former member of Camden Cyclists and Cycle Islington, who now works in Paris at the OECD International Transport Forum.

You can see a video [\[here\]](#) from a webinar that was first presented 2 months ago, but still hold true. If you would like to contact him you can email him at santacreu AT gmail.com.

These are some highlights from the talk and discussions:

Most of the improvements have been within the city of Paris which is the central area of 20 Arrondissements, roughly enclosed by the Boulevard Périphérique ring road, with 2 million people. The wider metropolis has a further 10 million people.

With COVID-19 Mayor Hidalgo initiated almost 50km of temporary bike lanes, many connecting to existing infrastructure. Many used significant concrete barriers, which were actually very quick to install and easy to adjust. With the wide boulevards of Paris, some roads and bridges were reduced from 6 lanes of traffic to 4, with 2 lanes for cycles. Interestingly the loading zones were often in the middle of the road (cycle lane, loading, other traffic). Alex suggested that this can be safer than moving them to side roads as that approach increases turning hook risks.

Only a few LTNs have been created and new electric charging bays have been left isolated. Due to the COVID crisis, the usual heritage constraints could be bypassed.

The most dramatic change was Rue de Rivoli with 1 bus lane, 1 delivery lane and the rest for cycling and pedestrians. During the summer, when COVID lockdowns were relaxed and many Parisiens returned to work, this attracted 20,000 cyclists per day. This was policed heavily for the first month, and got surprisingly little push back from the taxi trade. Alex suggested that this is because the local government has been consistent with regards to a “road diet” over the last 20 years.

It was suggested that London’s pop-up infrastructure weren’t able to be proven as much, because staff remained working from home rather than returning to offices. Another difference with London is that the Mayor has control over all the roads, not just the main ones.

With regards to cyclists only about 20% felt it necessary to wear helmets, there was a 30% increase in collisions, but that was on the back of a 100% increase in riding and many new/returning riders. The [Veligo](#) long term e-bike rental scheme is very popular, as are electric scooters, which are legal. Safe parking is less of an issue as scooters can be taken into offices and the veligo have good GPS protection.

With the re-election of Mayor Hidalgo the changes will be guaranteed in the long term. The next challenge is beyond Boulevard Périphérique which is a major barrier and where individual boroughs control the roads.

7. Plans for future monthly meetings

No plans were made, beyond staying with Zoom.

8. AOB

- The newly completed roundabout at Drayton Park is redundant due to the more recent LTN.
- SS: The Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum has commissioned the [Urban Movement](#) consultancy and they are currently conducting discussions with locals. Various competing opinions exist with the busy Chetwynd Road compared to other calmer roads. It is interesting to note that discussion is about traffic rather than cycling. The air quality at the Gordon House / Highgate Road junction is worse than central London. A wider LTN would need to be agreed with Camden and Islington due to the boundary, but as Islington is now much more amenable to traffic reduction, this may now be possible.
- London Living Streets are extending their map schemes out from the centre and are looking for volunteers to design walking routes in Camden. Anyone interested please contact David Harrison (dfharrison1138@gmail.com).
- Cycle Islington are creating a cycling map for families.
- An interim audit of the new Gower Street cycle lanes has been sent to the West End Project and a final one will be completed once the two-way traffic is in place. There are some aspects that are as planned, but need improvement e.g. ramps before loading bays; and there are some bigger improvements that may be more challenging e.g. stepped tracks extending to junctions.
- PA: The recent death of a pedestrian at Wandsworth Bridge may be an impetus for TfL to add pedestrian phases on the Euston Road side crossings, especially between King's Cross and St Pancras stations. JC commented that the cycle lane has actually prevented many of these left turns. JC suggested that this may best be addressed by the LCC [better junctions](#) campaign and [Living Streets](#).

Next Meeting

15th February 2021, 19.30 - 21.30; Chair: JC; Speaker [TBC]