

Southampton Cycling Campaign Newsletter

April 2004

Well, this is the sixth and final newsletter supported by a grant from Southampton City Council. Its been a tricky one to put together too, with not enough space to include all the interesting items that have been received. One article that I have had to leave out was to be based on the English Regions Cycling Development Team's assessment of Southampton City Council's performance on cycling. This is well worth a look for its honest view of cycling facilities and initiatives in the City. It can be found from the link at the following website (apologies for not having a non-WWW contact address) :

www.nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk/local_authority_performance.html

It is with great sadness that I learned of the death of Phil Penfold. Being only a recent recruit to the Campaign I met him only a few times, twice when he came along to take photographs of our rides through town. His passion for cycling was quite apparent. In July last year, we unanimously agreed that Phil would be presented with honorary membership at the AGM in May.

This final issue really reflects the season, with new initiatives for cyclists being introduced and plans being put into place for national Bike Week. All this kicks off with an article about the pleasures of touring Europe by bike. Just so that we don't start thinking all is fluffy in the world of cycling, there is an article contributing to the debate on the compulsory wearing of cycle helmets. Finally, don't forget the AGM on 10th May, I'll bring the jaffa cakes - Izzy

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Phil Penfold

Sue and Barry Colborne

Sadly, one of our founder members, Phil Penfold, died in January. Phil was very supportive of the Campaign. He was membership secretary for a number of years and gave up his time to man stalls during bike week. The Campaign has given a donation to Southampton and Eastleigh RAF association in his memory as requested by his family.

Claude, Thunderbird & Nigel take a slice through Europe

Mark Hancock

It was an extravagant idea, if not foolhardy; to cycle the 1700 mile length of the Danube from the Black Forest in Southern Germany to the estuary delta on the Romanian shore of the Black Sea. Chris had inconsiderately moved up north which made our seasonal day cycle rides through the wonderful landscape of Hampshire, Wiltshire & Dorset rather impractical.

I don't know who came up with the idea but with the kind permission of our wives we have been taking off a week per summer ever since to pursue the goal, flying out with trusty bikes, Claude Butler & Thunderbird Dawes. In 1999 it was Germany, 2000 Austria/Slovakia, 01 Hungary, 02 half of Serbia, 03 the other half and bits of Bulgaria and Romania and hopefully it will be Romania and a ceremonial bathe the Black Sea in 04!

Every stage has produced tremendous moments & left unforgettable images: in Germany road-side iced coffee and tiny mediaeval villages 'that time forgot'; in Austria the monastery at

Melk with the Saxon bible, the mother of all lighting storms barring our way to the next town, the jazz group in Vienna & a visit to the chilling former concentration camp at Mauthaus; in Hungary riding through magnificent Budapest, the endless prairie lands of the Puszta with the silhouettes of ancient shadoof wells & the battleground where the Hungarians rather carelessly lost half their country to a fairly weak Turkish attack: and into Serbia, a country internationally isolated and devastated by war & corrupt leadership but full of warm people, the rather alcoholic breakfast with young Serbs camping by the river, being the sole visitors to the oldest settlement in Europe twice the age of the pyramids, going through the Iron Gates where the Danube pierces the Carpathian mountain chain: Bulgaria the wild 'gypsy' music and dancing, the peasants travelling in horse and cart through spirit-deadening communist era tower blocks.

Sorry, I'm raving again but the Danube takes one along a fascinating slice



The Great Hungarian Plain

Photograph courtesy of Mike Hancock

through Europe historically, geographically, economically. Somehow the non-high-tech wobbly bikes (sorry, Claude & T'bird, but with drop handlebars, panniers & without suspension you are no longer counted fashion accessories!) put us on a non-threatening level with the locals, yet allowed us to travel through regions at a reasonable pace. We met kindness and interest wherever we went but particularly so far in Serbia where the economic and political isolation has hit the young people particularly hard.

One felt still some of great movements of history which have shaped middle Europe from times when Britain was a politically insignificant island: the ancient peoples who used the Danube as their motorway, the Romans who advanced to the Danube but struggled to exert control beyond it, the Vlaks, Magyars, Bulgars and the devastating

Monguls who swept from the East, the mediaeval German economic migrants who floated their worldly possessions in big barrels to a better life downstream, the Turks who dominated so much of Eastern Europe, the Austro-Hungarian Empire & the Russian communists.

As we cycle east the conditions are noticeably poorer, the environment more exotic, the surprises more guaranteed and by and large the greetings warmer (at least we are hoping). If you have an unused bicycle in your shed, why not give it spin by a river! I suggest you take it up the west bank of the Test on a gently undulating ride along quiet roads through a wonderful picturesque & historical landscape but should want to go further, we can give you some handy hints on the Danube!



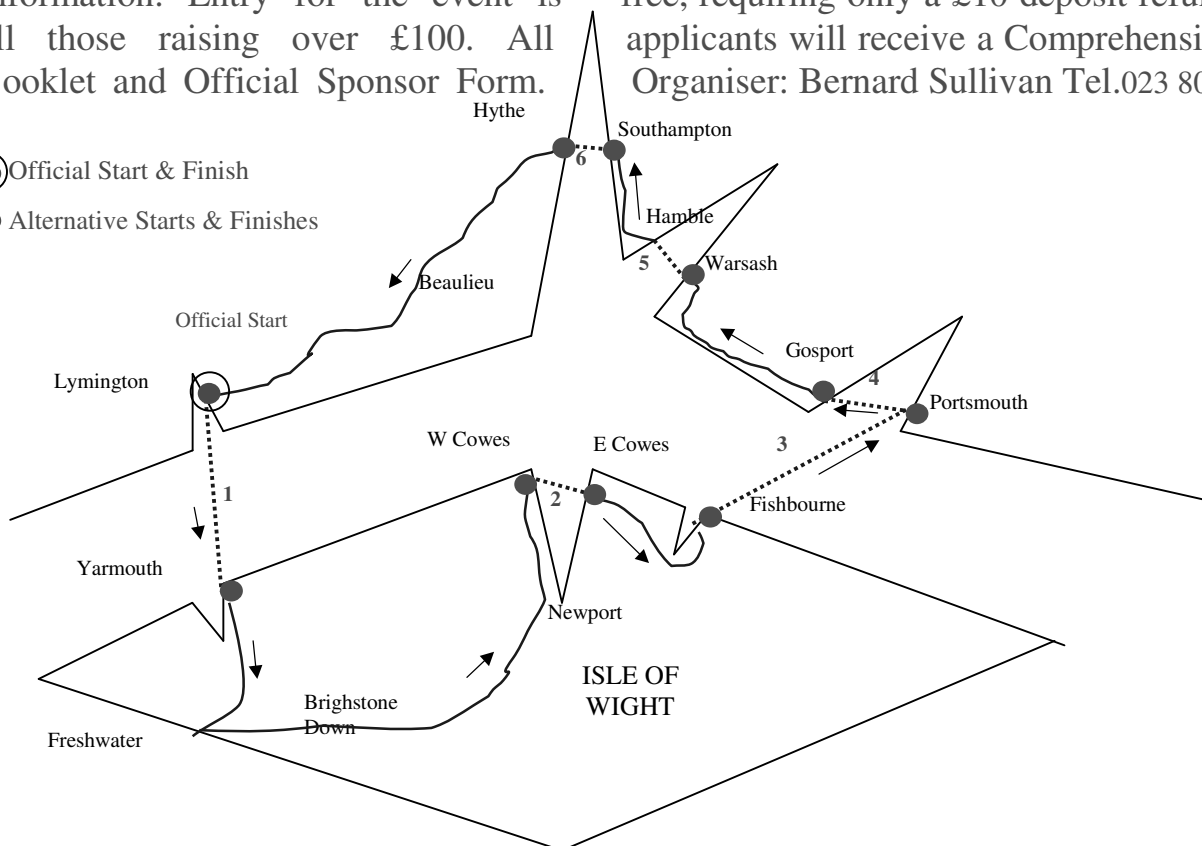
Are you Up For The Challenge?



The Solent Coasts Cycling Challenge is a great cycling event now in its second year, designed mainly for mountain bikers, but perfectly possible for road bikers too. It will take place on Saturday June 12th, the first day of National Bike Week. The challenge is to complete a 66-mile circuit around beautiful sections of the Hampshire coastline and the Isle of Wight in a single day. The journey, which is self-navigating, contains 6 great ferry journeys and because all the ferry companies on the route are sponsoring the event, it is very economical too! This year, we are hoping to attract 250 riders who will raise sponsorship funds for three humanitarian aid charities. The charities are each run with the help of people from the Solent area. A flexible feature of the event is that although the official start is at Whitelink’s terminal at Lymington, it is perfectly possible and allowable to chose your own start and finish point, anywhere on the circuit. The only requirements to be a successful challenger and qualify for a completion certificate, are that you must both complete the course and raise a minimum of £100 in sponsorship. It is even permissible to take two days for the journey although in that case, a “Completion Certificate – Second Class” will be awarded. As an additional incentive, there are a number of prizes to be won. All those raising in excess of £150 will have their names entered for a prize draw. The prizes so far are – a Three Months Free Family Subscription to a David Lloyd Leisure Centre, a Family Day Return Ticket for up to four people in one car to the Isle of Wight courtesy of Wightlink Ferries, and Five Pairs of Complimentary Tickets for a Day Out at Beaulieu! Further prizes are still being offered at the time of going to press. Check out the website at www.solent-challenge.org.uk or e-mail info@solent-challenge for the latest information. Entry for the event is free, requiring only a £10 deposit refundable to all those raising over £100. All applicants will receive a Comprehensive Route Booklet and Official Sponsor Form.

Organiser: Bernard Sullivan Tel.023 8026 2825.

- Official Start & Finish
- Alternative Starts & Finishes



The Cycling Helmet debate

Patrick Lingwood, Regional Cycling Development Co-ordinator South East

The issue of compulsory wearing of cycle helmets is currently being debated. A Private Members' Bill has been tabled in Parliament for debate on April 23rd to make it compulsory for children (under the age of 16) to wear cycle helmets. The main responsibility of the English Regions Cycling Development Team (ERCDDT) is to meet cycling targets, and we have therefore been forced (rather reluctantly) to look at the data. The evidence suggests that compulsory helmet wearing is likely to lead to a decrease in cycling (Towner 2002) and that the safety benefits of cycle helmet wearing are doubtful. Some relevant research shows that:

🚲 Cyclists make up just 8% of all transport related fatalities due to head injury (pedestrians 39% and motor vehicle occupants 50%) (source Hillman 1993)

🚲 Traffic deaths are usually the result of multiple injuries of which several are fatal in themselves. A study of autopsies of cyclists found that 82% had fatal head injuries, but 39% also had fatal thorax injuries. For pedestrians and vehicle occupants, 86% had fatal head injuries, but 71% also had fatal thorax injuries (source Kennedy 1995)

🚲 Just 6% of fatal cyclist injuries do not involve other vehicles (situations where helmets may offer some protection). The other 93% involve other motorised vehicles where cycle helmets are unlikely to offer much protection (Source DoT data)

🚲 In terms of hour travelled, cycling is safer than car driving in most European countries (source Wardlaw 2001)

🚲 Data from Europe and USA shows that the countries with the highest cycle helmet wearing rates have the highest rates of cyclist death, and the countries with the lowest helmet wearing rates have the lowest rates of cycle death (source IRTAD 2003)

🚲 In Netherlands, with 26% of journeys by cycle and cycle casualty rates by distance cycled around half that of UK, only 0.1% of cyclists wear helmets (source Osberg 1998)

🚲 Whereas in real life traffic situations there is no conclusive evidence of a safety benefit from cycle helmet wearing, there is extensive research showing that traffic calming saves cyclists, pedestrian and car user lives e.g. 20mph zones in Hull have led to 69% reduction in child cyclist accidents (source TMS 2001)

Our view is therefore that the main focus should be altering the road environment to build in safety and slower traffic speeds, which has been shown to both encourage cycling and improve cycling safety at the same time.

More information on debate:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3563671.stm

<http://ctc.org.uk/working/HELMETS.aspx>

Bells on bikes

Isabel Sargent

From May it will be compulsory for all new bicycles to be sold with a bell. This law is being introduced to try to reduce the estimated 90 serious injuries and 5 deaths caused to pedestrians by cyclists each year. Although it is a shame that little appears to be being done to tackle the considerably larger problem of pedestrians and cyclists being injured and killed by motor vehicles, in itself this is not a piece of legislation that is likely to effect considerate cyclists.

The New Forest Tour

John Sorrell, New Forest Transport Strategy Officer

The New Forest Tour, operated by Solent Blue Line with the backing of New Forest District Council, the Forestry Commission and Hampshire County Council, will begin running from April 4, 2004 to September 26, 2004.

Local residents and visitors will be able to take a car-free and stress-free tour of the Forest in an attractive and colourful double-decker, open top bus, with optional links to ferry services and a Needles bus tour on the Isle of Wight.

The tour will operate as a "hop on, hop off" service every ninety minutes, seven days a week, with people able to join at any point on the route, and will take in the New Forest's most attractive scenery and landmarks.

Hampshire County Council has also made the tour attractive to cyclists in the form of a cycle trailer, capable of carrying up to nine bicycles, which will be pulled behind the bus and allow cyclists to transport their bikes to more distant parts of the Forest.

The tour will begin from Lyndhurst car park and travel to Boltons Bench, Matley Wood campsite, Denny Wood campsite, Beaulieu Road station, Beaulieu Motor Museum, Beaulieu Village, Hatchett Moor Pond, Beau Heath, Crockford, Bull Hill, Towle's Public House, Lymington Pier and Ferry, Lymington High Street (excluding Saturday market days), the Toll House Inn Public House, the Hobler Public House, the Filly Inn Public House/ Setley Ridge Vineyard, Brockenhurst Station, Carey's Manor Hotel/ Balmer Lawn Hotel, Hollands Wood campsite, New Park, and the Crown Stirrup Public House, ending at Lyndhurst car park one and half hours later.

Passengers will be able to pay an all inclusive price for the whole tour, allowing for different stop offs, or to pay for individual parts of the journey as required, with reduced prices for children.

The service will also offer an additional all-inclusive price for anyone wanting to combine the tour with a ferry trip to the Isle of Wight via Wightlink at Lymington and a Needles tour on the island.

If the service is popular, additional tours may be provided over the summer months, making the service more frequent.

Prices will be as follows:

Adult £6.50 day ticket

Child £3.25 day ticket (under 16)

Family £17 day ticket (max 2 adults and 3 children)

For more information, please contact the Solent Blue Line head office in Eastleigh on 023 80614459.

Cycling and Cycle Tourism in South Hampshire

Cycle Hire information and details of 'Self Guided B&B Cycle Tours' in the South Hampshire area can be found at:

LEISURE Cycle Hire www.meonvalley-cyclehire.co.uk

TOURISM Cycle Tours and B&B breaks:

www.meonvalley-cyclehire.co.uk/shortbreaks.shtml

Events

April 2004

Mon 12th Southampton Cycling Campaign meeting

May 2004

Mon 10th Southampton Cycling Campaign AGM

Please come along to hear reports on the past year, vote in the new committee and discuss plans for the coming year.

June 2004

12th – 20th National Bike Week

Sat 12th Solent Coasts Cycling Challenge . The challenge is to complete a 66-mile circuit around beautiful sections of the Hampshire coastline and the Isle of Wight in a single day

Sat 12th 9th Winchester Bike Fair & Cycle Cavalcade

July 2004

23rd – 26th Welsh Festival of Cycling at the Rugby Club at Bala, Gwynedd in North Wales. For more details and booking forms please visit

www.ctc-wales.org.uk/cyclefest/index.shtml or call Steve Stockham Sustainable Transport Officer, Pembrokeshire County Council 01437 776364

September 2004

Wed 22nd Car-Free Day

Wed 22nd Winchester's 8th Alternative Transport Day

Other events at www.hants.gov.uk/cycling/events.html and www.tagfactivities.co.uk/localevents.shtml

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held at Friends Meeting House on 10th May. It is essential that as many members attend as possible to ensure a quorum so that we can make some vital decisions for the coming year. Southampton needs a Cycling Campaign to represents its cyclists, make sure you have your say!

Get in touch

Chairpersons Pete R 023 8034 0261
Izzy 023 8077 1689 / izzy@southamptoncycling.org.uk
Secretary Angela 023 8055 4715
Membership 39 Swift Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9FP

Want something raised at a meeting? Call Pete R or email agenda@southamptoncycling.org.uk.

And finally, to keep our meetings on track, how about getting that winge out of your system by emailing winge@southamptoncycling.org.uk



Meetings at 19:45 every 2nd Monday of the month (except August) at Friends Meeting House, Ordnance Road. **See you at the AGM on 10th May**

This newsletter is available online at www.southamptoncycling.org.uk

Membership application

Join us and help make a difference!

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

Annual fee (please circle) £10 Waged / £5 Unwaged

Return this form with your fee to SCC Membership Secretary,
39 Swift Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9FP

Cheques payable to **Southampton Cycling Campaign**, please.