

Southampton Cycling Campaign Newsletter

Dec 2009

Welcome to the December 2009 Newsletter.

Thanks to all our contributors! If you spot something that you think would be of interest in the Newsletter please send to me – contact details at back.

Angela



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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

14th December 7.30pm Campaign Meeting, Friends Meeting House

17th December 7.30pm Christmas Social and Quiz, 17 Whitworth Rd Bitterne Park

11th January 7.30pm Campaign Meeting, Friends Meeting House

8th February 7.30pm Campaign Meeting, Friends Meeting House

8th March 7.30pm Campaign Meeting, Friends Meeting House

DECEMBER MEETING

At our December meeting we have Paul Walker from the City Council coming along. Paul is Head of Transport Policy and therefore in a key position to influence decisions about transport within the city. All cyclists, whether members or not, are welcome to join us on December 14th for an informal discussion with Paul followed by Christmas nibbles/drinks.

RALLY FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

11am 12th December

To coincide with the Copenhagen climate talks we have our own rally here in Southampton. The event starts with a bike ride at 10 am, arriving at the Civic Centre at 11 am to hear Green Party speakers John Spottiswoode and Chris Bluemel, FoE and Greenpeace. There will be musicians and campaign stalls. If you would like to join the cycle ride please contact Lindsa Bluemel for more details as at the time of writing the meeting point has yet to be decided.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL and QUIZ

17th December from 7.30 pm 17 Whitworth Road Bitterne Park

Come and enjoy mulled wine and mince pies and have a go at a cycling themed quiz, which this year will have some questions on bicycles in art and literature, so you don't need to know a lot about the technical/sporting side of cycling. It would be great to see some new faces especially members who can't make our Monday meetings.

HAMBLE PATH

Many of you will be aware of the outcry from Warsash and Hamble cyclists at new "No Cycling" signs on the gravel path along the east side of the Hamble. Dilys and I investigated and found, as well as the normal "No Cycling" signs, a large red sign erected adjacent to the Hamble ferry jetty saying that cyclists should expect to be challenged if they used the path and the police would be looking out for cyclists not obeying the "No Cycling" regulation. The cyclists have got themselves organised quickly and efficiently and challenged the prohibition. I have written on behalf of Southampton Cycling Campaign to Fareham Council leader Seanne Woodward, MP Mark Hoban and Hampshire County Council and have received replies from all three. At this point in time it looks as though the group set up to oppose the cycling prohibition will be successful in achieving a reclassification of the path from footpath to a bridleway. It is really heartening to know there are so many vocal cyclists out there and a lesson in what can be achieved if we all unite in the cause of cycling.

Lindsa Bluemel

LONDON ROAD

The City Council is promoting London Road as a successful example of a "naked road" scheme and it has been presented as such on the Environmental Transport Association's website. However, for a truly "naked" scheme, look at the Times 28th Nov article on the Camden proposals - pedestrians will have right of way and can cross the road wherever and whenever they wish, the vehicle space will be reduced to one lane and there will be no distinction between road and footpath. Many cyclists have told me that they are not happy with the London Road scheme and Southampton Cycling Campaign would like to hear your views - positive or negative. Please contact either Lindsa Bluemel or Dilys Gartside.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Southampton Cycling Campaign has received copies of the LTP for comment. A group of members will be meeting on 7th December to discuss the document and draw up a response which will suggest greater priority to cycling as a means of achieving the key objectives. If you would like a copy of the LTP, please contact Southampton Cycling Campaign or look at the city Council website.

Lindsa Bluemel

MYBIKELANE.COM

Are you sick and tired of vehicles blocking cycle lanes? Mybikelane.com is a website where you can upload photos and have a bit of a rant, without getting into an altercation with an angry driver. There are already sites for [London](#) and [Oxford](#), many containing pictures of ice cream vans.



SMALL AD – Child seat

Mike and Maggie are looking for a child seat so we can take granddaughter Charlotte for bike rides. Ring 80558704.

NOT IN MY BACK YARD



Geoffrey Williams has ridden the same bike more than 30,000 miles through 30 countries – but where does his bike get stolen from? His **back garden in Southampton**. Geoffrey bought the yellow 1949 Sun touring bike secondhand in 1970 and he nicknamed it Celia. He said: "The sad thing about it is that the only person it's worth anything to is me. I'm just wondering where she is now." If you have any information about the stolen bike please contact Hampshire Police.

DIY STREETS

In order to tackle concerns about traffic in neighbourhoods, Sustrans launched DIY Streets in 2006 to work with residents to develop affordable, creative, solutions to their traffic problems. Sustrans is now consulting on how best we can support communities and the organisations who work with them to make DIY Streets a reality in more communities. You can help us shape this programme by answering a few questions:

<http://tinyurl.com/yourstreet> For background, see www.sustrans.org.uk/diystreets "

ACADEMIC CALLS FOR CHANGE IN POLICY

A university lecturer is calling for a radical reform of government policy in order to increase the number of cyclists in Britain. Dr John Stubbs, University of Derby senior lecturer in geography, explained that around £140 million is being invested by the government in cycling schemes between 2008 and 2011. However, Dr Stubbs warned that such investments may prove disappointing unless the government stops building new and expanding old roads.

"By trying to improve cycling and car use at the same time, you effectively ensure that cycling will always lose out... There is the immense difficulty for any government in deciding to get out of this vicious circle by drastically cutting back on its roads investment, with plenty of people ready to say it would harm the economy. But how much is traffic congestion costing the UK every year?"

Dr Stubbs added that cycling rates could decrease at a faster rate than car usage grows unless action is taken soon.

Dilys Gartside

THE DAILY MAIL ON THE BROMPTON AND LORD MANDELSON

Why the not-so beautiful bendy Brompton bicycle is nothing short of wondrous

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1223266/Lord-Mandelson-does-Cameron-goes-cycle-ride.html#ixzz0VuKMbHC7>



Something has just happened that I previously thought to be impossible. Suddenly, without any warning at all, I have been overcome by a feeling of solidarity with Peter Mandelson.

The sensation, as you can imagine, is distinctly uncomfortable. Yet there he is, staring back at me from a photograph, the Prince of Darkness himself, looking perfectly ridiculous on a folding bicycle. It could, quite frankly, be the devil himself perched on that telescopic seat; I would still feel the same sense of camaraderie.

For I, too, am a hopeless devotee of the Brompton folding bicycle. For years it was my constant companion, freeing me from the sweaty dungeon that is the London Underground.

Every working morning, after arriving at Victoria train station from Surrey, I'd unfold my bike and breeze through the four miles to Kensington High St in less than 20 minutes.

To the majority of the general public this wonder of engineering prompts nothing but sniggers and jeers. (I should know, having been reduced to a figure of fun in my Home Counties village where the teenage girls routinely lined up outside the station to shout out to me: 'Nice bike Mister - not!')

But to those in the know, the folding bicycle is nothing short of wondrous. The Brompton, in particular, is a miracle of engineering and by far the best bike I have ever owned.

Yes, it looks ridiculous. With wheels the size of dinner plates, you are never going to cut a dash in the same manner as Sir Chris Hoy or Lance Armstrong. Yet how many bikes can be folded up in less than 20 seconds to a size that is barely bigger than a briefcase?

'Ah,' I hear you protest. 'But what about performance? Surely you can't ride at any speed on wheels that small.'

Wrong. I lost count of the number of expensive racing bikes I sped away from at the traffic lights. Because of its low ratio of gears (most models have only three, to keep the engineering as simple as possible) the acceleration of a Brompton is second to none - perfect for stop-start city cycling.

No need to fiddle with expensive locks and bike racks. Simply ride up to the front door, fold up your bike and pop it under your desk.

This quintessentially British bicycle has been exported around the world to universal acclaim - a rare manufacturing success in these difficult times.

These bikes represent an astonishingly good investment. I bought a classic M-type Brompton for £500 in April 2005, rode it in all weathers for 5,000 miles over the course of two years, then sold it on for a profit of £50. Its battered experience was part of the charm - a selling point. And that is the best thing about these bikes: they do not go out of fashion, for the simple reason that they have never been *in* fashion.

So, on reflection, we Brompton lovers should proffer heartfelt thanks to Lord Mandelson. With the likes of him lending his endorsement, there is no danger of us being seen as fashionable any time soon.

CONTACTS

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SCC Website www.southamptoncyclingcampaign.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.