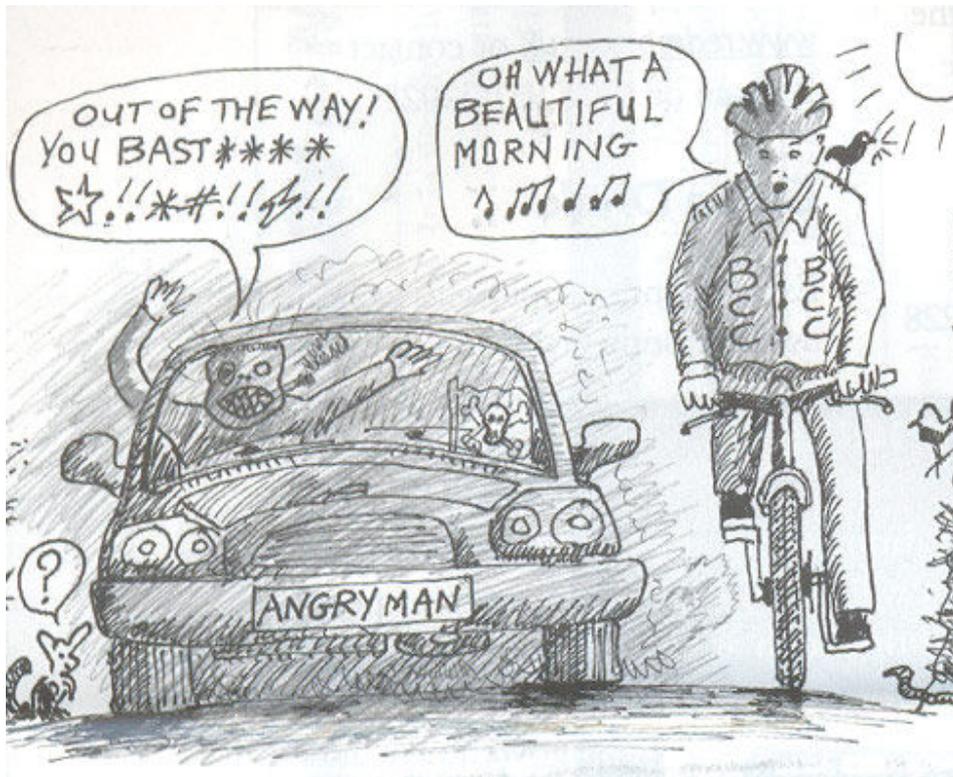


Newsletter April 2008

Hello all

Nearly spring and I expect you are all, like me, looking forward to some warmer weather so that you can get out and about more on your bicycles and blow those winter cobwebs away. We have planned a spring cycle ride in the New Forest for Campaign members, family and friends on May 17th. Meet at 10am at Brockenhurst train station. Trains leave Southampton Central every 15 mins to Brockenhurst, or, if you are feeling very energetic, you could always cycle there.



Help Requested

Cycle Campaign will be sharing a stall with Cycle Wise cycle training at two local events in April and members' assistance manning the stalls would be most welcome. The first is the University environment event on Tuesday 22nd April, at the Students Union, 10am - 4pm. The second is Environmental Rock at the Hobbit in Beavois Valley from mid-day on Saturday April 26th. Both of these events are focusing on a number of environmental issues, of which transport is one. Please come along and help, even if you can only spare an hour or two.

Cartoon taken from The Bristol Cyclist, the magazine for the Bristol Cycling Campaign.

ALAN WHITEHEAD LOBBY

Christian Aid at Southampton Uni organized a lobby of Alan Whitehead (MP for Test) on Monday 31st March. As Chairperson of SCC I went along, hoping to be able to raise with him the government's lack of support for cycling. Alan said that some of the problems were caused by obstruction on the part of the Department of Transport to new ideas. There is also, he said, an inbuilt bias towards cars in government policy: when comparing benefits for a given expenditure on different forms of transport, a car driver is regarded as having greater economic value than a bus passenger!!! And what economic value is given to a cyclist I can hear you asking – the answer, I fear, is that we don't feature at all in government accounting.

However, Alan was hopeful that the Local Transport Bill would free local authorities from some of the restrictions of current DoT regulations and allow them to introduce radical and innovative schemes to reduce congestion and encourage more active, less environmentally damaging forms of transport.

MATTHEW PARIS COLUMN IN THE TIMES

Many of you will have read Matthew Paris's offensive anti-cyclist column. According to A to B magazine, the Press Complaints Commission received 550 complaints about the article, the highest ever from a single article. The complaints were not upheld because the PCC Code of Practice Article 12 refers to discrimination on grounds of race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental illness not, as the PCC ruled, "preferred mode of transport"!

LORRIES AND CYCLISTS

In London a cyclist is killed or seriously injured every day and half of all cyclist deaths are the result of collisions with lorries. In order to improve safety for cyclists, Transport for London has given every HGV driver operating in the capital a safety mirror designed to overcome the "blind spot" which can result in cyclists not being noticed by drivers, particularly when they are turning left. I have given Dale a copy of an article about the mirrors in the Evening Standard and spoken to him about the possibility of a similar scheme being introduced in Southampton. However, Dale says that cycle/HGV collisions account for only 3% of accidents in Southampton.

CYCLING PROMOTION IN PRIORITY AREAS

At the February meeting we were pleased to have Natalie Gledhill, who spoke to us about her role promoting cycling and walking in six priority areas in the City. Her post is funded by Sustrans, the City Council and the PCT. One of her tasks is to identify "barriers to cycling" in these areas. I'm sure we can all identify some of these. Natalie is seeking instructors to assist in delivering cycle training to both adults and children in the priority areas, so if you are a Council instructor and would like to be involved contact Natalie at the Council.

WEBSITE

Our website coordinator, Mair, has some interesting new ideas for developing the website, so make sure you check it out. It has up-to-date info about campaigns, events, etc.

IMPROVEMENTS FOR CYCLISTS IN SOUTHAMPTON

- 1) Provision for cyclists using the Millbrook roundabout is to be improved. A number of members responded to the proposals suggesting improvements.
- 2) Toucan crossing in Hill Lane is scheduled. The Campaign responded to the consultation suggesting lights at the Raymond Road/Hill Lane junction similar to those at the Bellemoor Road junction in preference to a Toucan crossing, but it would appear that this solution has already been ruled out. Some members thought a zebra crossing would be preferable to a toucan as this would have the effect of reducing vehicle speed.
- 3) Northlands Road/Cemetery Road/The Avenue – works recently completed here should make access between Cemetery Road and The Avenue toucan crossing easier.
- 4) Dorset St cycle way
- 5) Romsey Road/Tebourba Way crossing
- 6) Townhill Way cycle way

Members are reminded that if they have any concerns regarding cycling in Southampton they should contact Dale Bostock, Cycling Officer at the Council. Alternatively, come along to a Cycling Campaign meeting and share your concerns.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Southampton Cycling Campaign AGM will take place at the start of the May monthly meeting at the Friends' Meeting House, 7.30pm, 12th May. We need the following:

- **SECRETARY**
- **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**
- **MINUTES SECRETARY**
- **CHAIRPERSON**

As current Chairperson of the Campaign, I am at present fulfilling all of these roles and I would welcome some assistance. On their own, none of these roles takes too much time. Please try to get along to the AGM – we will start with tea and biscuits at 7.30 ready for a prompt start at 8pm.

CHANGEYOURWORLD.ORG.UK

This is the sustrans change your world annual campaign website, in the run up to sustrans change your world week, 30th June to 5th July. There are lots of ways for you to get involved, via the website, and 2008 is sustrans 'Year of the child' with the campaign focusing on children.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We now have dates for the following events:

19th April – SCRATCH sponsored cycle ride. It is a 30 mile round trip, Millbrook to Calshot beach, where there will be a barbecue. £5 registration fee (includes BBQ).
www.scratchcharity.co.uk

17th May - spring cycle ride in the New Forest, 10 am meet at Brockenhurst

27th – 30th May – Junior Warden Bikes activities in various locations across Southampton

Still under consideration; date for the NAKED BIKE RIDE. Possibilities are 6th, 7th or 13th June. If you wish to participate and have a preference, or would like more info contact Rob, the Southampton ride coordinator on 07900 521782

21st June - Solent Coasts Cycling Challenge – 66 mile course will test your fitness. Includes six ferry journeys and passes through Southampton. It is necessary to register well in advance, as places fill quickly

Bike Week 2008 will take place from 14th – 22nd June and is this year challenging families to get out of their cars, step away from the TV and get on their bikes. The call to action is 'Free the Family' and rediscover how much fun you can have together on a bike. Thousands of free cycling events will provide plenty of opportunities for people to get on their bikes. There will be something for everyone from total novices to passionate cyclists.

PLEASE BE THINKING ABOUT EVENTS WE CAN PUT ON IN SOUTHAMPTON

We will discuss ideas at the May meeting

HOVIS FREEWHEEL - according to A to B mag, this will be on 26th September, although this date is not yet on the website. **NOT TO BE MISSED.** Register early to be sure of a place at this free event which gives you the chance to cycle around the landmarks of central London without a car in sight.

Contacts

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