

April 20, 2005

Our ref: C 05 012

Your ref:

To: Those attending the meeting regarding cycling in the Historic Core on 29th March (Richard Preston, Patrick Joyce, Stephen Hills (Living Streets), Clare Rankin).



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear recipients,

Historic Core Cycling meeting

Following our meeting on 29th March to discuss measures associated with the experimental lifting of the city centre cycling ban we prepared notes on the meeting for members of our Campaign's Committee.

It occurred to us that it might be helpful to circulate these notes to all participants in the meeting as well as to our Committee. We would particularly welcome any corrections or other comments.

We look forward to the next meeting on Tuesday 26th April.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith,
Co-ordinator

Experiment to Lift the City Centre Cycling Ban: meeting of working party on Tuesday 29th March 2005

Present: Martin Lucas-Smith (Cycling Campaign), James Woodburn (Cambridge Cycling Campaign), Richard Preston, Patrick Joyce, Stephen Hills (Living Streets), Clare Rankin

Notes by: Martin Lucas-Smith

Results of consultation will go to Brian Smith who will consult with the AJC Chair and Vice-Chair. Unless something new comes up, the County Council seems likely to proceed with the experiment.

The experiment is likely to start in July after the end of university term. There will be a temporary order (TRO) to suspend the current restriction. Such orders can last only up to 18 months. The start of temporary orders cannot be delayed by objections.

Cabinet will make the final decision about whether the lifting of the ban is to be made permanent. However, the AJC will receive a full report and take a view before the issue goes to Cabinet.

There will be independent market research carried out by one of the two companies that are currently used by the Council. The Council will start a dialogue soon as to how the research is to be done. They can't have too much stakeholder input into the questionnaire as it may be seen to compromise the results (i.e. questions being loaded in some way). Before the administration of the survey they want a full 12 month span so that public response can be based on sufficient experience. The market researchers can't legally stop moving cyclists. Perhaps cycle parking places would be good locations to try to obtain the views of cyclists. The 'magic' sample size of 2000 will be aimed for.

The main market research survey will be carried out in June/July 2006. There will be a report to the AJC in October 2006, and then the issue will go to Cabinet for decision in November 2006.

The Council will be monitoring injury accidents, both in the central area and just outside (e.g. Hobson Street). But Richard Preston stressed that one year's figures could not be expected to show trends. Usually at least three years' figures are needed.

A series of counts will involve comparing legal and illegal cycling (i.e. carriageway/pavement, correct direction/wrong direction). There will be several monitoring locations. The counts will be 'snapshot summaries' through the year on a regular basis.

The AJC has no budget of its own, so there are no funds to do anything very extensive.

After some debate, it was agreed that Trinity Street should be used as a control although it is not in the area in which cycling has been banned. This will be useful to see how habits change as a result of the suspension.

Initial counts will be done by the end of April. The four locations would be: Sidney Street (in both the wide and the narrow parts), Market Street (which is very narrow outside WHSmith/Borders bookshop) and Trinity Street.

If the experimental lifting of the ban is made permanent, minor carriageway adjustments could then be considered.

It was agreed that pedestrian amenity rather than purely safety was a very important factor.

Signing issues. As usual, the DfT's hand is crucial here. Richard Preston has already had contact with them about the use of 'Pedestrian Priority' because of the legal implications. He is going to see them again soon. He felt that the DfT may take particular interest in the Cambridge experiment as it may have implications on a national scale. Members (i.e. Councillors) want signage that will work; indeed signage was agreed to be a crucial factor for the experiment. Something will be needed beyond merely 'Pedestrian Zone' as, although this term is legally correct, it will incorrectly imply to pedestrians that only they may be there.

A Pedestrian Zone is apparently defined loosely by the DfT as somewhere where traffic is restricted to some degree and pedestrian access and amenity are increased. This is why there are signs at the traffic lights at the junction of Magdalene Street and Northampton Street which indicate the end of the pedestrian zone, even though Magdalene Street is open to vehicles at all times.

Stephen Hills said that there should be no areas within the pedestrianised area where pedestrian actions such as stepping into the street would be seen as inappropriate. After discussion it was agreed that the situation was analogous to pedestrian priority at zebra crossings: pedestrians have priority but must exercise due care and attention. James Woodburn raised the issue of signing outside the 10am–4pm period. He suggested that what was required was a simple system in which at all times of day and night motor vehicles and cycles must give way to pedestrians. The signs should say: "Pedestrian Priority Zone. Motor vehicles and cycles give way to pedestrians."

The police will be contacted by the County Council regarding enforcement during the experiment. They would be asked to give out leaflets to people whom they stop. Police Community Support Officers rather than Officers are likely to be those involved. The message needs to be consistent, hence the production of a leaflet.

Clare Rankin will take the lead in preparing promotional material. It was noted that there is no problem with using the term 'Pedestrian Priority Zone' on such material (as distinct from signage, unless DfT authorisation comes through). The material will stress responsible cycling. A subgroup will be set up (probably involving one CCyC member) to put this together.

City Centre Rangers would be asked if they could help deliver the leaflet. It was recognised some such employees would be wary of doing so. The leaflet will not be posted to households, as there is no budget and there are hundreds of other council matters about which people could be sent information. It would be sent to libraries and other such locations. Language students would also need to receive the leaflet. Clare Rankin is working on a general leaflet of this sort already. The leaflet would need to be convertible to a poster format. The leaflet will try to have several logos of organisations such as the two university students' unions (CUSU and APUSU) and others (presumably including CCyC).

There was much discussion of whether CCTV (video) or photographic evidence could be used to analyse trends in pedestrian movements, in particular whether pedestrians took avoiding action in response to the presence of an approaching cyclist. James Woodburn was extremely cautious about this, as it could be highly subjective and a year was not long enough to show trends. Martin Lucas-Smith felt that still photography, taken on a regular basis over a particular area over time, to see the relative proportions of people on the carriageway/pavement areas might be useful and non-subjective in inferring pedestrian comfort levels. Richard Preston, however thought that to carry this out would be too resource intensive.

Richard Preston said that there would be no problem in setting the gates at the Hobson Street/St Andrew's Street junction partly open between 10am and 4pm to allow cyclists through without cycling on the pavement.

Related matters

A report is going to the AJC on April 8th re Core Stage 4 measures to move to a 20mph zone in much of the city centre.

Bus stop kerbs will not be raised in the historic zone, but others around the city apparently will be. (Raised kerbs allow the disabled to board more easily and are also important for guided bus guide wheels.)

Next steps

On-street counts will be discussed at the next meeting, which is to be held at 10am on Tuesday 26th April.

An action plan will be produced and sent to us by Richard Preston. This will include the timetable for the whole 18-month process.