

Cambridge Cycling Campaign £1 - free to members

Newsletter



Number 34 February–March 2001

**Survey
results**

**Trumpington
stage 2**

**£15 million
for transport**

X-fiX review



Paranoia gone wild!

**Do we really need to give way to a locked
gate? Page 7**



If you like what you see in this newsletter, you can add your voice to those of our other 650 members, and join the Campaign.

Membership costs are low: £7.50 individual, £3.50 unwaged, £12 household. For this, you get six newsletters a year, discounts at a large number of bike shops, and optional third-party liability insurance. Please get in touch if you want to hear more.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign was set up in 1995 to voice the concerns of cyclists. We are not a cycling club but an organisation lobbying and campaigning for the rights of cyclists, and promoting cycling in and around Cambridge.

Our regular stall on Saturdays outside the Guildhall is the public face of the campaign; volunteers are always welcome to help. And don't forget our meetings, open to all, on the first Tuesday of each month, 7.30 for 8.00 pm at the Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge.

Elected Officers

Co-ordinator – Clare Macrae
 t 501050 w 336024

Treasurer – Simon Nuttal t 500902

Membership Secretary
Liaison Officer – David Earl t 504095

Stall Officer – Paul Tonks t

Newsletter Editor – Mark Irving t 882378

Officers Without Portfolio – Jim Chisholm, Martyn Smith, Richard Taylor, Lisa Woodburn and Wookey

Press Officer – post vacant

Contacting the Campaign

Cambridge Cycling Campaign
PO Box 204
Cambridge CB4 3FN

Telephone David Earl t 504095

Fax 0870 063 3150

<http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/camcycle>

E-mail camcycle@pobox.co.uk

Planning watch – south of Cambridge

Brooklands Walk (City Council)

After a long wait the proposal for the old government offices site off Brooklands Avenue has arrived. The existing site would be cleared of its 1940s 'temporary' buildings, and the huge 'secret' 1960s concrete block house adjacent to the Vicar's Brook path, the 'Regional Seat of Government' in case of nuclear war, would also be demolished (with difficulty?). A new four-storey office block would be constructed in the south east corner with some 380 houses on the remainder of the site.

The relevance to cyclists is that the proposed Sustrans route crosses the site and redevelopment provides good opportunities to encourage sustainable travel. Unfortunately the initial proposed cycle routes resemble Hampton Court Maze (I never did get to the centre of that), with many right-angled bends and few direct routes.

Busway (City Council)

Controversial plans for a scheme linking Trumpington Park & Ride, Addenbrooke's Hospital and the City Centre have also been submitted. These include some good high quality cycleways to the south of the city but could result in large articulated buses using narrow streets in the centre. Similar proposals in Northampton seem to have stalled: planning permission has been granted but not all landowners have agreed, so, in addition to funding, a 'Transport Works Act' is needed before the scheme can proceed.

Station area

It seems almost certain that there will be a multi-storey cycle park at the station in the revised plans to be submitted soon. Our complaints about lack of space in the original plans have been listened to.

Shelford Golf Course (South Cambridgeshire)

Plans submitted last summer for an area from Hinton Way, across Granham's Road and as far as the railway are likely to be withdrawn and replaced by a modified scheme. This should include, at the least, provision for the Sustrans route from Shelford to Addenbrooke's.

These developments could either advance or stall progress on new cycle routes in this

area. The Campaign will respond to these proposals. Plans can be inspected at relevant council offices. Please let us know your opinions if you do go to look at them.

Jim Chisholm

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper by Victoire Press, Bar Hill.

Grant aided by



Busway and cycle route using the old Bedford railway line may link south of city to centre

So tell us what you want, what you really, really want

Last summer the County Council commissioned a survey to get feedback on cycling provision in Cambridge. As we'd been asking for some time for cycle surveys to be done, we were very pleased to hear about this project. Furthermore, we were given a welcome opportunity to comment on the survey whilst it was being designed. (For example, we suggested including 'What do you *like* about cycling in Cambridge, alongside the question 'What do you dislike about cycling in Cambridge?')

Around 150 forms were handed out at the Cyclists' Breakfast on Parker's Piece last June, of which 66 were returned. The consultants, WS Atkins, have since written a summary of the results. Although a bigger sample would be needed to draw firmer conclusions, I've picked out a few points of interest from this report.

Cycling Behaviour

- How frequently do you travel by bike in Cambridge? 84.8% said 'Most days'
- What do you most use your bike for? 53% said 'Commuting only' – either to work or an educational establishment – another 25.8% mixed their commuting with some recreational cycling
- Do you hold a UK driving licence? 84.9% did
- Do you have regular use of a car? 68.2% did
- Do you cycle in wet weather? 81.8% did

Facilities and Policies

People were asked to rate a list of fifteen facilities and policies. With the sample size, care is needed, but the **most popular** were:

- Cycle lanes
- Exemptions to street closures for cyclists
- Secure parking in the city centre
- Off road shared use cycle paths

Least popular were:

- Secure cycle parking at Park and Ride sites
- Safer routes to schools
- Traffic calmed streets

Open Questions

We were pleased that the survey included the questions 'What do you like about cycling in Cambridge?', 'What do you dislike about cycling in Cambridge?', and 'What would you like to see implemented in the Cambridge area that would improve your experience of cycling?'. Although open questions are harder to analyse, they tend to provide useful insights, as they are not biased by the choice of options included by the question-writers.

The report's authors said the most common '**likes**' about cycling in Cambridge were:

- Low cost, convenient and faster than other modes (53.0%)
- Various positive comments on cycling in Cambridge (36.4%)
- Off road routes through parks and near the river (21.2%)
- Flatness (21.2%)
- Drivers more aware of cyclists in Cambridge than other places (12.1%)
- Environmental or health benefits (10.6%)

In contrast, the most common '**dislikes**' about cycling in Cambridge were:

- Traffic volume and speed, sense of danger (48.5%)
- Attitude of drivers (28.8%)
- Poor design of various facilities (15.2%)
- Design of junctions (15.2%)
- Lack of secure parking (13.6%)
- Poor maintenance and sweeping of carriageway and cycle facilities (13.6%)
- Lack of space for cyclists on carriageway (13.6%)

The most requested improvements included:

- Provide more or better designed cycle lanes (30.3%)
- General comments on the need to improve facilities for cyclists (26.2%)
- Provide improvements at specific locations (such as Mill Road, particularly the bridge, and re-opening the city centre to cyclists) (16.9%)

Contents

- 2 Planning watch – south of Cambridge
- 3 Survey results
- 4 Continuing changes on Newmarket Road
- 5 Trumpington Corridor improvements, stage 2
- 6 £15 million for transport in Cambridgeshire
- 7 City centre update
- 8 Letters: Trumpington, cycle lane widths, cycle map, the new lights at Coldham's Common, and a reader on the other side of the world
- 10 My Way: Lisa Woodburn stays out of the traffic
- 11 Cycle Friendly Employers... 2
- 12 Personal safety on cycles? and a mountainous invitation from Belgium
- 13 Fold away handlebars: X-fiX reviewed
Web Watch: Travel for Work, Cycle Theft Reduction, folding bikes and BikeReader
- 14 Cycling Shorts: Trading Standards cycle hire audit, Peterborough Home Zone, presentation and TRL research on narrowings
Small Ads
- 15 Newtown
- 16 Diary



21.2% said they liked being able to use off road paths through parks

- Transport policies giving priority to cyclists (15.4%)

A recent draft outline of the forthcoming County Cycling and Walking Strategy includes the action:

establish needs and desires of cyclists (What do they think of facilities provided? Are on-carriageway or off-carriageway routes preferable?) by asking them directly.(year 1)

So, we ought to see larger surveys in years to come – using more statistically meaningful samples – but until then, this survey was a useful and welcome start.

Clare Macrae

Continuing changes on Newmarket Road

Work in Newmarket Road associated with Park & Ride has now been completed. A side effect of this has been a range of changes for cyclists using the stretch of road from the Airport Way roundabout to the pedestrian crossing outside Marshall's. Although many of the changes have been mentioned in previous articles, this short report describes what has finally gone in. There is both good and bad in the end result from a cycling point of view.

Just to refresh your memory, this consists of a right turn lane for Park & Ride users from the roundabout to the car park, widening the junction just east of the Park & Ride site, improving the shared-use paths from the Park & Ride site to the pelican crossing by Marshall's works (on both sides), extending the bus-and-cycle lane from the Park & Ride site into town and adding traffic lights to the main entrance to Marshall's.

Overall the changes for cyclists are not great. They make little difference to my commute to work, for example. Some aspects are better than what went before, some slightly worse.

'Reflective markings have been put in, which we think is a first for the area.'

First we should congratulate the council for doing several things right:

- Quickly remedying the major flaws in the original construction of the westbound shared-use path. This was narrow, dark, lumpy, had kinks in it and big steps at side-turnings. It generally fell hopelessly short of a reasonable standard. The kinks have now been smoothed out. Reflective markings have been put in, which we think is a first for the area. Slightly raised crossings have been added in places to remove the steps.
- The eastbound shared-use path is commendably smooth. Why can they do this on one side of the road but not the other? The width of the surfacing machine perhaps? The kerb crossings on this side are reasonably smooth, although you have to watch the tactile paving, which is always a bit too smooth to be reassuring.
- The SAMI junction has a nice smooth kerb crossing between the road and shared-use path. It is not marked and doesn't look as if it was really intentional but, in the absence of a proper flush kerb, this does the job fine.
- About half of the poor road surface on the westbound approach to the lights has been replaced and thus made much smoother.
- The permanent cycle filter has been reinstated at the lights at the end of the bus-and-cycle lane.
- The left turn lane into the Park & Ride site has been removed, and the width between kerb and island left wide enough to avoid conflict (over 4 m).

Then there are the less good things. Overall this was a wasted opportunity to do something really good westbound. In particular, there are no bypasses to any of the islands and the shared-use path is little better than before.

'I've already been beeped at and cut up by a van (yes it was a white one!)'



New cycle lanes on Newmarket Road, past islands by the Park & Ride site, are well under one metre wide. Even then it would be hard for a large vehicle not to commit an offence by entering the lane. The drains and camber force cyclists to ride right on the edge of the lane, and drivers think the presence of a lane means they don't have to give the same room to pass as they normally would.

- New mandatory cycle lanes on the road are less than 1 m wide (actually only 80 cm in places). These are provided before and after the islands. In theory this should help keep some space for the cyclist, but at this width I'm not sure they help much. I've already been beeped at and cut up by a van (yes, it was a white one!) as I was approaching one of the islands. I was cycling at the correct distance from the kerb, which is just about on the white line. The driver took exception to this, claiming that I was 'too close to the edge of the cycle lane'. I don't know if removing the lanes would make this particular driver's behaviour any better, but it certainly shows that islands in general are unhelpful to cyclists, and that the narrow lanes past them are a poor 'solution'.
- 3 m wide lanes between islands are much too narrow. This creates conflict between bikes and other vehicles. It is noticeable that drivers behave much better at the longer islands, such as at the westbound approach to the Park & Ride site. Here they tend to wait until the cyclist has cleared the narrow section. At the ordinary short islands, drivers tend to scrape past. I think that this is because a longer section looks and feels narrower than a short one, even though the width is actually the same.
- There is no good way to rejoin the road from the shared-use path before Marshall's busy exits. You have to use the

Marshall's exits themselves, which means making tight turns. Many cyclists would want to leave the shared path before the busy entrances.

- Poor access to the shared path at the Airport Way roundabout. Here, there is a series of tight turns. This was pointed out in our initial response, but has not been remedied. Indeed, the Council said they 'didn't understand what the problem was', which was disappointing.

Wookey



The shared path has been marginally widened, but it is still too narrow and too lumpy. At least, however, the worst kink around trees has been removed and edge markings have been used for the first time in the area in this situation.

Trumpington Corridor improvements, stage 2

Consultations are taking place on these changes which could result in big improvements for cyclists, but we are opposing one section as we consider it unsafe. Extra 'on road' lanes and improved shared use paths will be constructed between Fen Causeway and Trumpington, and a southbound 4.0 m wide bus lane will be created approaching the Long Road junction. There



A cycle lane is proposed here alongside the Botanic Gardens on Trumpington Road, on the outside of the parking. There needs to be a buffer between the two to avoid car doors being opened into the cyclist's path.

will be consequent removal of some unofficial and 'Pay & Display' parking. Changes will also take place on Shelford Road, Trumpington to provide a northbound bus lane. We oppose part of this lane as it will force the removal of some existing 'on road' cycle lanes, and a section of the shared use path to be constructed will, we consider, be dangerous due to severe cross slope and limited visibility. The overall width of the verge here reduces to less than 5 m and the slope across the cycle lane could be greater than 1 in 7 against the recommended 1 in 40. Although this change would reduce the length of the bus lane by some 200 metres it should still give buses a 15 minute advantage over the existing peak hour queuing. The Campaign hopes to be given sight of more detailed drawings at a later date enabling some fine tuning to the advantage of cyclists.

Jim Chisholm



This shared-use path northbound along Trumpington Road would be improved into a proper cycle track like that on Barton Road.

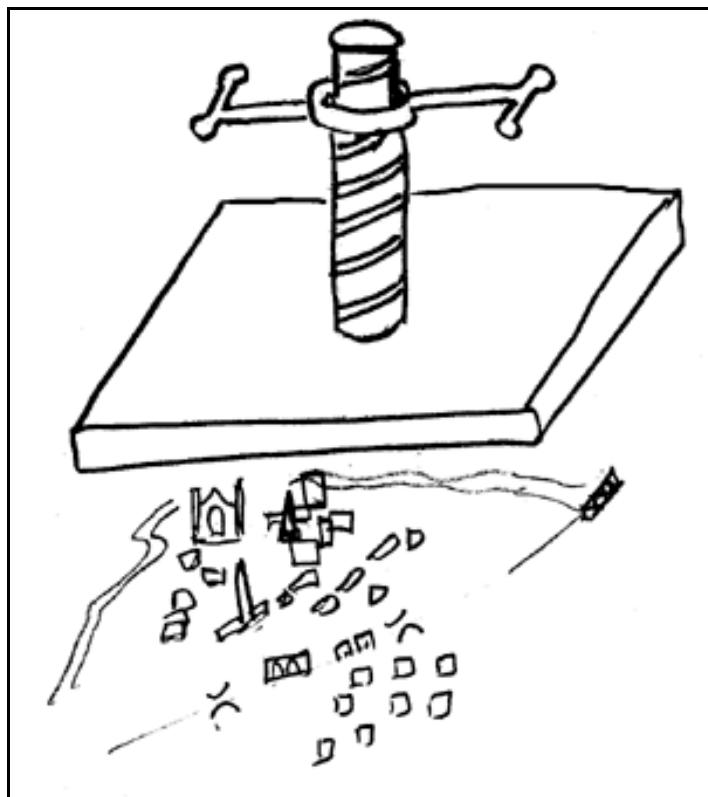


A wide cycle track would be hard to construct here because of the slope, but a proposed northbound bus and cycle lane on the road would make it hard for southbound cyclists on the road.

£15 million for transport in Cambridgeshire

Just before Christmas, Government funding allocations for the first full Local Transport Plans were announced. Cambridgeshire has been awarded a little over £15 million, of which £8.1 million is for 'integrated transport' (for the whole county) and the rest for maintenance and upgrading bridges to carry heavier lorries. Because the Plan is for five years, the Government has also suggested what we might expect for 'integrated transport' over the next four years, namely: £7.2m, £7.3m, £8.0m and £8.2m.

What does this mean in practice? As the money available has nearly doubled from previous years, more of the Plan can be implemented. But, interestingly, in the future fewer people will be deciding on how to spend it. This is because of organisational changes within Councils. The County will have cabinet style government. Committees will be a thing of the past. Let us hope that consultation, much improved in the last few years, is maintained.



Cambridge – 'under tremendous pressure'

Park & Ride development is the key plank in the County Council's strategy for the Cambridge area. Funding will allow the 1,000 space Trumpington site and associated changes in Trumpington Road to proceed this year. These changes have a direct impact on cyclists – mostly for the good, we hope – as Jim Chisholm discusses in his article on page 5.

Many advocates of sustainable transport have criticised the emphasis on Park & Ride as detrimental to other public transport (and indeed, since so much of the money is tied up in it, possibly as detrimental to cycling too). The Government Office for the East of England appears to have noticed that public transport, other than Park & Ride, does not figure much in the County Council's Plan. To quote them:

'There does need to be a further development of public transport provision with the operators.'

In the annual report we want to see a much firmer programme drawn up based on the allocations we have made. In particular there does need to be a further development of public transport provision with the operators.

and

You need to work with the Strategic Rail Authority etc. to develop a rail strategy for the Cambridge area.

In fact, they bemoan the lack of a rail strategy twice in the letter.

Recognising the focus of the Plan for Cambridge, they also said more positively:

Many of your strategies such as park and ride, the central core and cycling networks should benefit considerably from the investment.

Two major schemes are considered in the Plan and in the Government's response. One of them, the Fordham by-pass near Newmarket, was pretty much certain to be approved.

The issue of the St Ives line, however, continues to drag on. The competing options of guided bus, light rail and heavy rail, maybe with a cycle track alongside, are complicated further by the Cambridge to Huntingdon corridor study which has proposed new roads to relieve the A14. On top of that the Government Office in its response says they have not yet been provided with the right information for deciding on whether to fund a scheme here or not.

Feather in our cap

The Government Office is complimentary about the way in which transport in Cambridge – 'under tremendous pressure for further high tech development of national importance and claims to need significant transport investment to maintain competitiveness in a sustainable manner' – has been handled:

The work done ... has been a significant success in a difficult area and we are pleased to see the enthusiastic approach that you and partners have taken to green travel through the travel to work club and other initiatives.

As one of the partners in Travel for Work, the 'club' they refer to, we can take a little bit of credit here.

Parking Levy

One of the changes heralded by the Integrated Transport white paper a couple of years ago has now become law in the 2000 Transport Act. This allows Councils to raise funds and, at the same time, to put a brake on traffic increases, either by taxing workplace car parking, or by introducing charges for using urban roads.



Park & Ride is at the heart of the Cambridge area's strategy

Cambridgeshire has expressed interest in the workplace parking levy method, and the Government response to the Plan welcomes this:

Ministers have recognised your readiness to explore the scope for advancing modal shift through the use of workplace parking levy powers contained in the Transport Act 2000. There is significant potential in the new powers and Ministers look forward to your continuing participation in the Charging Development Partnership.

It seems quite likely that Cambridgeshire will be selected for a pilot scheme, provided councillors keep their nerve and continue to go with it. Strangely, the *Cambridge Evening News* ran a prominent article recently trying to scare people about road tolls. This is very odd since the County Council expressed a preference for the workplace parking levy method very early on in the process. Given that *News* editorials on non-car transport spending announcements are usually along the lines of 'good, but we mustn't forget the poor motorist...', we can expect more scare stories about 'hitting motorists' pockets' as this subject comes up in the future.

Reductions, or at least smaller increases in traffic, are likely to be one of the best measures to help cyclists. It is to be hoped that this initiative would have such an effect.

However, the Local Transport Plan settlement has nothing to say about specific facilities for cyclists. That is just so much

noise in the background, and the settlement does not commit the County Council to spending the money on specific items. There is more money, so we should see more done. But whether it is in the form of good schemes like that along Barton Road, or more rubbish like the recent work in Newmarket Road, remains to be seen.

David Earl

Utterly unnecessary extreme paranoia



We've complained long and hard about the way in which cyclists on cycle tracks must give way at every side road when they wouldn't have to if they were on the road alongside. But among the seven Give Ways across entrances in about 250 m in the new construction on Newmarket Road, these two must take the biscuit. Only a few metres from each other, cyclists must yield here to the massive amounts of traffic turning off the main road to cross their path through padlocked gates onto the grass of the airfield. This is utterly unnecessary extreme paranoia.

City centre update

The **City Centre Manager** is Victoria Little. The **Assistant City Centre Manager** is Ruth Lynn.

The City Council's roles in the Grand Arcade scheme, as land owner and planning authority, are now the responsibility of the **Grand Arcade Project Manager**, Sue Chadwick. ☎ 457474

Two **Cambridge City Rangers** are responsible for patrolling and monitoring the city centre and helping appropriate organisations and authorities improve the standards of management and maintenance. ☎ 457205, City Centre Rangers

The City Centre Rangers are soon to be joined by a **Neighbourhood Ranger**, covering Petersfield and West Chesterton Wards. The Neighbourhood Ranger will be responsible for reporting and fixing faults with pavements, signs and street furniture, discussing any problems with local traders and residents, and generally 'improving the urban environment'. Mobile: ☎ 07711 753655

A new **Signing System** for Cambridge is about to be introduced. The area within the inner ring road has been divided into eight areas, called Kite, Regent, Downing, Queens, Jesus, Quayside, Brunswick and Fitzroy. When drivers reach the inner ring road, new Cambridge Blue signs will direct them to each area. Most of the areas have only one entry and exit point from

the inner ring road, and area name plates will be provided at these entry points. A leaflet on the system is being published, and businesses, organisations and residents will be encouraged to let visitors know which area they are in. (When the County Council originally consulted on this scheme back in September 1998, we welcomed the proposal. However, where cycle and motor routes were different, we asked for the signs to show the shorter route for cyclists.)

The City Council is reviewing its **Tourism Strategy for Cambridge**. They say that 'one of the challenges for the future is to ensure that Cambridge continues to welcome visitors and serves them well, while also conserving the character and environment of the City. An underlying theme ... is the need to ensure that tourism in Cambridge is more sustainable.' (For starters, how about some more information at the Tourist Information Centres about cycling to and around Cambridge? There's precious little there, compared to some other places.) Any specific ideas or suggestions are welcomed by Elizabeth Rolph ☎ 457183 ☐ Elizabeth.Rolph@cambridge.gov.uk ☐ www.cambridge.gov.uk/planning/tourism.html

*Adapted from the City Council's quarterly publication City Centre News
Victoria Little ☎ 457205 ☐ citycentre.manager@cambridge.gov.uk*

Letters

Trumpington

You probably consider me a sleeping member of the Cycling Campaign, but I do read and enjoy the magazine and frequently intend to comment.

I live in Trumpington so use the Shelford Road cycleway almost daily. I much prefer it to the foot/cycle path. I wholeheartedly agree with Jim Chisholm that half a cycleway is better than no cycleway and would add that the presence of a cycleway reminds pedestrians to look for oncoming cyclists – and I say that with feeling since I was knocked off my bike by a pedestrian stepping backwards into Trumpington High Street.



Disliked access to Trumpington High Street from Shelford Road

I do not like the access to the High Street (Trumpington) from Shelford Road. Staying on the road is dangerous, using the Toucan crossing onto the cycle/foot path is time consuming, and it is rarely possible to cycle on the path. Emerging from the path into the cycle lane the lights are behind you and it is difficult to see if it is safe to proceed.

There has also been no improvement to the cycle footpath on the opposite side of the road (runs from Shelford Road to middle of Anstey Way) and still no request to the bus queue not to block the path.

Further along the High Street, the right turn from High Street into Church Street is impossible. There is no safe place to position yourself to wait for a gap in the traffic, and rarely a gap in the traffic anyway.

I notice that plans for the route through the allotments still only go as far as Foster Road. I have commented (several times to Dept. of Transport, Shire Hall) that we need an all-weather track to Addenbrooke's with an exit at Foster Road–Paget Road school entrance.

At the traffic exhibition on 6 December people were clearly not happy with the High Street and most thought the Shelford Road bus lane impracticable.

Shirley Brown

Jim Chisholm comments:

The Campaign is also unhappy at some of the features of stage 1 improvements in this area. As you can see elsewhere in this Newsletter we are also objecting to some of the proposals for stage 2. Negotiations are continuing over off road routes in this area, but see 'Addenbrooke's crossing' in Newsletter 32 about safety of rail crossings, and 'More Major Planning Applications south of the City' in this issue.

If it's too narrow, it's not a cycle lane at all

The Highway is different to a mud track in a forest in many ways. One of the ways it is different is the information presented to us is used to control the high density of multiple modes of transport, and to ensure there are no accidents.

Like wiring a mains socket plug, this is an interface. And like the plug, getting it wrong can be lethal. This is why there is a very clear standard on colours, layout, and design. You don't get substandard plugs with dubious fittings. And when it does blow your hand off you don't say 'oh well – to be expected these days – at least I have a plug.'

Yet road planners display complete lack of this interface skill. There is no such thing as a narrow cycle lane in their view. It is a cycle lane – they can tick the box, and have no responsibility. If I were to design a plug which proved lethal because users failed to understand it readily I would be directly liable. How come planners get away with this?

A cycle lane should be wide enough for a trike or trailer buggy to pass along easily – not crunch through tyre-puncturing car debris in the gutter. Sustrans has specifications for this. This route should be very clearly defined and protected by the law. It should say so at key points, like it does in some cities (Ipswich for example). Why is there not a sign at ASLs 'it is illegal to stop your vehicle in this space when lights are red' or something? If it is not possible to make the path wide enough because it requires more money than a tin of paint and a clueless contractor, then that section should be earmarked for upgrading, and not bodged and forgotten. And yes, it does cost money to alter road widths, but hey, this is due to decades of short-sighted planning and the continual attempt to stuff more vehicles through our city. Just because councillors screwed it up for future generations doesn't mean we can't put it right for our children.

If there is one main reason for the 'all or nothing' approach, it is to stop County Transport Planners splashing a bit of white paint down and then wiping their hands of their responsibility to make the roads safe for all users.

A narrow lane with a dotted line fails under law, under interaction design, cycle provision, and under common sense.

In summary, no cycle lane at all is better than the limp offerings we are used to.

Matthew Polaine

Cycle map

In Newsletter 33, you ask for comments on the new cycle map to include all cycle paths, even those of poor quality, because cyclists have different reasons for using a path. If they find the path poor they can then make up their own mind about it. In my case, I needed a safe path for my young grandchild to Trumpington.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign can be proud of their contribution to the new map.

Ron Hall

The new lights at Coldham's Common

I have a few comments on your article about Coldham's Common junction in *Newsletter 33*. I use this junction on my daily journey to work and I agree that, from the safety point of view, the actual junction itself is much improved. However, I balk slightly at the conclusion that 'this is how it should be done'.

Don't get me wrong, I'm pleased that the improvements have been done, and credit for them is deserved. As you correctly point out, though, problems for cyclists on that part of Coldham's Lane still remain.

The length of the light sequence is a problem, and has tempted me to jump the junction on many occasions, although the rational side of me recognises that a wait is a small price to pay for improved safety (even if it is as much as 7 minutes – well, long enough to get me pretty well-chilled and impatient, but that may not make for very accurate time estimation).

The real problem that the junction changes have uncovered, rather than caused, is on Cromwell Road. Travelling towards Coldham's Lane I have often found the narrowings hazardous, and have witnessed (and participated in) a number of near misses as cars overtake cyclists and then pull straight across the cycle lane in front of them to give priority to an oncoming car.

This is also one of Cambridge's 'parked car in the cycle lane' black spots. The changed light sequence, however, has caused long tailbacks on Cromwell Road, heading for Coldham's Lane, and this has significantly worsened the cycling safety problem.

Stationary traffic is often found queuing for the lights, and one car in three seems to be in the cycle lane. This forces cyclists either to queue (anathema where there's a mandatory cycle lane), onto the pavement (not at all ideal, or legal), or down the middle of the road. The cycle priority box at the lights is very small, and I have to struggle to think of an occasion when there wasn't a car in it at the head of the queue (queuing seems to do that to drivers).

So, I'd agree that safety at the actual junction is much improved, but the problems in Cromwell Road have been worsened, and, as you point out, the railway bridge remains to be tackled. I hate to be a voice of gloom—as I said, credit where credit's due—but I wouldn't want to give the Council the impression that all cycling issues at the junction and its approach have been resolved.

Chris McBride

To be fair to the Council, the bollards in Cromwell Road weren't part of the junction changes, but are being considered for change. We have also recently heard rumours that some action may be taken in the not-too-distant future to provide a cycle



*Does it just seem like forever waiting at these lights?
(After I took this picture, they changed in 15 seconds
for me.)*

bridge across the railway here. But more than ten years ago I had been hearing rumours as well. See picture on the back cover. Dave

Summer compliments on Newsletter 13 - 1997

Your newsletter was the **only** place on the Internet I could find with actual instructions on how to mend a punctured tyre. Thank you! I had both tyres punctured within a couple of days when I have had none in the previous seven years or so of owning my bike.

So many of the places I found searching for 'fix a puncture' or 'mend a puncture' led me to sites where they mentioned a person would have to know how to do such a thing to get their scout badges, or to go on a cycling trip etc. and very few had anything more explicit than 'patch the punctured tube'. So thanks again!

Madeleine Ware, New Zealand

All our Newsletters are archived on the Campaign web site. You can find all sorts of useful articles. Mark.

HOWES CYCLES /

WHY SHOP WITH US ?

BECAUSE WE ARE IN TOWN

BECAUSE WE HAVE A GREAT RANGE OF PRODUCTS

BECAUSE WE HAVE THE BEST WORKSHOP AROUND
OFFERING HIGH QUALITY REPAIRS AND SERVICING

BECAUSE ON TOP OF ALL THIS

ON PRODUCTION OF YOUR CURRENT MEMBERSHIP CARD

**WE WILL GIVE YOU A
10% DISCOUNT**

104 REGENT STREET
CAMBRIDGE
CB2 1DP

TEL. 01223 350350
FAX. 01223 460883

My Way

Last year David Green described his journey from Queen Edith's Road to Chesterton, a journey that coincides



one go and not in the rush hour.

with trips I

regularly make, though not in



However, David seems to delight in busy roads and horrific roundabouts while I prefer the more peaceful



back streets and I take a rather different route.

My journey on the latest occasion started from the direction of the Shelfords and ended in the centre

of the city, but involved a slight diversion to deliver newsletters in Queen Edith's.

Having puffed and panted to the top of Granham's Road (walking!), it's a welcome downhill roll virtually all the way to the bottom of Beaumont Road [A] where I turn left into Queen Edith's Way, using the shared-use footpath to nip into Heron's Close nearby. Like David, I would not like to use it for more than a few yards. However, I avoid the

necessity to do so and I avoid the unpleasant roundabout at the end of Queen Edith's Way by cruising down Strangeways Road almost opposite Beaumont Road [B].

I continue the roll, turning right into Godwin Way and then left down Gunhill Way to Wulfstan Way having missed the nasty bends this road contains [C]. I now have a straight run [D] down to Cherry Hinton Road with

a few yards of shared-use pavement round the corner [E]. Here there is a pelican crossing [F] (cyclists dismount) and a walk past Budgens.

This part of the route will, hopefully, soon be improved with a contra-flow for bicycles.

I now arrive at another pelican crossing [G] onto the cycle lane in Perne Road. I have now avoided another roundabout. Perne Road to Radegund Road is relatively simple, but I



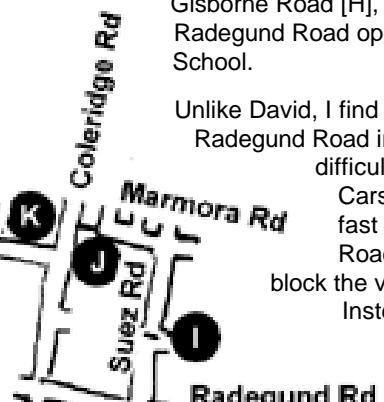
often avoid the main road and the next roundabout by turning left up Perne Avenue and squeezing

through the 'pram handles' at the end of Gisborne Road [H], coming out into Radegund Road opposite Coleridge School.

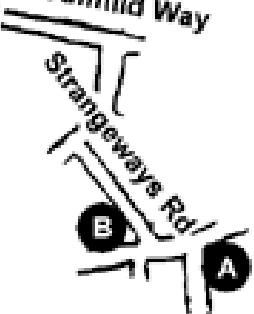
Unlike David, I find the crossing from Radegund Road into Davy Road difficult and dangerous.

Cars often move too fast down Coleridge Road and parked cars block the view from the right. Instead I turn right off Radegund

Road into Suez Road where you can cycle through the barrier [I] and continue down to Marmora Road where I turn left and, with some difficulty, manoeuvre my rather large basket through what must be some of the worst 'pram handles' in the city. You



Newsletter 34



will now realise the extent of my preference for back streets and even 'pram handles' to traffic and roundabouts.



I am now on the recommended cycle route to the cycle bridge, crossing Coleridge Road on a toucan crossing and on up Greville Road [K] to the bridge. (Stop to buy some nice Italian bread at the corner shop.)

Up to the top of the bridge with its view of the Gogs [L] (well, I remember it!) and down to Devonshire Road where the new kerb could well be better aligned [M]. Unlike David, I

don't automatically position myself in the middle of the road ready for a right turn ahead. It is usually possible, when emerging from the bridge, to judge one's speed to arrive at a green light or get safely into the box while any cars



are stationary.



I can't imagine why David then wants to tackle Mill Road – the delight of the cycle bridge is that you can avoid it! For me it's on down Lyndewode Road and

Gresham Road to Parker's Piece, hoping that there are not too many pedestrians wandering across the cycle crossing, leaving me with my back wheel on the road when the lights change. And



Ainsworth Street and York Street. Take the pelican crossing across Newmarket Road and continue along the river to the Green Dragon Bridge. A new bridge across the river from Riverside would cut the distance to West Chesterton. Of course, on a beautiful summer's day



Romsey Town to Coldham's Common, Fen Ditton to Baits Bite Lock and back along the river makes a lovely start to the day!

Lisa Woodburn



Do you have a Way you would like to share? We have not heard much from people west and north-west so far, so if you come in from Barton, Newnham, Madingley or Dry Drayton, for example, we would love to hear from you.

Cycle Friendly Employers... 2

Hope you all managed to stay on your bikes during the 'big freeze'. It's a wonder how we all coped – still, you can at least bet that you coped better than Railtrack...

Anyway, I said I would talk in this issue about some of the projects run by Cycle Friendly Employers. Having just produced the Health Monitoring Project Report 2000, I can give you its results as well as make a plug for any would-be Participants or Employers to take part in the Health Monitoring Project 2001 starting in April.

The Project closed in November after a four-month experiment on the effects of regular cycle commuting upon a group of non-exercisers (people who did not previously take regular exercise). The overall aim was to test whether the HMP was a useful tool for recruiting and retaining non-exercisers to commuter cycling and was designed to be a demonstration of the health benefits of cycling as a form of commuting.

It was very much a pilot project but the results were most encouraging – seven out of ten people questioned said they would carry on cycling. The project has proved to be a useful first experiment and can be used as a building block for future projects over the course of 2001.

This year CFE wants to run a similar project, but over a longer period and with maximum publicity. The HMP 2000 received a mention in *Local Transport Today* (23 November 2000) in the

article 'Transport and Health: are enough local authorities making the full range of links.' Just the sort of publicity we need to build on. We also hope to be able to offer greater incentives, such as a free set of bike lights to each participant but, as yet, nothing has been confirmed. If you know of anyone who would

'wave this... under their nose'

benefit from taking up cycling or walking to work then please contact me. We are looking for people who do not currently exercise, which I presume excludes most of you who read this magazine... but if you know of anyone, then please wave this article under their nose. The more the merrier. We will be advertising in bike shops, libraries, *Cambridge Evening News*, Local Authorities, work places – anywhere we can think of to get as many people involved as possible. It is free, you just need a bike and the will to take part. We would also like to know of any employers with on-site gyms.

If you would like to be involved, or have any information, please contact Dave Meiklejohn at dave@cfce.org.uk or 01223 712429 as I am now on maternity leave. And if anyone would like a full report of the HMP 2000, Dave will be happy to send you one. Watch this space for important project updates.

Sarah Goretzki

Personal safety on cycles?

At a recent monthly Campaign meeting the subject of personal safety was discussed. I would like to make some comments and put the matter in perspective.

When cycling, some people feel vulnerable, especially in the dark and, especially, on routes away from the public eye. There are things we can all do to reduce these threats. Please can everyone report things like the following:

- Failed street lights, or locations that lack suitable lighting.
- Overgrown hedges or other things that cause dark or blind spots on routes.
- Poor surfaces, such that it is not possible to cycle at a reasonable speed and keep an eye on the space ahead.

As individuals, we can reduce risk by:

- fitting and maintaining good bicycle lights, so that you can be seen, as well as seeing well yourself
- keeping your cycle well maintained to reduce the risk of breakdowns
- encouraging others to cycle, so that there are fewer deserted spots
- not carrying valuable items that are easily visible. There have been a number of occasions when handbags have been snatched from front baskets, some even being stolen by people on cycles!

Everyone's assessment of risk is different, and risk cannot be eliminated, but it is important to put things into perspective:



Baskets: contents may be a target for robbers

- Most muggings are on young men under 23.
- You are ten times more likely to extend your life by cycling than to shorten it.
- More cycling and walking makes crime less likely.

Some people will never be happy cycling alone, or in the dark, but the risks are not as high as might appear from reading some sections of the press. Although incidents do occur, I consider that 'Stranger Danger' is a phenomenon promoted by tabloid press because it sells papers. Perhaps others have a contrary opinion?

Jim Chisholm

To tell the County Council about street lighting and traffic signal faults, report town, street, and post number to **0800 25 35 29** or
✉ Street.Lighting@transportation.camcnty.gov.uk

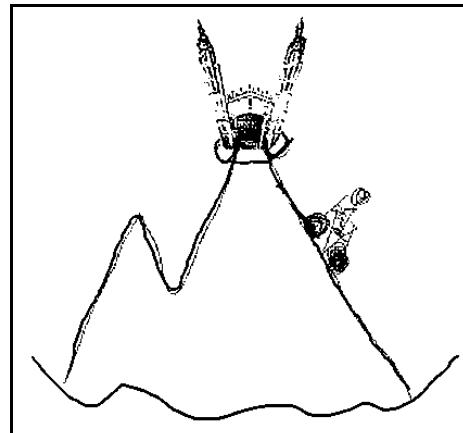
For poor surfaces and overgrown foliage ☎ (01223) 458260 or use our postcard for reports – on the Web at http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/camcycle/campaigning/pothole_postcard.pdf or ask for some real postcards by post to the Campaign.

Mountainous invitation from Belgium

The cycling campaign gets a lot of peculiar mail. Some of it is deeply junk, like the frequent invitations to buy Viagra by mail (is there something about cycling we don't know?), or how to become millionaires overnight (err – is there something else about cycling we don't know?). But of the cycling related messages, a recent one from Belgium lightened the mood.

'First', the writer said, 'I have to tell you that we work all together only with friendship and the share of the same passion'. Great, another cyclist! Just friendly? No, there's more. 'Are you eventually interested on becoming our Lincoln, Norfolk and Cambridge's newsletter and website correspondent?'

Ah, he wants something. Correspondent for what? 'This website presents you more than 2,000 of splendid climbs in Europe. We already have 49 correspondents in Europe (but none in Lincoln, Norfolk and Cambridge)'.



Geography starts to kick in. 'Our guide Passacol describes those climbs reaching 1,000 tops with all the following data: height of the foot, height of the top, ..., maximum gradient, description of how to reach the foot, what's at the top (nothing or restaurant, TV tower, viewpoint, orienteering table, ...). It's important to know if the pass or the mount can be reached with road-bike or only with MTB.'

'You'll become the manager and real chief of the regional guide of Lincoln, Norfolk and Cambridge, if you desire. All the good climbs (very steep ones, or very touristic ones, or very mediatic ones) will be included by you in this guide.'

I don't suppose we'll get many more invitations to be correspondent for East Anglian mountain climbing by bike. But one can but be optimistic.

David Earl

Fold away handlebars

The narrow entrance hall of my house is crowded with bikes, and we always have to squeeze past them to get in or out. I've found a solution to this problem – a product called the **X-fiX**.

X-fiX is a device which allows handlebars to be turned relative to the fork for parking, which allows the whole front half of the bike to stand flush against the wall (see picture). The device is operated by a black plastic 'tap' in the middle of the handlebars and is very easy to use. The tap secures the handlebars in the riding position and, when loosened, releases the alignment of the handlebars allowing them to rotate. Although the tap is rather unattractive, a variety of new designs are promised. The X-fiX has another advantage: a bike



parked with its handlebars parallel to the front wheel would be more difficult to steal.



X-fiX was sent to me from The Hague, together with three pages of translated instructions. I found these quite difficult to interpret and it took a while to figure out how the X-fiX worked and how to fit it correctly. On the other hand, when I sent him re-written instructions, the owner of X-fiX waived the £13.50 cost. The X-fiX is designed to fit handlebar stems of 22.2 mm diameter which are at least 9 cm long. It didn't fit my Ridgeback ATB or Ammaco hybrid, but worked fine on an ex-Geoff's Bike Hire bike.

For details of how to obtain an X-fiX see <http://www.X-fiX.nl>.

Simon Nuttal

UNIVERSITY CYCLES

We now stock Sparta bikes from Holland

9 Victoria Avenue
Cambridge
01223 - 355517



Web Watch

Cambridgeshire's **Travel for Work** scheme (of which the Cycling Campaign is a partner) now has a Web site – www.tfw.org.uk – alongside that of its partner organisation, **Cycle Friendly Employers** (www.cfe.org.uk).

The emerging website of the **Cycle Theft Reduction Project** (described by Simon Nuttal in the last *Newsletter*) is at http://www.cambs-police.co.uk/camops/crime_reduction/index.htm

BicycleBusiness, a UK magazine for the cycle trade, has an 'Info-Zone' accessible to people outside the trade. The site includes much coverage of the astonishing recent demise of Sturmey Archer. <http://www.bikebiz.co.uk/>

For information about **folding bikes**, **electric bikes** and **alternative transport**, try **A to B magazine**. <http://www.a2bmagazine.demon.co.uk/>. And, for **cycle trailers**, **taxis**, and much else besides, see <http://www.workbike.org/>.

Finally, for some delightful light reading, try **BikeReader – a rider's digest** – which opens with a charming quote from the BikeReader dictionary:

WHEELBASE. *The shortest distance between two axles on the same bicycle in a Euclidean universe. Standard advice is that long wheelbase models are ideal for touring, because of the extra stability they impart. A unicycle has no measurable wheelbase, ergo it is not recommended for touring.*

For more humour, essays, travel stories and photos: <http://www.bokeh.net/BikeReader/BikeReader.html>

Clare Macrae

Cycling Shorts

Cambridgeshire Trading Standards Service has completed the first audit of the six cycle hire companies who have signed-up to the County Council's **Bicycle Safe Hire Scheme**. The *Safe Hire Code of Practice*, along with current safety legislation, was used to check that the traders were ensuring that their cycles, and their maintenance methods, were in accordance with the scheme. All cycles had to be fitted with lights, reflectors, and chainguards and supplied with locks and baskets. There will be a seminar about the scheme on 6 February for cycle hire operators and language schools.

Trading Standards Helpdesk
0845 30 30 666

Peterborough has one of the UK's nine trial **Home Zones**. Work has now begun, with road closures using concrete pipes, to implement their Home Zone on an experimental basis in an area called New England (specifically in Shakespeare Avenue, Crown Street and Thistlemoor Road). In addition, 'Kill Your Speed' signs have been erected at key positions throughout the area.

<http://www.homezones.org/>

Just as this newsletter was being prepared for the printers, we were also preparing for a **presentation to politicians and officers** at the City Council. More news on this next time.



Fen Causeway – at least when this narrowing was introduced, the carriageway width remained constant, a cycle lane was introduced through the narrowing, and a left-turn lane was shortened, helping cyclists turning right

The Transport Research Laboratory is studying the **effect of road narrowings on cyclists**. We wrote to them last year suggesting some Cambridgeshire examples.



*A mystery:
why do so
many
Sheffield
stands in
public places
have locked
locks attached?*



Small Ads

Free to members, on cycling subjects.

Wanted

I'm looking for a small commuting bike. About 20". Any racer, tourer or possibly hybrid considered. I have a 22" 1983 Dawes Galaxy (too big for me) to swap if you like. Under £200, scruffier the better. Wookey ☎ 504881 ☐ wooley@aleph1.co.uk

For Sale

Any reasonable offer accepted for

- Claud Butler Majestique cycle (mixte frame, drop handlebars, frame about 19")
- Raleigh Lady Clubman – good for spare parts: new 27" rear wheel, new Kevlar front tyre, aluminium rack, but the frame is irreparable
- Donkey cycle trailer, little used (for description, see *Newsletter 16*)

Clare Macrae ☎ day 336024 ☐ macrae@ccdc.cam.ac.uk

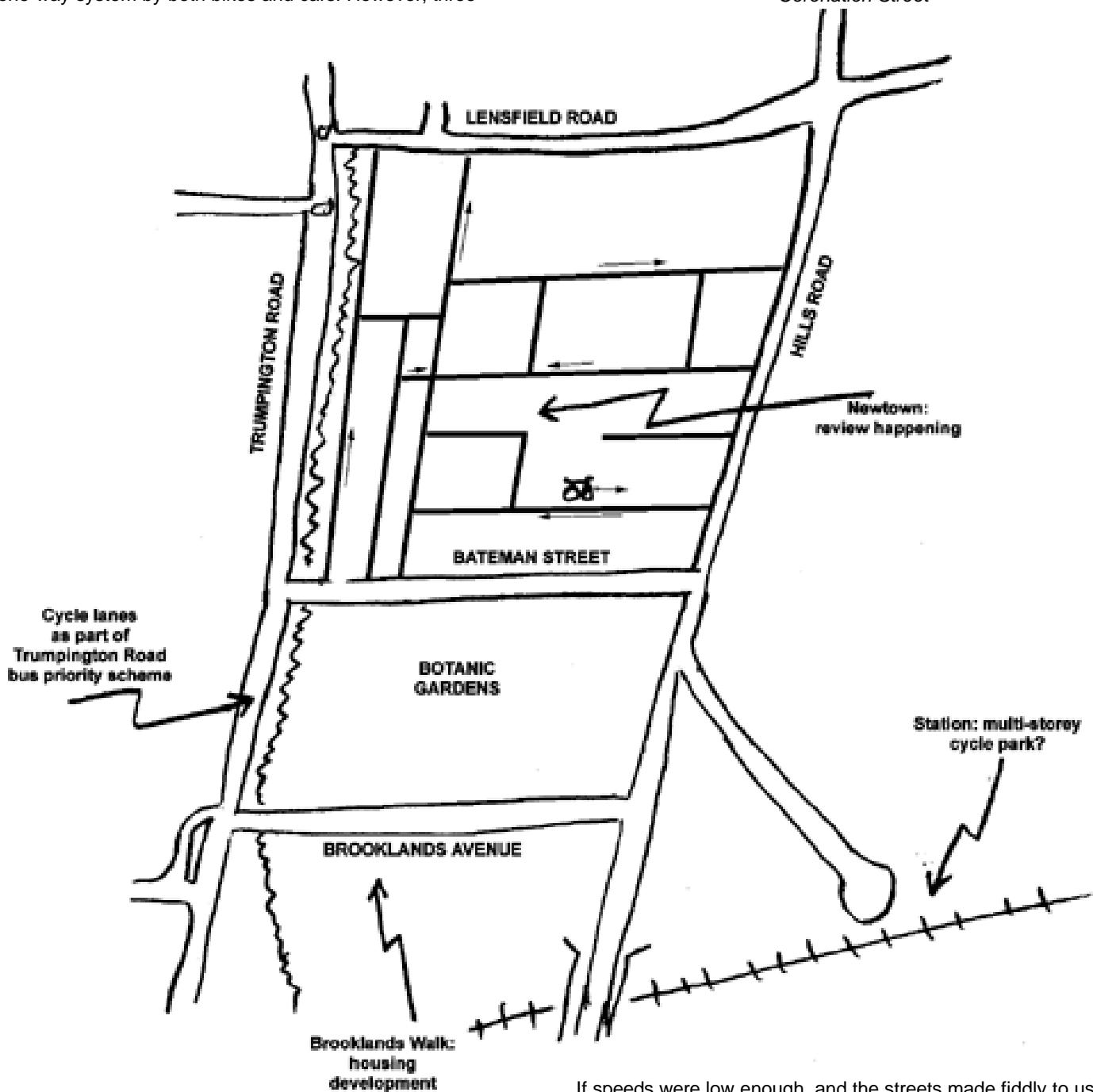
Newtown

The observant among you may remember that last year the Council turned down our suggestion for making Panton Street (off Lensfield Road) two-way for cycles because of a possible knock-on effect on adjacent streets. They saw a need for a review of the whole Newtown area. Well, this review has now started. An evening workshop was organised for residents and interest groups such as ourselves, taxi drivers, etc, to consider how Newtown – the area bounded by Lensfield Road, Trumpington Road, Bateman Street and Hills Road – could be changed. Unfortunately, the several schools in the area did not send representatives.

There was general agreement that speed and rat-running was a problem and that there was widespread abuse of the existing one-way system by both bikes and cars. However, three-



Coronation Street



quarters of an hour was not long enough to design a new one-way system so the groups could only come up with some general principles.

If speeds were low enough, and the streets made fiddly to use, could this become Cambridge's first home zone, perhaps abolishing one-way working almost completely?

David Earl

Campaign Diary

February 2001

- Tue 6 4.30 pm Constructive discussion of **cycle helmet issues** with representatives of the local Health Authority. If you would like to be invited to join this, contact the campaign ☎ 504095 ☐ camcycle@pobox.co.uk
- Tue 6 7.30 pm **Monthly open meeting**, Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane, at the Park Street junction. (Tea and coffee, a chance to chat, and for us to introduce ourselves to new members for the first half-hour. The meeting itself starts at 8 pm.)
- Wed 14 8.30 am **Newsletter 34 review** meeting, over breakfast in Tatties café
- Sun 11 2 pm **Leisurely ride.** Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road. A countryside ride at a gentle pace. Includes a tea shop or café stop. We are usually back in Cambridge by 6 pm. Don't be confused by the longer CTC afternoon ride, which sets off at the same time
- Tue 13 7.30 pm **Cycle Parking subgroup** meeting at 3 Bentinck Street
- Mon 19 7 pm Join us for a **social gathering at CB2** café 5–7 Norfolk Street
- Tue 27 **Bicycle Maintenance Improvers Evening Class** - 5 weekly evening sessions. For administration and booking, contact the Community Education Office, Coleridge Community College, Radegund Road, Cambridge CB1 3RJ ☎ 712340 or 712341. For other questions about the course, contact David Green ☐ david.green@smallworld.co.uk or daytime ☎ (01223) 449304

March

- Sat 3 **Bicycle Maintenance Beginners** 1-day workshop. For information see 27 February
- Tue 6 7.30 pm **Monthly open meeting**, Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane. See 6 February for details
- Sat 10 **Newsletter 34 deadline**. Please send copy to Mark Irving
- Sun 11 2 pm **Leisurely Ride.** Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road. See 11 February for description
- Sat 17 **Bicycle Maintenance Beginners** 1-day class. For information see 27 February
- Mon 19 7 pm Join us for a **social gathering at CB2** café 5–7 Norfolk Street
- Wed 28 7.30 pm **Newsletter 34 Envelope Stuffing** at the Baby Milk Action offices, 23 St Andrews Street (between the Robert Sayle main and computer shop entrances, above Jacobs Outfitters and Lunch Aid). Help very much welcomed!

April

- Tue 3 7.30 pm **Monthly open meeting**, Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane. See 6 February for details
- Sun 8 2 pm **Leisurely Ride.** Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road. See 11 February for description
- Mon 16 7 pm Join us for a **social gathering at CB2** café 5–7 Norfolk Street

Later this year

- May The **Great Organic Bike Ride** between Bilbao and Barcelona, in aid of the Soil Association – ten days and 400 or 500 km. You'll need to raise £2,000 sponsorship. ☎ 0117 914 2427 ☐ 0117 925 2504 or ☐ info@soilassociation.org
- Sun 22 July **London to Cambridge Bike Ride**, in aid of Breakthrough Breast Cancer ☎ (01225) 480130 or <http://www.breakthrough.org.uk/>
- 17–21 September **VeloCity 2001 Conference** in Edinburgh and Glasgow. For details, see <http://www.velo-city2001.org/>

Another way?



Rumours of a separate bridge for cyclists across the railway at Coldham's Lane have recently come to light. See letter, page 9