In this issue:

- Cyclists and buses
- Slowing down
- Car parking in bike lanes
- Cycling police
- Science Park
Monthly meetings

Our October and November meetings focused mainly on single topics. This has proved to be a very effective and informative use of time so we will continue the idea. These are the plans for the next few months. (Meetings start at 7.30 for 8.00, at the Friends Meeting House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge.)

December 1998

The Core Traffic Scheme, to reduce car-use in the city centre. As mentioned last issue, this is going to be shaping Cambridge for several years to come. How will cyclists be affected?

January 1999

Safer Routes to Schools. This Sustrans initiative, snatched by the Government in the Transport White Paper, will be one of the main thrusts of future policy. We will hear about what’s been going on locally, and how we can support the work. The guest speaker is Tara Lammam-Daniell, who runs Safer Routes to Schools for the County Council.

February 1999

Bikes and Trains. Guest speakers: Tom Joyner and John Sarson, of WAGN, will talk about the complexities of life for Train Operating Companies after privatisation, answer questions on cycle provision locally and answer any questions members may care to raise.

March 1999

Guest speaker: local cycling expert Mike Sharpe, a key author of Cycle Audit and Cycle Review. Mike also sits on the National Cycling Forum, which oversees the implementation of the National Cycling Strategy.

Our third AGM – October 1998

The AGM passed smoothly, with a very impressive turnout. I would like to thank Councillor Shona Johnstone for taking the time to come and speak at our meeting on what was already a very busy day for her. Unfortunately the post of Press Officer remains vacant.

Two motions were debated, and passed unanimously.

The first one asked that we should place greater emphasis on reducing the causes of danger on the roads. Support for the Slower Speeds Initiative will be just one way of doing this.

Given that a significant disincentive to cycle use in Cambridge is the speed and volume of ill-regulated motor traffic; and given that, in many areas, such as Mill Road, it is neither possible nor appropriate to resolve the problem by segregating cyclists from motor traffic; we resolve to place greater emphasis on cyclists’ safety on the road, especially in respect of traffic speed, traffic volume, cycle-friendly traffic calming, responsibility in the use of the road, enforcement of rules of the road, and cycle-friendly junction changes. Road Danger Reduction is one example of an approach which addresses these issues directly. The Slower Speeds Initiative is another. The hierarchical approach of Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure is a third.

The second one formalised the existence and running of sub-groups, which have perhaps been slightly hindered by the amount of spare time that committee members have been able to offer.

We asked Tim Burford for his personal impressions of the meeting.

Clare Macrae
Not the minutes

It was great to arrive for the AGM and see that there was no doubt that we’d be quorate, after the worries of last year. No sooner had I sat down than the dread finger of Clare pointed at me and I was ‘persuaded’ to take the minutes, meaning that I failed to ask any opposite and penetrating questions, or indeed any questions at all. However I was eventually able to look back at the meeting and at least think of points I might have raised.

The first hour was taken up by Shona Johnstone, chair of the County Council’s Environment and Transport Committee. If nothing else, she seems to be evidence that the Tories have managed to find some presentable media-friendly human politicians from somewhere. In fact she comes across as genuinely cycle-friendly too. However, she comes at things from the viewpoint of a ‘normal’ person rather than a cycling activist, and from the viewpoint of a working politician, aware of constraints and of the complexity of the real world. This being so, I thought she came in for some rather harsh questioning on the notorious Royal Cambridge Hotel junction. Cyclists quite rightly refuse to be forced off the public highway, but I don’t believe any possible scheme for this junction would do this.

One fairly major project which, oddly, Shona Johnstone didn’t mention at all, is a cycleway along the old Bedford railway line. I went the day after the AGM to the exhibition of proposals for a Trumpington Park and Ride, and the council seems to be committed to this no matter whether they put the buses onto the road or the old railway line. I assume this would link to the Sustrans route towards Saffron Walden, and it could also be continued northwards along the railway north of the station. It is true, as David Earl pointed out, that her thinking and that of the council is generally inclined towards providing specific facilities for cyclists and getting them out of the way of cars (and into the way of pedestrians) rather than forcing drivers to give way and behave in a more civilised manner. Cameras would be a help at the Royal Cambridge Hotel junction, although they could be a sop and a way of delaying more effective action.

Shona Johnstone ran through the various funding sources available to the council, and the juggling act needed to make the most of them. She spoke of how strapped for cash the council was, but didn’t mention the fact, which I saw in the papers a day or two later, that Cambridgeshire has by far the lowest Council Tax in Britain. Perhaps people should simply pay more for better services, as opinion polls have shown they are increasingly willing to do — but you’ll never get a Tory to agree to that. It did seem absurd that there was so little money for replacing 40 mph signs with 30 mph signs and so on.

Her idea of moving the coach station from Drummer Street to an edge-of-town site generated perhaps more heat than anything else she said. Personally I didn’t think it was such an appalling idea, particularly if it was near the M11 at the Trumpington Park and Ride (or maybe Addenbrooke’s railway station), and had genuinely secure bike parking (so one could leave a bike for a weekend or longer) and frequent buses to all parts of the city.

A final thought was that she seemed to regard policing as an issue for the police themselves, with no scope for the council, or the broader community, to influence them. Obviously we don’t want a politicised police service, but there must be scope for the paymasters to indicate that a little more enforcement of laws on dangerous driving and anti-social parking would be welcomed. We’d also be happy to see cyclists forced to use lights!

As for the rest of the meeting, we had lots to congratulate ourselves on, and few negatives. It would have been nice to have heard more about the Strategy Day, which will with luck make its way into the newsletter at some point. Our finances are fine, both motions were passed without acrimony, and no officers were deposed. Paula retired from the post of Stall Officer, with sincere thanks from all, and Sarah Elsegood took over, with our best wishes.  

Tim Burford

Campaign Christmas Cracker

I’d like to extend a warm invitation to all Campaign members to this year’s Christmas party. It’s on Friday 18 December, from 7:30 pm at 8 Thirleby Close. Do come along and meet other members, and enjoy an entirely social occasion!

Clare Macrae
Good news: on Thursday 5 November, the 300 new spaces were opened at last. This doubles the number of spaces for bikes. Tom Joyner, of WAGN in Cambridge, and John Sarson, of WAGN in London, have put a lot of time and effort into installing the new racks (and it really wasn’t easy). Thank you to them, and to Cambridgeshire County Council, who provided the materials.

Bad news: it saddens me greatly to report that, in Tom’s absence, the opening of the new racks was announced solely by a message on the information screens saying that bikes must be parked in the racks provided, and ones in unofficial spaces would be removed.

Anyway, I met Tom and John just before the new racks were opened, to continue our discussion of cycling issues at the station. I was pleased to learn that the new area will be covered by the existing CCTV cameras. We have since suggested that signs are installed in the area announcing this. We have also asked for a grille to be fitted across the gully in the car park. In the longer term, we would like to see a connection from the Carter Bridge into the station.

Another welcome change is a new cycle symbol in the latest WAGN timetables, showing exactly which trains don’t accept cycles at peak times. This is much clearer than the previous system of summarising restrictions in a separate leaflet.

I must say that these have been very positive meetings, and I do have the feeling that WAGN’s cycle working group is moving in a number of very positive directions. I am pleased that we have an opportunity to contribute.

We would like to hear from Campaign members who use Cambridge station regularly, so we can gather feedback. For example, my perception of the parking problem at Cambridge station has been that it’s nigh-on impossible to find a space to park. I recently heard an alternative view: if you find a space, at the end of the day you have to extricate your bike from all the others that have been leaned on yours!

Messrs Joyner and Sarson have offered to come along to our General Meeting on Tuesday 2 February next year to talk about the initiatives they are working on, together with any issues Campaign members may wish to raise. Integration of cycle and train transport is a subject close to many hearts. Make a note of the date now!

Clare Macrae

Cambridge Recycles

We asked Paul Munro, of Cambridge Recycles, to tell us about the cycle business at Cambridge station.

After many discussions with WAGN, we are now open in our premises at the railway station. We offer bike hire, bike repair, bike accessories and left luggage. The shop is on the left of the station (as you approach it) next to the transport police. Our main thrust has been to establish the bike hire and left luggage facility. Now we need to complete some building work before stage two, the development of bike repairs and accessories sales. We currently offer small repairs (punctures, lights and brakes) but will ultimately be able to offer full service facilities on the majority of bikes. We are aiming to offer customers a morning drop off and evening collection service.

In association with WAGN, it is now possible to purchase a combined ticket from London King’s Cross which covers rail travel, bike hire and punt tours. It is also planned to offer regular commuters priority bikes as an integral part of their season ticket. Arrive at the station, hop on a bike, go to work and drop the bike back in the evening, Monday to Friday. Other ground-breaking initiatives are being discussed and we will tell you more as plans are finalised.

We are currently open 7 days a week, 9 am–6 pm, although we are discussing plans to extend this to 8 am–6.30 pm, to offer our customers a more convenient service.

We still operate from our other premises at 61 Newnham Rd (at the top end of Fen Causeway) but are only allowed to offer hire bikes from there. The winter opening hours for Newnham are Monday–Friday 9 am–5.30 pm.

The ‘Cycle Station’ is still developing but we are fully committed to offering customers a friendly, convenient and efficient service. Suggestions from your members will be gratefully received.

We are also delighted to offer all Campaign members a 10% discount on bike hire, bike accessories and bike repairs. (Discount on bike hire does not apply in June, July and August).
York Weekend

About a year ago, a group of Cycling Campaign members spent a very enjoyable weekend in the Dutch city of Groningen, discovering what it was like to be a cyclist in the cycling capital of the Netherlands. That was so successful that we decided to organise another fact-finding weekend away this year, and so in October a group of Cycling Campaign members visited York, which claims to be ‘Britain’s best cycling city.’

York is superficially rather similar to Cambridge. Both are historic cities in flat regions of eastern England, and both are well known for having many cyclists. York is rather larger and more industrial than Cambridge – chocolate and trains being the principal industries. Cycle usage, though still high by national standards, is rather lower in York than in Cambridge: in recent years about 20% of commuting in York has been by bike – the equivalent figure for Cambridge is 25%.

Unfortunately we chose one of the wettest weekends of the year for our visit, and most cyclists in York were sheltering sensibly indoors. We were no exception, and spent most of the Saturday sitting in restaurants and tea shops talking to members of the York Cycle Campaign.

Nevertheless we were able to gain a good idea of what conditions are like for cyclists in York. There’s a pedestrian area in the city centre, surrounded by narrow streets with lots of congested traffic. Some roads had cycle lanes and there were a number of signposted cycle routes, rather like we have in Cambridge. But we discovered a couple of significant differences.

One difference was that shared-use pavements are hardly ever used in York. As we all know, they are widespread in Cambridge. So cyclists in York rarely have to worry about the problems of mixing with pedestrians, or of crossing side roads, or of avoiding oncoming cyclists.

The other difference I noticed was the almost universal use of advanced stop lines at junctions in the central area. I also noticed that these always had red surfacing to make them obvious to drivers, as well as approach lanes to allow cyclists to get to the front of the traffic queue.

We do have advanced stop lines in Cambridge, and they are becoming increasingly common, but they are still the exception rather than the rule and where they are provided they too often have no red surfacing and no approach lane.

We even saw one junction where an advanced stop line had two approach lanes – one for straight-ahead traffic and one for right-turning traffic. We had previously thought that provision as good as this only existed in Holland.

On the second day of our visit we were blessed with sunshine and clear skies, and to celebrate this we went for a ride to Beningbrough Hall, a National Trust property about ten miles north of York, along part of the National Cycle Network’s route 65. The route follows the River Ouse, which was in flood at the time, and so part of the journey involved riding through a couple of feet of flood water (wiser members of the party took another route).

At Beningbrough Hall we were able to claim £1 off our entrance fee because we arrived by cycle.

On both days we were accompanied by Matthew Page of the York Cycle Campaign, who made us very welcome. A big thank you from all of us, Matthew. (I hope your shoes have dried out by now – mine haven’t!)

So is York really entitled to style itself ‘Britain’s best cycling city?’ Perhaps. But I have no doubt that although Cambridge may not be the best cycling city in the country, sheer weight of numbers definitely makes it the cycling city of Britain.

Nigel Deakin

The autumn fact-finding weekend has now established itself as a regular fixture on the Cycling Campaign calendar. Any suggestions for next year? Apparently Shanghai is nice in the autumn.

New Stall Officer seeks volunteers

Following the October AGM I’ve taken over from Paula Watson as Stall Officer, organising the Campaign’s Saturday stall outside the Guildhall. I’m looking for more volunteers to join our Stall Team. If you can spare an hour between 10 am and 2 pm every few weeks to help on the stall, please get in touch with me by phone or e-mail to discuss what is involved. The more volunteers I can find, the less often I will have to contact you, so if you’re already a volunteer, perhaps you could tell other members what it’s like. We won’t leave you on your own: someone experienced will be on duty as well. It’s a very simple way for the Campaign to get feedback on what we’re doing and to keep in touch with the issues of concern to cyclists, pedestrians and motorists within Cambridge. We’ve been interactive right from the start! Think of the Stall as a free advert in one of the busiest parts of Cambridge every Saturday.

We don’t operate if it’s pouring with rain, so don’t let the weather put you off! As well as answering questions about the Campaign and giving out leaflets and membership forms, we sell sweatshirts, T-shirts and Campaign mugs (oh, and we also direct people to the Tourist Information Centre). The Committee is currently working on a FAQ (frequently asked questions) list.

Can’t spare an hour? I’d also like a few volunteers who can help occasionally for ten minutes at 10 am and again at 1 pm or 2 pm to help get the stall table and leaflets, etc. (tidily) back into the shed on the corner of King Street and Manor Street where they are stored (thanks to Debby). If you have any ideas about how we can improve the Saturday stall, please contact me.

Sarah Elsegood
Once again the County Council has put off doing anything about the dual mini roundabouts at the end of Trumpington Street, this time for so long that it amounts to abandoning the scheme.

Frankly it is an utterly shameful decision and we condemn it completely.

The decision, by the Environment and Transport Committee in October, was not helped by an earlier decision of the Cambridge Area Committee voting to defer it, and also by the withdrawal of Council officers’ support for the scheme. This is despite it being number four on the County’s list of priorities, with the top three being speed cameras (not location specific) and two which have already received funding. It still ranks as the junction with the most cycle casualties in the county.

In theory, we now have to wait for the outcome of the Trumpington corridor review and the Silver Street stage of the Core Traffic Scheme (see below). These could be five years or more away. Silver Street is itself likely to be put on hold pending the development of a vast shopping centre in the City Centre (more on this next time).

As a result of the decision we are looking at what to do next. Possibilities include legal action, more letter-writing, monitoring the junction and looking for other ways to change the junction. However, looking at other ways cyclists could go, which is what we were told at our AGM would be done (see page 3), clearly shows a lack of understanding of cyclists’ needs, behaviour and destinations.

The decision was taken despite the eloquent pleading of Councillor David Kelleway, who has promoted traffic signals there from the beginning. It was very disappointing to see Liberal Democrats supporting the Conservative majority on the committee.

The reasons for not putting traffic lights here keep changing. Sometimes we are told it is residents’ objections. At other times it is motor traffic capacity – which flies in the face of both Government and Conservative national policies. However, it seems that there is more than a little party politics going on here and cyclists’ safety is suffering as a result.

There are mixed signals coming from the County Council about restricting cars in the City Centre at the moment.

At their October meeting, councillors voted to proceed to the next stage of the Core Traffic Scheme (see Newsletter 20). This will mean closure of Emmanuel Road or Short Street, bringing some relief to Parker Street residents, and also bans on left turns out of Downing Street. Cyclists will be exempt from all of these. Four Lamps roundabout should also be made more cycle- and bus-friendly.

However, action on the next phase, closing Silver Street to through motor traffic, was not brought up at all.

From Councillor Johnstone’s remarks to us, it seems likely that the development of the Grand Arcade, a massive new shopping mall in the City Centre, will be used as an excuse to spin out further progress on limiting traffic in the Centre instead of accelerating it.

A decision is to be made as we go to press about the scheme we reported in the last Newsletter in Milton High Street and Cambridge Road.

In the meantime, we had some publicity for our point of view – that the need for cycle facilities there is only generated by some very poor traffic calming, and that putting cyclists on the pavement is not satisfactory in built-up areas.

The Cambridge Evening News took our picture in the pinch points by the offending traffic islands. They even said in one of their editorials: ‘Cambridge Cycling Campaign is right to raise objections to schemes for cycleways in Milton. The organisation knows at first-hand what will be best for cyclists. Anything that raises doubts about safety is unacceptable.’ Given past editorials I don’t know whether to treat this with pride or as the kiss of death!

We have recently received plans showing proposed changes to the roundabout just east of the M11 on Barton Road. This is
mainly to slow down traffic joining the roundabout, but it will also slightly change the cycle track which crosses the north side of the junction. Among other things it should get rid of an awkward drain cover which all of us who use it have worried about catching our wheels in.

The new Barton Road cycle track seems to be extremely well used. However we have received reports that at least two cyclists (one of them a Campaign member) have come off their bikes because they have caught the slightly raised white line at an awkward angle. It seems surprising that this can happen since it is only 20 mm high. It is there to give blind and partially sighted people something they can sense so they can avoid straying onto the cyclists’ side.

Of course the fundamental problem is that the track is not wide enough at the western end, as we said at the beginning. If it was, people wouldn’t have to cross the line.

Regent Terrace

We have now received a letter in reply to our representations about the condition of the surface, among other issues, on Regent Terrace (see Newsletter 20). We were told by the County Council that the street was unlikely to score highly enough in the systematic method they have for deciding resurfacing priorities. This is despite a weighting for cycle routes. Yet it is hard to think of a worse similar street.

This does raise the question of how any cycle route can qualify from now on, and what the criteria are. Now that Burrell’s Walk has been so well resurfaced (see Newsletter 19), Regent Terrace must rank as the worst cycle route surface in the City.

What were the criteria that allowed Burrell’s Walk to be reconstructed, but not Regent Terrace? We will try to find out, and let you know. We also asked about the bollards at the Regent Street end, which effectively direct pedestrians into the gap for cyclists. The reply here was noncommittal and we will tell you if there is any further progress.

Corridor Reviews

W S Atkins consultants have started work on considering how Newmarket Road and the adjacent ‘corridor’ can be made more cycle-friendly. They have our review and suggestions for the area that we prepared a while ago. Hopefully we will see some consultation on this as work progresses. There is a considerable sum of money available for this. If all that comes out of it is ‘more shared-use’ we will be bitterly disappointed.

Marshall’s, who own lots of land off Newmarket Road, are also keen to develop leisure routes out of Cambridge in the area, though their interest in co-ordinating with other efforts such as the corridor review is somewhat in doubt.

Cambridge City Council has been commissioned to look at what was originally billed as the Addenbrooke’s corridor, which we took to be focused largely on Hills Road. However, the bus priority scheme there has largely overtaken events. Subtly, the emphasis has changed so that it is now being put on Trumpington Road. However, it may now also be possible to include the cross links in the study, especially the track between Trumpington and Addenbrooke’s.

Feasibility work, which should involve us, will start this year. However, it is unlikely we will see anything on the ground for at least two years, because Barton Road took up this year’s funds and Newmarket Road will soak up all the money for at least the next financial year to March 2000.

Fulbourn Road

The cycle way along Fulbourn Road between the city boundary and Fulbourn village is nearing completion. It is sad that we have had to push every little inch for a decent standard here. Utterly unnecessary Cyclists Dismount signs went up at the crossing of Yarrow Road. They have now been taken away at our request. A slip-lane to bypass the roundabout was constructed to a very poor standard and has now been reconstructed.

Ramps down to cross side roads are not at all the smooth junction with the road we had been promised, and of course they are littered with the usual Give Ways. At one point the track goes through a rarely used bus stop, and even this has had Give Way signs put at either end. This paranoia that the Council has is frustrating, and leads cyclists either into ignoring the signs on a regular basis, or not using the cycle facility at all.

On the up-side, the track east of Fulbourn Hospital is very smooth and mostly wide enough, a triumph in itself. It remains to be seen whether it will deteriorate over time as the cycle track to Barton has done. I also do not know whether it will have reflective markings so that it is usable in the dark. Every question I have asked about this has been ignored.

County Council Consultation

We receive lots of plans and letters from the County Council consulting us about various changes to road design. Sometimes we simply don’t have time to respond to these, so we have to prioritise them. For example, there was quite a lot of material about a traffic island in Barnwell Road, which has now been installed. While I did do a short response, the scheme did not seem to be particularly significant. Similarly, traffic signal changes in Histon and Willingham seemed very positive from a cycling point of view so I felt there was no need to follow up on them.

It would be nice to respond to every letter, even if is only to say ‘yes, great, thank you’. Also, it is only after the event that problems with what looked good or innocuous on paper become apparent. So if we don’t always say what you think we should have said about a proposal, then firstly let me say sorry. Secondly, let me encourage you to offer some time to help in making responses. To give you some idea of the scale of things, we have written over 150 letters and reports this year.

David Earl
'Isolated incidents'?

We’ve been getting increasingly worried by reports of incidents between buses and cyclists which we have received recently. We asked some of you to tell us if you had had a ‘run in’ with a bus. And I went to Cowley Road to talk to Stagecoach Cambus to get their point of view.

S Longbottom and C Maunder of Newnham College contacted us in September with a copy of a letter recording a frightening incident on Madingley Road with a Park and Ride bus. The driver appears to have objected simply to them cycling in an ordinary way in front of the bus rather than cycling on the pavement. He intimidated them with his vehicle — blowing his horn and driving less than a foot behind them. Then he let out what they describe as ‘a stream of vociferous abuse… peppered with expletives.’ Despite being experienced cyclists, they were so upset by the incident that they felt they had to complete their journey on foot.

Perhaps it was the same driver in another incident we were told about where ‘just past the entrance to the Cavendish Laboratory, I was hooted from behind by a fast-approaching Park and Ride bus to “get out of the way” – which I did. I was riding along the white line that delimits the hatching.’

Abuse by drivers has also been a common feature: ‘On Jesus Lane… the driver shouted abuse at, and subsequently argued with, a female cyclist who was blocking the way. I couldn’t see why, but it seemed to me that she was waiting to turn.’

Park and Ride buses feature widely in criticisms: ‘On Maid’s Causeway a Park and Ride bus overtook me and then moved over into the left lane, forcing me to brake and move over to the left to avoid being hit.’ And ‘a Park and Ride bus overtook me as I approached the narrowing and then pulled over to the left, forcing me to brake and move over.’

A tight squeeze

Overtaking with minimal room is probably the most common complaint. I suffered from this myself recently. On Gonville Place a double decker driver decided he had to overtake me alongside the central islands where the road narrows considerably. It didn’t gain the driver any time, as I reached Drummer Street in time to get his number.

Clare Ellis reports similar incidents: ‘I complained to Cambus when a Park and Ride bus passed me just after the narrowed Short Street crossing, but because of oncoming traffic, there just was not adequate room. In moving back into the road in front of me, the front of the bus actually overhung the bus stop, leaving me with zero road at very short notice. I braked hard and just managed to stay on, but I felt shaken.’

She continued: ‘It is the speed at which they “whoosh” past, leaving you only inches.’

Sheila Pankhurst had a close call in Regent Street: ‘I had one nasty experience recently… A double decker Stagecoach bus passed me so close and at such speed that I came off my bike – the bus didn’t actually hit me, but the “whoomp” was enough to wobble me off. I was unhurt but upset… I caught up with the driver at the lights and banged on the door, which he opened – he had the grace to look rather sheepish and did apologise, but I hate to think what might have happened if I’d had my child on the bike too.’

Clive Cox continues this theme: ‘I regularly get buses passing me fast and close on Shelford Road. This happened twice today in the rain, once on the bridge, which was especially dangerous as the cycle lane there is narrow, with only dashed lines.’

Debbie Mellor tells us: ‘I was cycling along Fen Causeway when the bus caught up with me… I was riding in the kerb between the two yellow lines so I was doing all I could. He had to stay behind me all the way along Lensfield Road… He hooted me as we both turned left into Regent Street. He was obviously pissed off and overtook me dangerously close and had to pull in far too early. He obviously considered it a fairly matched battle between us and thought he’d take me on at speed.’

So is it widespread?

These were responses from asking only the third of Cycling Campaign members who have e-mail. In turn the membership of the Cycling Campaign is only a small proportion of all the cycle journeys in Cambridge. I was surprised to find such a large response and so many recent incidents.

Nevertheless, Philip Eden, Commercial Manager of Stagecoach Cambus says ‘I think you’re talking about isolated incidents, not regular incidents by any stretch of the imagination.’ He says, ‘When there’s a nice wide road, keep to the edge of it please.’

That seems to be one feature of the comments people made – but by doing so it seems that drivers sometimes take advantage of this to go too close. Like Eden, I’d say don’t cycle up the middle of the road, but my advice, where you consider there isn’t room for a bus to overtake, is to cycle well out so as to make that obvious. You need somewhere to be able to go in an emergency. Drains and holes at the road edge can bring you off. It is your safety that is at stake.

Buses and cycles are likely to have to share the same space more and more in years to come. Expansion of Park and Ride and the associated bus priority measures mean that cycle lanes are more likely to become bus and cycle lanes in the future. This has some advantages, since even with a frequent bus service, the volume of traffic in such lanes is low. But it does mean we have to learn to live together with bus drivers.

Eden says his employees ‘are professionals: these guys have got to behave themselves. But we’d ask other people to have regard for the fact that for the sake of a couple of seconds they could end up under the wheels. Cyclists should have regard for
what the bus is trying to achieve. Don’t fight with it – which is the message we give to our staff here – don’t fight with other road users, there’s no point.’

I was particularly impressed that Cambus are taking pro-active steps to monitor their drivers, as Eden says below.

**How do I complain?**

Stagecoach Cambus is not the only operator. There are many others but Stagecoach is the dominant company. When it comes to pollution, another widespread concern, Guide Friday seems to attract the most criticism.

Stagecoach buses carry (mostly) the white and orange livery. If you do have an incident with one of their buses, you should write to:

C. Moderate, Operations Manager,
Stagecoach Cambus,
100 Cowley Road,
Cambridge
CB4 4DN.

Eden says that Moderate ‘deals direct with and is responsible for our employees. Whatever course of action is necessary will be taken.’ That usually means interviewing the driver.

I started by asking Philip Eden the question most often raised: **does the need to keep to schedules lead to drivers taking risks?**

One of the most difficult things in a city like Cambridge is that the drivers have schedules to keep to. I don’t think for one minute that they go out of their way specifically to antagonise cyclists, but it is difficult for them.

**Do drivers have incentives to keep to schedules?** The schedule is designed to meet the average need, not the absolute need and sometimes this can be incredibly different. We don’t encourage our drivers to break any rules or break any laws or anything like that but clearly they are under pressure. Don’t get me wrong, but there are experiences that have reached our attention where cyclists have not exactly helped either, even with the most placid of our staff. It is important that the road space is shared out and treated with respect for all users and that is hopefully what we actively encourage.

**Is there any financial incentive?** No, not within Cambus.

**It needs a certain temperament to be a bus driver, so do you look for this in recruiting?** Yes, we are seasoned as far as recruitment is concerned. You can usually spot the ones that aren’t going to make the grade quite quickly. The instructors are very, very skilled at doing that. Clearly we keep an eye on them when they are new, and after they have gone out on their own, to see if there’s any change in the way they behave.

**Has the recent shortage of drivers affected standards – are you taking people you wouldn’t otherwise have taken?** Clearly we have to take what’s available – but we’d never take people who weren’t suitable for the job.

**Do drivers in training only go out on buses or on bikes too, to see it from the other side?** No – they go out on buses, that’s what we’re training them to do. I expect most of them have been or are cyclists. You have my word that it is taken seriously in training. It’s got to be.

Cyclists get annoyed when a bus overtakes them and then immediately pulls up at a bus stop. Is there anything you can do about that? It’s all about judgement really. So long as it’s safe to do it, that’s the criterion we would use. If it means the cyclist has to pass the bus round the outside, well, that’s going to happen all the time, isn’t it? If it’s safe, do it; if not, don’t.

It seems clear that drivers’ sometimes foul language upsets people more than intimidation. I think you’re talking about isolated incidents. Anything like that is not in our interests and needs to be taken up with the individual. You’ve got to be really angry to do that. But when it does happen, we certainly take it very seriously – it’s our image. [The Madingley Road complaint] is the sort of regrettable and isolated incident that gives the whole situation between buses and cyclists a bad name. These things are going to happen from time to time as they are with any other road user. And it happens the other way as well, where we’re the party that gets the grief. The drivers talk about cyclists all the time, but they are actively encouraged to consider them. They have a right to use the road as much as anyone else.

You told me previously that you monitor your drivers? We pay the Driving Standards Agency, a Government agency, to perform unobserved checks on the standard of ride quality and driving standards generally of all our staff – the whole lot in the Cambus area. The drivers haven’t got a clue when they’re being observed. The observer pays the fare just like a passenger. We’re getting feedback on every single driver from an outside agency looking at it totally objectively in the light of their ability...
to check people's driving skills. The results are quite pleasing. The observations are so valuable to us. They would clearly pick up the sorts of things you're saying if they were a regular problem.

Is the monitoring going to be repeated regularly when everyone has been observed, or is it a one-off? When we've received all the results for this time round then we'll make that decision. The information we're getting is that 90% of our staff are driving well. The results up to now have been positive and worthwhile, and where there are deficiencies we're addressing them by interviewing the drivers, and if necessary putting them back in the driving school.

There seem to be more problems reported with Park and Ride buses. Is there anything unusual about them? There's two things. First, they don't stop so often so they tend to be going at the maximum road speed where conditions allow. Second, they tend to be our new employees. New employees go onto the Park and Ride services because they're simple and repetitive and it's good ground to get used to the standards of customer care. The whole scenario for a new employee is much more positive on Park and Ride. But because they're new employees they probably need the edges knocking off them and we need to take on board any particular comments that may be made by people like yourselves. But they've all gone through the driving school, and they've got to start somewhere.

With new bus priority measures being implemented, more space is being shared between buses and cyclists. Do you think this works? It's not too bad. I don't think all the lanes are the standard minimum width, are they? In most circumstances

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Philip Eden, Commercial Manager of Stagecoach Cambus

round here, that's not helpful, but we'd rather see a bus lane of 2.8 m or 3 m than no bus lane at all. I think that as a company and organisation we can live with the shared use because obviously that's the way forward, that's the right way. If the frequency of buses goes up, which is likely, then I'm not sure whether or not something further would need to be done to ensure that there weren't road safety implications. Certainly the shared use is the right measure because all you guys have to look for is buses… and taxis. I think it is only right to go that way, because it's encouraging environmental forms of transport, of which the cyclist is an important part.

At bollards and islands such as on Gonville Place and in Bridge Street, cyclists often get pinched by an overtaking bus. Gonville Place is one of the examples I would cite where cyclists try to get down the side. I think again it's just about using common sense from both parties and if someone is going out of their way to be belligerent about it we would take it up on a formal basis. But it is all about common sense and road safety really.

Do you see cyclists as lost customers? No. The cycling market is actually a target of ours. I don't think it is that way round at all. As a total package, we need to encourage people who are making the marginally longer journeys by cycle to use us, and together we need to encourage the people who are making extremely short journeys by car to cycle or walk. We gain people particularly in inclement weather who choose to use us rather than cycle. We'd like to see more interchanges where people could park their bikes, lock them up safely, use lockers, whatever, and use the bus. The whole thing is complementary. No, we don't see them as lost customers.

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‘There's nothing worse than being surprised by someone suddenly going past your entrance door on a bike. But by the same token if you're on a bike there's nothing worse than having a bus within 2 or 3 feet of your tail, which is something we actively discourage.'

Buses seem to be a very visible source of pollution. Do you go beyond the minimum standards? Every new bus has got an engine with emission standards that are better than the requirement – Euro 2 or the rest of it – they are better than what is required. Every bus also regularly has smoke checks to make sure that it meets the standards and if it is anywhere close to not meeting them then attention is given. Clearly the older the bus the more emissions you are going to get, but those vehicles would be replaced first and the problem will get less and less.

Are you planning to run more gas buses? No, in short. It would be nice but unfortunately there are problems with those vehicles. We're watching First Group's experiments in Southampton, Northampton and Bristol where they've got quite large batches of gas buses. But it's actually more expensive to use gas than diesel. And they are more expensive to buy. The range of them as well is another problem. When the unit cost comes down I think you're more likely to see it. A lot of it is pump-primed by local authorities. The vehicles we use on the City Centre are a nightmare technologically because they were early in the cycle of gas buses. So perhaps our judgement is slightly coloured.

Article and interview by David Earl

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Helmet law?

Colin Breed, Liberal Democrat MP for South East Cornwall, is promoting an Early Day Motion, number 1708, in the House of Commons, demanding compulsory bicycle helmets for under 16s. EDMs have very little hope of becoming law, but this may well be the sign of things to come. Is this the thin end of a wedge which could see compulsory helmet wearing for everyone in the future? It is possible that the EDM has come from the work of a new organisation, the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust, which has been formed with the sole purpose of getting people to wear helmets when riding bikes. The motion reads:

'That this House believes that too many young cyclists die each year because of a lack of protective headwear and that the wearing of bicycle helmets can greatly reduce the odds of a head injury; notes that if cyclists are involved in an accident and are not wearing a helmet they are three times more likely to suffer a head injury than if a helmet had been worn; and to this end supports the compulsory wearing of helmets by under 16 year olds to prevent unnecessary death and injury.'

David Earl

The next international Velo-City conference will take place in not one, but two locations: Graz, in Austria, and Maribor, in Slovenia, on 13–16 April 1999. We hope that at least one or two Campaign members will be able to attend. Get in touch with Clare for details.
Letters

We do like to be beside the seaside

You may be amused by my recent attempts to transport myself round Blackpool during the Labour Party conference.

I had an operation on my foot at the beginning of September, which meant that it was still encased in plaster when I went to Blackpool. This certainly restricted my walking, but I was delighted to find that I could manage to cycle as well as usual.

I tried hard to find a cycle shop in Blackpool from which I could rent a bike during my time there. However, there appear to be none! Ben Hayward Cycles were very helpful and lent me a small folding bike which was transported to Blackpool for me by my agent.

The combination of a very fast one-way system for cars, no cycle lanes and unfamiliarity with the location of the various places I wanted to visit made it all a bit hair-raising. The other problem was that there were few places where I could leave a bike safely. Group 4 security looked after it in their refreshment hut at one hotel. At the conference centre I folded it up, sent it through the X-ray scanner and then left it in the cloakroom. It was an interesting experience.

However, I did enjoy envious looks from the scores of other visitors as I whizzed along the prom and the bike saved me a fortune in taxi fares.

I am converted to the idea of a folding bike and I look forward to using it again in future when I am visiting other cities.

Bad surfaces

I’ve worried for ages about bad surfaces on new cycle facilities. Now I have experience of the sort of problem I had predicted might occur.

A colleague of mine went to Grafham Water on Sunday. He’s in work now with bandages on both hands, and a sore knee. Why? Well, when attempting to turn, the gravelled surface broke lose, resulting in a lot of grit in his hands and also a severed artery.

This is someone who is not a regular cyclist, and, if he’s ever going to become one he surely needs to have some good experiences on a bike. Instead, he commented this morning that he and bikes ‘don’t mix.’ I would be very surprised if he were travelling at what any of us would consider to be a high speed (though it obviously was such for the conditions).

I have suggested he attempt to sue the council, or whoever is responsible for the terrible facility, on the grounds that it is not suitable for cycling. If people were to do this regularly, maybe future facilities would be built so that they were actually suitable for cycling?

I’ve not seen the facility myself, but it sounds as if it has the usual gravelly rough surface and is too narrow to pass safely (especially for novice cyclists, I would imagine). Sounds bad.

The roads are surely safer than these ‘safe’ paths.

Anne Campbell MP, with folding bicycle

Quy roundabout

I sometimes cycle into Cambridge from Little Wilbraham and thought you might be interested in an update on the A14’s Quy interchange. This is my most direct route into Cambridge, but when travelling during the morning rush-hour I now take the longer, but much more pleasant, route through Fulbourn (via the Robin Hood junction, Walpole Road, Radegund Road and the Carter Bridge over the railway). Recent road works along Fulbourn’s Cambridge Road have forced me onto the Fulbourn Old Drift cycle route – now much improved. It is a wiggly route, but the more I use it, the more I enjoy it.

Why not use the direct route? These are the difficulties I have experienced recently:

- The usual rules for roundabouts do not apply. Drivers coming off the A14 and onto the A1303 for Cambridge (Newmarket Road) no longer have to give way to traffic from the right: the slip road flows directly into the left-hand lane of the A1303. But drivers going onto the roundabout (for the Burwell and Newmarket exit) do have to give way to all vehicles from the right, except pedal cycles. Drivers are understandably confused and hesitant.

- Traffic sometimes flows more smoothly. But this has been achieved by condoning and encouraging the use of high speeds off the A14 straight on to the slip road and A1303. Yet there is supposed to be a national movement towards speed reduction. At really peak times (like a wet Monday after the school half-term break) there is still slow-moving traffic on the approach road from Burwell and on the A1303 exit, therefore a shunt-type accident is just as likely to occur as before.

- There is a tiny strip of cycle lane on the roundabout itself, then nowhere for the cyclist to go. We wait for a gap (which I admit isn’t as difficult as I thought it might be) then cycle into a lane of traffic which is travelling at 60–70 mph straight off the A14.

In the interests of making reports to Cambridge Cycling Campaign, and for a fast journey time, I continue to experiment with this route. But in general I choose to cycle through the villages. Cyclists from Lode and Bottisham don’t have that option.

David Hembrow

Anne Taylor
Subgroup News

Trailer Sub-group

Last issue I alluded to a possible location for our proposed cycle trailer loan scheme. We had produced a report for Sainsbury’s in the city centre, with, we felt, rather well-thought-out plans for their newly-acquired basement space. Unfortunately, now that their refurbishment is finished, we’ve heard that the idea has fallen foul of fire regulations, and won’t be able to go ahead.

However, since car-parking is now completely banned in the historic city centre, we have asked for the row of cycle stands in front of Sainsbury’s to be extended. This area is desperately short of cycle-parking. When I mentioned the possibility, one of our members said he’d actually start shopping there again if more parking were installed.

(It’s early days yet, but this could be the first addition to City Centre cycle parking I’m aware of since our report of suggestions around three years ago!)

Cycle Parking

Ridgeon’s on Cromwell Road have kindly agreed to stock Sheffield stands in their Ironmongery Department. They now carry a supply of galvanised and black-plastic-coated stands, made by Velopa. Their price of £59 (plus VAT) compares quite reasonably with the cost of mail-order suppliers, when delivery charges are taken into account.

Interestingly, since two bikes park at one Sheffield stand, the price also compares quite reasonably with £50.80 (plus VAT) which would buy two ‘wheel bender’ or ‘butterfly’ units.

We were reminded of the need for this sub-group recently, with the appearance of wheel benders at the entrance to the refurbished Octopus DIY store on Tenison Road. City Council parking standards quite clearly state that cycle parking facilities should enable frames to be locked to a fixed point. We plan to write to the manager, with names of suppliers of Sheffield stands (including Ridgeon’s – part of the same company as Octopus).

Coincidentally, we have been contacted by two police officers from Parkside. They are lobbying to improve cycle parking provision in the city centre, as a crime reduction measure. We will of course be offering our support and assistance in this important endeavour.

Our planned report and information sheets on cycle parking are still in progress (having suffered somewhat from the amount of time that the Science Park has consumed of late). In the meantime, we have put together some information on our Web site, namely:

- A Spotter’s Guide to Cambridge Cycle Parking
- Guide to Cycle Parking Suppliers

If you don’t have Internet access, and would like printed copies, just ask us.

Science Park Access

This group has been very active recently. We have:

- surveyed four entrances
- written a report
- issued a press release
- met Steve Sillery of Bidwells to begin discussions of cycling issues
- successfully objected to a planning application to close one access into the park
- met an engineer to discuss the imminent widening of the access road

Back in September, Campaign member Stefan Kaye pointed out that one of the ways into the Science Park, from Garry Drive, had just become considerably harder to navigate. One of the gaps in the hedge near the disused St Ives railway line had been closed off by building work.

This prompted us to run a survey, to see just how important this entrance was to people walking and cycling to the Science Park.

On Thursday 24 September, we counted all movements into the Park, via four different entrances, from 7.30 am to 9.30 am. We wanted to know:

- the modal split – the percentage of bikes, pedestrians and cars, and
- the proportion of pedestrians and cyclists using each entrance.

*Sketch map of the Science Park*

The Laser-Scan entrance is likely to be used much more by people leaving at the end of the working day than in the morning hours when we ran our survey.

It isn’t really surprising that the figures for the Origin entrance are so high. As the queue of north-bound cars lengthens, it’s difficult for bikes to pass on the road, and this entrance provides a convenient way in.

The first surprise was that cycles represented as much as 10.7% of movements into the Science Park. I spent the entire two hours...
going from entrance to entrance, checking that things were
going smoothly, and giving counters the occasional break. It
certainly didn’t feel to me like there were so many cycle
journeys. The constant stream of cars through the main
entrance was so conspicuous, while cyclists were gliding past.
Also, the main entrance accounts for only just over a quarter of
cycle traffic, so motorists don’t realise that cyclists and
pedestrians are appearing through other routes.

We found that, even after the entrance on the south of the park
(via Garry Drive) had been made so much harder to use, it still
accounted for nearly a fifth (18.9%) of all cycle traffic, and
nearly a quarter of pedestrian movements.

To put this into perspective, use of this unofficial entrance
involves wheeling your bike along a disused railway line, over
two steep and slippery earth banks, and through undergrowth! The fact that it is so heavily used despite all these problems
shows just how important it is.

The full report of this survey is available on our Web site and at
our Saturday stall.

Just by chance, as a result of this survey work, we heard that
there was a planning application lodged with South
Cambridgeshire District Council to run a security fence along the
entire length of the south side of the Science Park. Although we
could understand the need for security, we felt that the access
was so important to cyclists and pedestrians that we objected to
the application, just in time. We were surprised that there was
no notice of the planning application placed at a well-known,
even if unofficial, entrance.

Trinity College, via their agents Bidwells, gave us a very
welcome written assurance that the new fence would not be
installed until a planned new access road from Cambridge
Regional College is opened. However, we felt that this new route
would be a significant deterrent for people coming, especially on
foot, from the Arbury area.

We suggested instead that a gate should be installed in the new
security fence, and that it should be locked overnight. This way,
security could be improved without discouraging walking and
cycling.

The goal posts then moved slightly, and the main problem
became the fact that people were crossing private land, namely
the disused St Ives railway line. So we investigated, and found
that there had already been initial contact with Railtrack, with a
view to using this land for a cycle route, and the idea had not
been dismissed. Although it was very early in the process, it
therefore seemed unreasonable to close the entrance on this
basis.

It then seemed that the goal posts moved again. Complaints
from Garry Drive residents now entered the picture. Whilst we
could understand that it was unfair for a few motorists to park in
Garry Drive and walk in, to avoid the evening queues, this didn’t
seem a valid reason to force at least 57 cyclists a day to
to negotiate the many lanes of traffic on Milton Road, or detour via
Cambridge Regional College.

As I write this, I have just heard that South Cambridgeshire’s
Planning Committee has decided to grant permission for the
security fence, provided that:

- it is not installed before the new access road is open
- there is a gate for cyclists and pedestrians to use, at some
suitably agreed hours

Obviously we are very
relieved at this
outcome.

The timing of
all this was
rather
unfortunate, as
we were just
about to meet
Steve Sillery, of
Bidwells (the
company that
manages the
Science Park
for Trinity
College) to
begin general
discussions of
cycling issues.
However, our
planning
objection didn’t
prevent us from
having a very positive and helpful meeting. We are also pleased
that Bidwells have lent their support to the Travel for Work
scheme.

**Cycle access (left) and pedestrian access (right), by entrance**

**A cyclist struggles to get a bike through the more awkward of the two routes in on the south side of the Science Park**

**Widening the Science Park access**

Contractors are about to begin work to widen the main entrance
to the Science Park. There will soon be two inbound lanes
instead of one, and three exit lanes instead of two. Traffic lights
will be installed on one arm of the junction, to be operated only
in the evening peak.

A shared-use path is also being created. We wrote to Bidwells
and the County Council earlier this year, with a number of
suggestions of areas that could be improved. I’m pleased to say
that staff at the County have since requested that some of our
suggestions be implemented. In particular, two ‘safety barriers’,
which would have made life extremely inconvenient on this path,
have been removed from the plan.

We also had some more detailed suggestions to improve
integration of the path with the network at either end. At Steve
Sillery’s suggestion, we contacted Bidwells’ consultant engineer
and have had a useful site meeting.

A general theme, which we see repeated elsewhere in
Cambridge, is that it is hard to obtain details of privately funded
road works. In contrast, schemes led by the County Council
these days tend to be effectively and systematically consulted
upon, and the quality of our feedback seems to be valued.
Similarly, we tend to hear too little, too late, about some
‘accident remedial measures.’ The changes made at the Quy
interchange with the A14 earlier this year are a fine example of
poor consultation.
Saab, Volvo and BMW are all running adverts at the moment showing their cars against a blurred background, giving the impression of speed. ‘Simple statistics will tell you that the new BMW M Coupe is a car built for circuits that are a lot more testing than the M25.’ [The Saab 95] slices through the air with a speed, ease, silence and stability that must be experienced to be understood. The culture of cars is one of speed.

But speed kills. And speed intimidates. Country lanes, once quiet and still narrow, see huge volumes of commuter and leisure traffic they weren’t designed to take, travelling at speeds which put off most cyclists. In urban areas speed not only causes collisions: it also puts people off crossing the road or cycling along it. On motorways, traffic cruising at 90 mph uses fuel far faster than, say, at 55 mph, contributing to global warming and pollution, and making rail journeys unattractive in comparison (even though the law is broken to do it).

Those are just a few of the reasons why it is sensible to reduce traffic speeds. More than anything, though, speed reflects a culture of impatience and frustration, one that many of us don’t want to be involved with. Motor traffic has effectively taken our roads away from us. Changing attitudes to speed means changing driving culture. Such a change in culture would in turn make cycling a more attractive proposition.

### The Slower Speeds Initiative

We included a leaflet from the Slower Speeds Initiative with Newsletter 17. This is a coalition of national campaign groups: the Children’s Play Council, CTC (Cyclists’ Touring Club), Environmental Transport Association, Pedestrians’ Association, Pedestrian Policy Group, RoadPeace, Road Danger Reduction Forum, Sustrans and Transport 2000. In November, we invited Don Mathew, who chairs the Slower Speeds Initiative, to speak at our general meeting with a view to campaigning on this issue locally.

The Slower Speeds Initiative wants to see many of the same kinds of thing we do:

- A general reduction of speed limits on all classes of road
- A much higher profile for the Government’s Kill Your Speed campaign
- Government and industry acceptance of the need to control speed using ‘in-car technology’
- Greater resources for good-quality ‘traffic calming’
- Much better enforcement of existing limits, through more speed cameras and greater police action

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...continued from page 13

I feel we can be confident of improved communications with Bidwells now, but on the broader issue of general consultation when developers deal directly with local authorities, we still have quite a way to go.

### Safety on the road

We are in the process of launching a major new subgroup to look at the many issues affecting cyclists’ safety. This will be a big addition to our campaigning work.

### Chisholm Trail

This is the route along the railway line that Jim Chisholm proposed a few months ago. (Members more cultured than me might have realised that the name was a literary allusion, to the Wild West. This was news to me!) We need to start promoting this route, and a subgroup is our usual strategy.

And finally, as mentioned elsewhere, I would like to hear from anyone who cycles to or from Cambridge railway station regularly, with a view to setting up an informal network of users.
There has been an early success. The Government has announced a national review of speed policy. This is not just about speed limits, but the whole way traffic speeds are handled.

Transport Minister Lord Whitty launched the review in November, saying that cutting vehicle speeds would save lives, cut accidents, lower vehicle emissions and lead to more efficient use of roads. Effective speed management would play a crucial role in developing an integrated transport strategy.

However, his words were tempered by suggestions that the economy might be harmed by lower limits: ‘The effects of speed are highly complex and felt beyond the vital area of road safety.

A pedestrian hit by a car at 40 mph has only a 15% chance of surviving. At 30 mph this rises to 55%, and at 20 mph survival chances are 95%.

To create a comprehensive and successful speed policy we need to see how it affects the economy, how much it will reduce vehicle emissions and improve people’s quality of life. Only by taking account of all these elements will effective speed management help develop a successful integrated transport system.’

The review of speed policy will be a three-stage project, with the first phase exploring existing research on traffic speed and its effect. Phase two will involve the Department consulting people and organisations who can make a valuable contribution to the subject. The final stage will be to draw conclusions and prepare a report, which will take about a year.

**Speed Cameras need help**

One point of recent years is the very limited use of speed cameras. The problem is that the money they raise, fines does not get recycled into the running costs and installation of new cameras. Therefore they can’t be as widely used as they might be. The money must come from local authority funds. Many organisations (including the police and the Campaign) have made representations about this, but with no success so far.

Speed cameras are demonstrably successful. When they were installed on Newmarket Road there was a reduction of around a third in the number of accidents. Up-to-the-minute figures show that on Huntingdon Road speeding offences have more than halved and collisions and their severity have been cut enormously. On the A603 at Harlton, the (high) speed limit is now being obeyed where it was clearly being widely ignored before.

Sergeant Gerry Howard of Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s Enforcement Unit says: ‘All the evidence indicates that where cameras are installed, they are an effective deterrent to speeding motorists. These figures show a dramatic decrease both in the number of speeding offences and of accidents, so it is obvious that the cameras are working.’

Cambridgeshire has only one 20 mph zone, in Romsey. This is managed with rather severe traffic calming – which is also uncomfortable for cyclists and limits which streets we can use (although St Philip’s Road was at least made two-way for bikes). The awkwardness of the speed humps (see Newsletter 18) means that the scheme has less than universal support in the area. Yet in England and Wales at present, this is the only way to establish slower speed zones. We think it should be possible to establish 20 mph areas as standard, without necessarily using all this hardware. Some of the lesser through roads (Mill Road is an obvious example) would benefit enormously too. Home Zones – slower speed areas based on the Dutch concept of Woonerf, where the carriageway is no longer the central feature of a street and where responsibilities of road users can be reversed – are not completely possible yet in this country, but should be.

Even without this, we have seen that much more could be done in Cambridge. On our recent visit to York, for example, we saw many more examples of widely traffic-calmed areas, using the more cycle-friendly speed-cushions (which leave gaps for bikes to get through).

While there are many areas we could work on, three areas for particular focus were brought up at the November meeting. All have to do with challenging the culture of speed.

- Opening up dialogue with the police, and using the system that exists to get them to make speeding a particular strategic target
- Challenging provocative car advertising
- Speed cameras, particularly the funding mechanism and speeding up court proceedings

We will also, no doubt, be making representations about future traffic calming. While more 20 mph zones are probable, with our support, ultimately perhaps we should be aiming at a City-wide speed limit of 20 mph.

David Earl
The issue of motorists parking in cycle lanes has cropped up on numerous occasions recently, in a variety of circumstances, so I’ve been paying more attention than usual to parked vehicles.

The problem is actually much broader than I first realised. It’s not just bike lanes that are disregarded by some motorists. Bus lanes, and restrictions outside schools and at pedestrian crossings are routinely ignored too. People who drive motor vehicles seem to think that if they’re off the carriageway, they’re out of the way. They wouldn’t dream of blocking other cars, but a significant minority don’t seem to care about blocking pedestrians and cyclists at all.

First, the rules

There are two sorts of on-carriageway cycle lane:

- Mandatory ones, marked with a solid white line. The word mandatory here means that motor vehicles may not enter them. Cyclists are allowed to cross the line.
- Advisory ones, marked with a dashed white line. These simply advise drivers to travel a bit further over to the right. Gilbert Road in Cambridge is a much-quoted example. Just when you need the lane most, at busy times, it’s covered with parked cars, who unfortunately have every right to be there.

The meaning of single and double yellow lines is not as simple as it might be. They indicate ‘no waiting’, not ‘no loading and unloading.’

The Highway Code (currently, rules 138–140) gives chapter and verse on where motorists can and cannot park, including restrictions at pedestrian crossings and outside schools.

Local hot spots

People’s perception of the magnitude of the problem varies depending on where they travel in the city.

For example, a number of members have pointed out that on King Street, at the junction with Malcolm Street, there are frequently cars parked in the mandatory cycle lane. Contractors find the cycle path on the Malcolm Street pavement a convenient place to park, too. We have written to the City Council, asking for the CCTV camera pointed directly at the offending cars on King Street to be used to provide evidence to enforce the regulations. This may require a change in the CCTV guidelines in order to be possible.

The gap at the junction of Market Street and Sidney Street, which exempts cyclists from the Sidney Street No Entry sign, seems to be a handy place for contractors to place equipment. (Mind you, the gap is really on the wrong side of the road, so not all cyclists use it anyway.)

The contraflow cycle lane on Pembroke Street and Downing Street seems to be fair game for delivery vehicles, which force cyclists out into two lanes of oncoming traffic.

I’ve even seen a taxi parked in the short stretch of mandatory cycle lane at the Bridge Street bollards. This completely blocked cyclists’ right of way, just at the point where buses are swinging into your path at the best of times. He was very conveniently parked right by a phone box, but unfortunately he returned to his vehicle just as I was about to phone it in. He may not realise it, but he has single-handedly set my heart on getting a mobile phone!

I frequently see cars parked two-abreast, in the bus, bike and taxi lane, by the take-away shops on Milton Road, close to Mitcham’s Corner. Motorists seem to be making increasing use of the bus lanes on Newmarket Road, too, albeit not for parking.

Elsewhere, along Barton Road, the older section of cycle track is seen as a convenient place to park cars and wheelie bins.

However, just occasionally someone restores my faith in humanity. I recently heard of a car parked beside the mandatory cycle lane in Gwydir Street, close to the Mill Road

Bateman Street

Downing Street

This motorist broke down on Downing Street. Better not block the cars – let’s leave it in the cycle lane instead.

Newmarket Road
What’s to be done?

In London, the City of Westminster’s Road Safety Unit and Department of Education and Leisure have got together to produce an excellent leaflet for people Driving Children to School. It talks about the numbers of children killed going to and from school each year and the hazards that parked cars outside entrances present. It promotes the alternatives, such as walking all or part of the way. And it goes on to explain the Keep Clear markings outside schools. (Not that they should need explaining, of course.)

This is a much more focused and informative approach than the more general ‘Cyclists Beware, Beware Cyclists’ one taken in Cambridgeshire. Instead of discouraging people from using sustainable transport, it promotes alternatives to the private car whilst simultaneously addressing the source of danger. We have a dozen copies of the Westminster leaflet if anyone is interested in seeing it.

As for enforcement, Cambridgeshire Constabulary is currently blitzing cyclists riding without lights. I have no problem with this. The law clearly states that bike lights are required on the highway after dark.

However, I wonder whether a similar campaign could be run in future, complete with publicity in the local press, targeting illegal car parking?

In the meantime, to report a problem, phone the traffic wardens at Parkside on 358966. If you are lucky, and one of our over-stretched traffic wardens is in the area, there will be a response.

And finally on enforcement, a couple of gems from the Transport White Paper that I really enjoyed. Recently, more London buses have been equipped with cameras so that car drivers who use or obstruct bus lanes can be caught and prosecuted. And London Transport is to offer traffic wardens (sorry, parking attendants) free travel passes, allowing them to ride on buses and target illegal parking in bus lanes!

Clare Macrae

The Estate We’re In

A new book by Nicola Baird

Nicola Baird’s book is accurately subtitled Who’s Driving Car Culture? It is written in a highly journalistic style, with a mass of facts, anecdotes, interviews and humorous side-tunings all about society’s love affair with the car, and its consequences.

The book follows through the idea that a car is not simply about getting from A to B. Baird examines the advertising culture that promotes sex, speed, status and safety. Safety for the occupants, that is. In 1997, Ford spent well over £72 million on advertising. Around 12% of TV advertising is for cars. In 1995–6 Rover Group spent £42.9 million on advertising compared with £18,000 by Stagecoach on rail, £9 million by Eurostar – and £83,000 by Friends of the Earth.

Baird quotes research which shows that ‘12 percent of Britons actually spend more time in their car than they do with their family’. She goes on to say ‘Twenty years ago Ivan Illich’s classic book Energy and Equity graphically pointed out that drivers’ refusal to do their sums explained why industrial societies stayed wedded to their cars: the typical American devotes 30 hours a week to his car.’

The book looks at some of the alternatives to the car, and people’s experiences of them. It’s a bit light on cycling. Colin Graham of the CTC is quoted as saying: ‘we want to move away from this populist view that what cyclists want is off-road provision… We know that most journeys are under five miles, ideal for cycling, and we already have a road network which is door-to-door.’

The book looks at some of the protests and actions that have surrounded the car – and is bang up to date. Reclaim the Streets demos, Twyford Down and Newbury are all familiar. Less well known actions get a look in, like the Brighton group so fed up with pavement parking that they took direct action by moving the vehicles. Trouble is, the police weren’t in the least interested in the driver’s offences, only in the people who tried to do something about them.

The first chapter, Cars R Us, sets the tone: ‘this book does not blame car drivers for the state we’re in. After all, anyone in a vehicle can be driven mad, every day, by the traffic… we all want to drive, we all have a right to drive: and that’s the problem.’ In among the seriousness of pollution statistics and how Oxford has managed to stabilise traffic levels for 20 years, Nicola Baird takes us behind the scenes with an AA patrol. ‘The weather predicts our workload’ explains Frank. Everyone has an AA story: people in full wedding gear… and people who’ve been willing to tamper with their car so it breaks down on the long haul from Scotland to get a tow back to their home.’

The light-hearted style makes The Estate We’re In an easy read, but one in which the indictment of car culture shines through. And it contains lots of very useful sound bites which you may just see again in these pages in times to come.

The Estate We’re In is published by Indigo at £7.99, ISBN 0-575-40156-7. I found my copy in the motoring section of Waterstone’s.

David Earl
A few months ago I stopped PC Mark Lappin, West Chesterton Beat Officer, cycling across Midsummer Common, to ask him if we could do an interview for the Newsletter. He kindly agreed.

How many cycling police are there in each of the Cambridge sectors? In the City of Cambridge there are three Sectors. They are North Sector, (where I am based), South Sector and City Centre Unit. All Community Beat Officers in all 3 Sectors have access to cycles, about 15 officers in all. As well as the CBOs, there are a number of Traffic Wardens who use bikes.

How long have there been cycling police in Cambridge? I can't really say how long, although the bike was here before the car!

Do the cycling officers receive any sort of special training? No.

What sort of bikes do you ride? Most officers have police-issued Dawes cycles. Those officers that don't have Dawes bikes are given unclaimed mountain bikes from the Cambridge cycle store.

How are they maintained? By a local cycle shop.

Are you given any special clothing? The only special clothing issued to officers is a cycle helmet. This is not worn by all officers as some prefer the police custodian helmet, because they can leave the bike when they get to their beat and go on foot patrol. All police officers are issued with reflective jackets, which are worn by most officers when cycling.

What do you feel are the advantages of policing by bike? As well as being more accessible to the community, officers on bikes are able to get to places inaccessible by car. They are also able to patrol more of their beat during a shift.

Any disadvantages? It can be cold and wet during the winter months!

How does patrolling with a cycle compare with patrolling with a car? It compares favourably. In fact in a City as 'grid locked' as Cambridge, cycle officers are likely to arrive at a scene before officers in cars.

Do you enjoy patrolling on a cycle? In the main, yes I do.

Any other comments? Parkside has its own Cycle Squad, and they have supplied these facts and figures.

- There are approximately 300 recovered bikes in our cycle store
- Of all the bikes found, only 1 in 4 is recovered by the owner
- Cycle store have an auction of unclaimed bikes about every 10–12 weeks
- Bikes are kept in the store for only one month, after which time they are auctioned
- Losers should visit the cycle store every 2 weeks
- Less than a third of losers know their cycle frame number
- Of all bikes stolen, bikes locked to themselves or left unlocked account for 51%

Of the last 100 cycle reports completed, 15 were unlocked, 36 were locked but not attached to anything else, 8 were locked to another cycle, and 41 were locked to another object. Of those locked to an object, 15 had D locks, 21 used padlock and chain and five used cable or combination locks.

Lastly there is a Cycle Campaign running in North Sector between 2nd and 16th November. In the interests of public safety, all police staff within North Sector will be engaging in a campaign of:

- Awareness
- Education
- Enforcement

Cyclists should be aware of the following:

Cycling without lights during the hours of darkness is dangerous and many people find it offensive. Riding without lights on a highway during the hours of darkness is against the law. Look after your cycle, mark it, remember the mark and lock it. Officers will stop and deal firmly with anyone found committing offences on cycles and they will also ask these cyclists to confirm ownership of the cycle.

When I went to Parkside to take a photo of PC Lappin, I took the opportunity to ask a few more questions of various officers.

Does Parkside still offer a cycle postcoding service? We had to stop stamping postcodes on bikes, because of the variety of new alloys being used. The risk of damage to frames, and of liability, was just too high. The process invalidated the guarantee on new bikes, too. We do now sometimes use ultra-violet inks, though, and kits for this can be found in shops easily.

The cycle store at Parkside police station. If your bike is stolen, check here every two weeks; recovered cycles are kept for only one month.
Do you have a DataTag scanner, for identifying recovered bikes? Yes. We also have a direct link to the central database, so we can check bikes identified by DataTag. The trouble is, though, that there are now so many different schemes for registering bikes.

We've heard about an idea for some police bikes having transmitter devices so they can be tracked if stolen. Is this still being done? Yes. Once we got over potential problems of entrapment, we've found it to be effective, and an idea that's still in use.

We are concerned about the definition of Road Traffic Accidents, and whether cyclists are counted. We are one of the few forces in the country that logs single-cycle incidents on the highway. However, off-road incidents are not recorded.

Are Fixed Penalty Notices now being issued to cyclists riding illegally on pavements? No. So far as we know, there is no rule that allows us to do so.

In the space of one week, I've now met eight different officers at Parkside! I certainly came away with the sense that many issues we care about are already being taken seriously. We'll be talking more over the coming months about issues that concern cyclists (and pedestrians too) and about what can be done. In the meantime, if you have had any experience of cycle theft, or anything discussed here, please do let us know of your experiences.

Clare Macrae

Can You Help?

As Co-ordinator, one of the things about Cambridge Cycling Campaign I most value is so many people’s willingness to contribute time and support. Many members contribute significant amounts of time and energy, in many ways, to keep building the Campaign. Thank you.

We know that not everyone wants, or is able, to take an active part in the Campaign. That's fine by us. Every membership and renewal is valuable to us in its own right, in strengthening our voice. (For example, I belong to a few other transport-related organisations, to support them, with no chance of getting more involved.)

I'm writing this because one or two people have said recently that it looks like a few people in the Campaign have 'got it pegged' and that it looks like there isn't really anything useful anyone else can contribute.

In fact, we depend on input, ideas and suggestions from members, but time is our biggest limitation, especially during the working day. There are all sorts of things we could do, that would help our work, and that don’t have to require any particular experience or knowledge.

For example, we only sit in on Council Committee Meetings if there’s a vote we feel particularly strongly about. And then, typically, someone will take an afternoon off work to go along and just take notes of who said what. Occasionally, we spend time counting journeys, and that also takes time.

So this is a gentle plea to those of you who might be able to spare us the occasional hour or two, especially in the working day. If you think you might be able to lend an occasional hand, please get in touch with me, or phone the usual Campaign number.

We promise not to put pressure on you to do anything you don’t want to do, or don’t have time for. There are lots of ways to help:

- Just join!
- Come along to one of our Open Meetings
- Lend a hand on our Saturday stall (give Sarah a ring on Cambridge 366152)
- Join a sub-group if one interests you
- Help a friend to start cycling (tell them about quiet routes; give them a copy of 0n Your Bike magazine for advice and inspiration; ride with them on their regular journey)
- Tell a friend about the Campaign
- Help with administration and filing (I’m continually snowed under with post and newspaper cuttings!)
- Come along one Friday evening when we stuff newsletters into envelopes – it’s fun, and a good way to meet other members
- Write a letter on something you feel strongly about
- Join us at the Zebra after a monthly meeting or on the third Monday of each month, to share your ideas.

Clare Macrae
Cycling shorts

We have written to the organisers of Cambridge Folk Festival, asking for temporary cycle parking to be provided next year, along the lines of the scaffolding we use at the cyclists’ breakfast each year.

Marks and Spencer’s Food and Wine Department in Cambridge has recently launched a home-delivery service. A £5 fee gets your food delivered anywhere within a 5-mile radius. (There is a sliding price scale depending on the amount you have spent.) You nominate a two hour time-slot in which the food will arrive. Robert Sayle also runs a long-established free delivery service. These are welcome services for those who don’t drive in Cambridge.

New parking restrictions in Cambridge city centre came into force on October 19. Car parking is now prohibited at all times within the pedestrian zone streets, with some exceptions. My first version of this snippet remarked that there were still plenty of parked cars. However, I have just heard that for the first two weeks, cars were being leafleted, to explain the new restrictions. There have also been discussions with traders about enforcement. And only now are tickets being issued. I am impressed.

We have heard on the grapevine that the County Council has appointed a Bus Campaigner. How about a Cycle Campaigner?

The County’s Environment and Transport Committee recently decided that ‘concern be expressed to Government about the withdrawal of the scheme to widen the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon and consequently Officers work with others locally to press for early commencement of and involvement in the A14 corridor study to be commissioned by DETR, in order to secure the earliest resolution of the unacceptably high level of congestion on this route.’

The purpose of the so-called ‘multi-modal corridor study’ is to examine the potential benefits of all possible modes of transport along the entire corridor. Thus, for example, public transport along the old St Ives line will be considered. It is not simply a way to get the A14 widened. I trust that, despite this motion, the study will get fair treatment locally. We will seek to be involved in the process, to put the cycling point of view.

The County Council has been contacting all schools, to expand the Safer Routes to School project. This is ‘designed to discourage unnecessary car journeys by encouraging parents to walk or cycle with their children to school, increasing the children’s health, fitness and independence.’ There is plenty of scope to reduce congestion this way. 51% of those travelling to school by car live less than one mile from school. 34% of parents who drive their children to school go straight back home. 54% of children currently travelling to school by car said that, given the choice, they would rather cycle to school.

We have heard that this year’s Fen Cycle Package (a bid for Government funds to develop a cycle network in the Fens) will fail. This will be the second year that funding will be refused, for reasons I don’t quite understand. But it seems that the County Council has been treated unfairly on this matter twice now.

Cambridge City Council has allocated £10 000 to minor cycling works this year, in addition to the general budget which is going into the big schemes in sequence (like Barton Road, which is taking up this whole budget for a couple of years). Because we expressed deserved enthusiasm for Midsummer Common’s cattle grids, it is likely that most of this new money will be spent on replacing four of the pinch stiles or gates with grids. There should be a little money to go on some cycle parking too – and we have asked for the south end of Regent Street to be first in line there.

The County Council recently unveiled a new aerial photograph survey of the county. Photos will be on display in Heffers and the new survey will be available for sale both as prints and in digital form for computer use.

Early results from the Travel for Work surveys look very interesting. Full results should be out just as this Newsletter goes to the printers, so we hope to have a full report next time.

At the Trinity Forum’s recent discussion on the Integrated Transport White Paper, the County’s Director of Environment and Transport stated that there is now an acceptance that shared use has failed, and no more will be created. Strange. Shared use is still very much on the cards in Milton.

My favourite typo of the month: seen in a letter about planning: Correction: Phase 1b, line 1: ‘Hoses’ should read ‘Houses’.

Clare Macrae
Signs of the times

The County Council is proposing to improve the signposting on the inner ring road to make it easier for essential traffic to find its way to destinations in the City Centre.

Their proposal is to divide the City Centre into ‘zones’, each with a suitable name. New road signs would then be erected on the inner ring road that directed drivers around the ring road to the most appropriate access point for each zone. The idea is that this will reduce the number of drivers who get ‘lost’ in the city centre when they discover that their way is blocked with a road closure or restricted street.

The council is hoping that the idea of ‘zones’ will catch on and that people in the city centre will add the name of their zone to their postal address.

The Cycling Campaign has generally welcomed these proposals. It is very much in the interests of cyclists for drivers to find an appropriate route to their destination. Anybody who has been stuck behind a large lorry which whose driver has just discovered that her route ahead is blocked by a road closure or pedestrian zone will know the nuisance caused by drivers who do not know where they are going.

We have asked, however, that any new signing be carefully designed so it does not encourage drivers to enter the city centre who do not have a legitimate reason to go there. We have suggested that the new signs should make it clear that different routes apply to cyclists. As an example of what we had in mind, we drew a possible sign on Castle Street southbound showing directions to the King’s Parade area. This would instruct drivers to turn right into Northampton Street and round the ring road to Silver Street. We said that it should also make it clear that cyclists should take a different route – straight ahead (into Magdalene Street) – to get to the same place.

We also proposed additional signing specifically for cyclists to show the route through the city centre to each zone. Nigel Deakin

Bicycle Maintenance

When I realised that my brake blocks were wearing down, I started looking for a class where I could learn the secret, magic way of replacing them. Then the Campaign distributed a leaflet advertising David Green’s course at Coleridge Community College, so I enrolled, not realising my luck as it’s currently the only such course in Cambridge.

This is the first time David has given the course, which shows a little bit (I believe he thought we might progress a bit faster than we are), but he is a good teacher – he even copes with me and I’m not the world’s best student. The number of pupils is strictly limited, and I think he got the number about right. We still have to work in pairs, but I can’t see any way around that (I only grumble because I’m not very good at it).

Since we’re working on our own bikes, what we learn is immediately useful. The approach is perhaps a little old-fashioned (liquid paraffin as a solvent and oil for lubricating chains) but it’s very pragmatic and makes sense.

Are the lessons worthwhile? Yes, definitely. Right from the first I was learning new confidence in working on my bike. We’re doing things I would never have dared do, such as maintaining hubs, and bottom brackets are slated for a later lesson. With more practice by myself, I think I might even be reasonably good at it.

Oh, and did I learn the secret, magic way of replacing brake blocks? Well, no, but I can now do it the normal slow, fiddly way, which is good enough.

Regional thinking

I suspect there will be few people unaware of the changes taking place in government in Scotland and Wales. But I wonder how many are aware of changes in England?

There is much emphasis on a move towards regional decision-making and regional assemblies are being formed. Each region seems to be making its own decisions about who will be represented. It seems clear that there will not be enough spaces, for example, for all the environmental organisations that might want one. This process potentially places an extra workload on local campaigns, and so regional umbrella organisations are being formed. The one for our area is called STEER (Sustainable Transport and Environment for the Eastern Region). It already has a fine track record of lobbying and carrying out research.

Our own campaigning work will continue to focus on the Cambridge area. But we have joined STEER and support it fully.

As a young organisation, STEER needs funds of its own, and its organisers are actively seeking donations. Sorry for the TV style, but if you can afford it, please do send a cheque (made payable to STEER) to STEER, 213 College Road, Norwich, NR2 3JD

Clare Macrae
National cycle campaigners’ conference

Held in London in October, this was probably the largest UK gathering of cycle campaigners in living memory.

Keynote speaker Glenda Jackson (who chairs the National Cycling Forum) gave a very impressive overview of national policy. I definitely had the impression that she genuinely understood the issues. From the audience, the sense was that we’ve won the policy debate nationally. But the problem is getting some of the policies implemented at a local level.

Ms Jackson went on to present the awards to the three winners of the first National Cycling Awards. It was suggested that these should be named Glendas in her honour!

One eagle-eyed campaign member spotted that the National Cycling Awards were listed on BBC1 CEEFAX’s local news! Except they called it the ‘Cambridge Friendly Employers’ Scheme.

Because of the sheer size of this gathering, there wasn’t quite the usual opportunity to meet fellow campaigners, and hear about the previous six months. However, I did attend some very interesting presentations. In the most thought-provoking one, Carol Freeman, of Sustrans, led a session entitled ‘More Bums on Saddles’ on how to increase cycling levels. It largely consisted of details about the National Cycle Network, but she did pose a very interesting question:

Which of these three is the most important to encourage more people to cycle:

- Provision (building more routes)
- Promotion (publicising cycling)
- Policy (at a national level)

The audience was roughly equally divided in their opinion. However, Carol Freeman’s assertion was that they were all equally important, and if any single one were missing, we could not reach the targets.

This made me wonder about just how much promotion of cycling goes on in Cambridgeshire and whether more could be done. I am aware of the following:

- Safer Routes to Schools (promoting cycling and walking)
- Cycle Friendly Employers’ scheme
- TravelWise

Amongst the many things we do, our Saturday stall has been our main method of promoting cycling. The cycle map we are working on, in conjunction with Adhoc and the County Council, will also prove to be a good promotion tool. After all, new cyclists need to decide where to cycle.

Through the Travel for Work initiative, we hope to begin work soon on an Adult Cycle Training scheme along the lines of the one in York.

And nationally, the magazine On Your Bike continues to promote cycling as a means of transport and fun. I’ve mused about the idea of distributing this informative, realistic and positive publication somehow in bulk locally, to offer help and encouragement to people who might be thinking about starting cycling. If you want to see your own copy, you should be able to find it in Halfords. I understand that a deal may recently have been struck with W H Smith too.

Steve Sillery, of Bidwells, also recently told us he believed promotion of cycling was probably the single most important thing we could work on.

We welcome suggestions. How can we best promote cycling? What do you think is most likely to encourage more people to cycle instead of driving?

Clare Macrae
Carfree commuting

Do you think that there are too few cars in Cambridge? I don’t, so I decided to try to make a difference. Let me explain how I travel into Cambridge.

I live in Fenstanton (12 miles to the west). Rather than take my car in to work, I catch the bus. I get off at Fitzwilliam College. Here I have an old bike camouflaged amongst the students’ cycles. I unlock my bike and ride the two miles in to work. On the way back I reverse the procedure.

This provides the benefits of:
- Saving time
- No sitting in traffic jams
- No problems parking. A bike can be left outside a shop, locked up at work, etc
- Cost. This approach is much cheaper and, perhaps more importantly, it is much better for the environment and the residents of Cambridge.

The problems are:
- Complexity. You have to be aware of and synchronise yourself to when the buses run.
- Your journey is fragmented. This makes it a little more complex than getting in your car and driving. But is that really too hard for you to do?
- You have to find a place where your bike is secure.

This brings me to the last point in this homily. I think this method of travelling into and around Cambridge has promising possibilities. Every person on a bike or on a bus is one fewer in a car. Could you make a contribution to calming the traffic chaos? Could your trip to work be made ‘carless’ like this?

What is needed is a selection of locations to provide security for bikes locked up overnight. Two possibilities could be bike sheds at the Park and Ride sites or the evolution of ‘cycle pubs.’

If you think this is a Good Idea, please write in. Kieran Toner

Camcycle Bulletin

In October the Cycling Campaign produced the first of a new series of briefing sheets called *Camcycle Bulletin*. The Bulletin is aimed at ‘movers and shakers’ – people like Councillors, Council Officers, MPs, and also other campaign groups across the country who we haven’t so far been able to send our newsletter to. While this newsletter is distributed widely, we couldn’t, for example, afford to send it to every City, County and South Cambridgeshire councillor (there are around 150 of them). We also recognise that they would not all read it.

So the idea of a Bulletin is to provide a more focused campaigning tool, attractively presented and with specific requests for action. It will also give the target audience some background in what is going on in cycling policy nationally. We have been able to produce the first edition in colour, which we could not possibly afford to do (at the moment) for something the size of this newsletter. We aim to fit publication around the cycles of County Council committee meetings. This means three or four a year.

The first edition covered:
- support for the city centre Core Traffic Scheme (see page 6)
- one-way streets (based on our recent position paper – see Newsletter 19)
- the dual mini-roundabouts at the end of Trumpington Street (see page 6); and
- how cycling provision means much more than just cycleways, introducing the Hierarchy from *Cycle Friendly Infrastructure*.

We expect the next edition to include an item on slower speeds (see page 14).

We aren’t proposing to send copies to all of you, though, I’m afraid. The cost of production would be just too high to send one to everybody, and we cover most of the same ground at more length in these pages. Copies are available, however, on the Saturday stall in the Market Square, and also as a PDF file on the Internet. If you particularly want a copy and you can’t get it from either of those places, just give us a call and we will send one to you. If you would like to contribute to producing the Bulletin, or indeed this newsletter, again please give us a call. The number is on page 2.

David Earl

Small Ad

Free to members of the Campaign, on cycling subjects. 10p per word for non-members or for non-cycling subjects. For free ads, please be as brief as if you were paying for them.

For Sale

Pashley ‘Picador’ tricycle for sale £450. 311828
Cycling Campaign Diary

December

Tue 1 7.30 pm Open Meeting, Friends’ Meeting House, Jesus Lane. Special topic is the Core Traffic Scheme. (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.)

Tues 8 8 pm Maps sub-group meeting, 2a South Road, Impington

Wed 9 8.30 am Newsletter 21 Editorial Review meeting, at Tattles café

Sun 13 2 pm Leisurly Ride. Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road; visit Fen Ditton, Quy, Lode, Little Wilbraham, Great Wilbraham; tea in Fulbourn. About 20 miles. A countryside ride, using bridleways and quiet roads, at a gentle pace, and always including a stop at a tea shop or café. We’re usually back in Cambridge by 6 pm. Bring lights.

Fri 18 7.30 pm Christmas party at 8 Thirley Close. All members very welcome

Mon 21 8.30 pm Pub social. We’ll be at the Zebra on Maid’s Causeway

January 1999

Tue 5 7.30 pm Open Meeting, Friends’ Meeting House, Jesus Lane. Special topic Safer Routes to Schools with invited speaker Tara Lammass-Daniell (see 1 December for description)

Fri 8 Newsletter 22 deadline. Send articles for the February issue to the Editor.

Sun 10 2.00 pm Leisurly Ride. Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road; visit Girton, Oakington, Longstanton, Willingham, Rampton, Cottenham and Histon. Under 25 miles, and includes three windmills (see 13 December for description)

Mon 18 8.30 pm Pub social. We’ll be at the Zebra on Maid’s Causeway

Tue 19 7.30 pm Strategy meeting 2 (provisional date). Continuing our long-term planning.

Fri 22 7.30 pm Newsletter 22 envelope stuffing, 8 Thirley Close. Volunteers welcome!

Wed 24 7.30 pm Chisholm Trail sub-group meeting, 8 Thirley Close

February

Tue 2 7.30 pm Open Meeting, Friends’ Meeting House, Jesus Lane. Topic Bikes and Trains with guest speakers from WAGN (see 1 December for description)

Sat 6 STEER meeting in Peterborough

Wed 10 8.30 am Newsletter 22 editorial review meeting, at Tattles café

Sun 13 2.00 pm Leisurly Ride. Meet at Brookside, near Lensfield Road. (see 13 December for description)

Mon 15 8.30 pm Pub social. We’ll be at the Zebra on Maid’s Causeway

Cycling Campaign Subgroups

- Telephone number
- fax
- e-mail address

Chisholm Trail – Promoting a major new cycle route across Cambridge. Jim Chisholm ☎ 841954 Jim.Chisholm@uocs.cam.ac.uk

Cycle Enumeration – Analysing cycle journeys in Cambridge. Dave Earl ☎ 504095 david.earl@sofhome.net

Cycle Parking – Working to improve cycle parking provision throughout Cambridge. Contact Clare ☎ 336024 macrae@ccdc.cam.ac.uk

Hills Road Corridor – Studying the route to Addenbrooke’s. Dave Earl ☎ 504095 david.earl@sofhome.net

Maps – Should we produce a map for Cambridge cyclists? Nigel Deakin ☎ 311073 npd@dial.pipex.com

Newsletter – Co-ordinating this, the Campaign’s newsletter. Editor, Mark Irving ☎ 882378 Mark.irving@home.cam.net.uk

Safety on the Road – To look at the many issues affecting cyclists’ safety. This new group needs a co-ordinator.

Science Park Access – Contact Clare ☎ 336024 macrae@ccdc.cam.ac.uk

Trailer Loan Scheme – Contact Clare ☎ 336024 macrae@ccdc.cam.ac.uk

Other organisations – contacts

Addenbrooke’s Bicycle User Group
Colin Carr ☎ 216726 cc232@hermes.cam.ac.uk

Cambridge City Council (including Highways Department for potholes in the City) ☎ 457000

Cambridge Friends of the Earth
St Michael’s Church Hall, Trinity Street, Cambridge CB2 1SU. ☎ 517509 camfoe@home.cam.net

Cambridgeshire County Council ☎ 717111 (Road Safety ☎ 717385; potholes south of Cambridge ☎ 833717; potholes north of Cambridge ☎ (01353) 667826)

CTC (Cyclists’ Touring Club), Cambridge District Association. Sue Taylor, Secretary ☎ 563414

Cycle-Friendly Employers scheme
Teresa Broadstock, Travel For Work Advisor, Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Authority, Hillview, Fulbourn Hospital, Cambridge CB1 5EF ☎ 475131 Teresa.Broadstock@chh.anglox.nhs.uk

Parkside police station and traffic wardens ☎ 358966. Cycle squad; PC Marcia Bate and PC Tony Kennedy.

South Cambridgeshire District Council ☎ 44000

Sustrans – Nigel Brigham, The Environment & Energy Centre, 33a Westgate, Peterborough PE1 1PZ ☎ (01733) 319981 (01733) 346902

The Slower Speeds Initiative
PO Box 746, Norwich NR2 3LJ

Transport 2000 Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk
Simon Norton, Co-ordinator, ☎ 312654 simon@emu.pmms.cam.ac.uk