



CycleReading

WORKING FOR A CYCLE FRIENDLY READING

www.readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Winter 2009 No. 103

RCC Annual General Meeting

The RCC AGM in April 2008 was packed with members who wanted to hear the spokespersons for the four political parties contending for seats in the local elections. For the RCC Committee it was a gratifying experience to be in the presence of so many members, as we operate for so much of the time without really being in contact. The outcome of that AGM was to improve our impact on the political parties and to let our members in on the local politics of cycling. Of course we are in regular contact with other cyclists, whether at work, on the road or on organised rides. We know what bugs us and what bugs them. We have a monthly stall in the Reading Farmers' Market and on some occasions we have had a stall in Reading town centre, major



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commercial parks or at local festivals. We have newsletter and email contact. These opportunities for communicating with other cyclists and RCC members are not enough.

This year we again plan to keep the routine business in its place - the Officers' reports will be in writing and most will be on our website at least two weeks before the AGM. This will allow us to spend most time in sessions designed to give the Committee a plan of action for the year. You may be a member who has campaigning experience, or briefs you want us to take up. You may be happy to pay your subscription and trust us to come up with the priorities for cycling. Wherever you are coming from we want to meet you and hear from you.

So come to our AGM and do some more for cycling in Reading.

RCC has well over 600 members - the fourth largest local campaigning group in the UK (after London, Lothian and Cambridge). We make representations to the local Councils or they contact us about cycling matters.

Our membership subscription is very low at £3 per head per year (£5 for joint or family membership), yet we have some spare money to spend.

The forthcoming AGM at Reading Town Hall on **27 April 2009** (see page 5) is an opportunity for the RCC Committee to meet members (and vice versa of course) and blow away the cobwebs of what the Committee does or doesn't do with its time and your money.

Council News



Reading Borough Council (RBC)

Second Councillor Becomes Cycle Champion



Cllr Tim Harris

Councillor Tim Harris (Church ward) has recently been appointed by the Reading Conservative Group as their new 'Cycle Champion'. Tim, who describes himself as a 'keen Tri-athlete', becomes the second councillor to take on a specific role of promoting and encouraging cycling. He joins Paul Gittings (Minster ward) who was appointed by the Labour Group as their 'Cycle Champion' in 2007.

If either Tim or Paul is one of your local councillors then do try to meet them at one of their local councillor surgeries - galvanising the support of

our councillors has been one of the biggest achievements of the campaign over the last couple of years.

Tim, who describes himself



The Thames Towpath

our councillors has been one of the biggest achievements of the campaign over the last couple of years.

Thames Towpath

Despite being part of Sustrans National Cycle Route No. 5, an 86m stretch of the Thames Towpath between Reading and Caversham bridges does not enjoy permissive rights for use by cyclists. In 2008 the Campaign assisted in trying to get this stretch of the path designated as a cycle way by proving over 20 years of unopposed usage by cyclists. Unfortunately strong opposition by

local residents and other interest groups has made it unlikely that this will happen. Despite this we will still be pressing for the Thames path in central Reading to be properly surfaced.

Cycle Liaison Group

The newly convened Cycle Liaison Group met for the second time in January and the topics discussed are reported in this section of the newsletter. The meeting was attended by the lead / shadow lead Councillors for Transport for the three political parties (Councillors Page,



working for cycling

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Council News

Willis & Duveen) as well as the two Councillor Cycle Champions (see separate article).

If you think there are strategic issues that need to be discussed at the Cycle Liaison Group, or otherwise raised with the Council, then get in touch via the rbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk email address, or by the RCC phone line (see back cover).

Reading Cycle Map to be Revamped >>

Reading Borough Council is in the process of giving the *Cycling in Reading* map a comprehensive overhaul and those of you on our e-mailing list will have been alerted to the informal consultation sessions on the draft map that took place in the Civic Centre in January. The main aim of the new look is to concentrate on designated routes rather than fragmented cycle lanes, and build on the 'premier cycle routes' concept outlined in the Council's recently adopted Cycle Strategy.

Hardened Reading cyclists will already know the best routes for their normal destinations (as well as those that are best to avoid) and the *Cycling in Reading* map is primarily aimed at those less familiar with the intricacies of cycling on our road network. The Reading Cycle Campaign has collated and issued suggestions for improvements on the draft to RBC, and whilst it will not be possible for the map to be all things to all people, we feel it is developing in the right direction.

Shinfield Road >>

In November 2008 RBC unveiled proposals for improvements to the shopping area of Shinfield Road, between Elm Road and Whitley Wood Road. The proposals included new traffic lights at junctions, a 20mph speed limit and a reduction of the total carriageway width to just 6m. Most cyclists hate cars and lorries squeezing past them on narrow carriageways and we have advised RBC that narrowing the carriageway would be detrimental to cyclists' interests.



The cycle map concentrates on 'premier cycle routes'

Bikeability Training

Bikeability is the new national standard for cycle training promoted by Cycling England: www.cyclingengland.co.uk/bikeability. From its early pilot days in 2006, Bikeability has now been adopted by half the local authorities in England including West Berks.

RBC has for some years offered free cycle training to primary school children delivered by volunteers and this is to be applauded. However, we have been encouraging RBC to take

cycle training for children to a new level by offering Bikeability training to schools using professional instructors. We are therefore pleased to report that RBC has recently announced Bikeability training will be offered to children in Years Five to Seven in 2009/10. The training will be provided through the CTC, with most of the cost expected to be covered by grant funding from Cycling England.

Keith Elliott
RBC Campaigner



Shinfield Road Improvement Proposals

Other Cycling News

Waitrose Lends Free Cycle Trailers

Shoppers at Waitrose will now be able to borrow a cycle trailer for up to three days. The trailers consist of a canvas bag that will hold up to 40 kilos. This is held on a metal pole which secures to a clip under the saddle, allowing the trailers to be fitted to most types of bike (although a RCC contact has mentioned that the clips looked a bit flimsy). There are currently 13 stores offering the service, including Wokingham. A further 21 shops, including Woodley and Newbury, should be rolling out their trailers by the end of February. According to the Waitrose website the scheme should help customers stay healthy and save money.

(<http://www.waitrose.presscentre.com/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=886&NewsAreaID=2>)

New Design Keeps Bikes Out of Harm's Way

A London design student has won over £5,000 for a system to secure bicycles in central London. The designer set out to keep bikes out of thieves' hands, so he designed an electric hoist that can be mounted to almost any wall. The device would hold bikes up in the air and out of harm's way. The electric winch would be operated by either a personalised remote control, or possibly by the owner swiping their 'Oyster' card over a special reader. This would ensure that the owner - and only the owner - could retrieve their cycle.

(<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/stand/article-23630897-details/The+high-rise+bike+lock/article.do>)

Free Bikes! (for Liverpool - sorry)

A project in Liverpool - specifically aimed at areas of low bike use - will provide free bikes, maintenance and repair training, as well as advice about routes and a dedicated telephone support line. The TravelWise project is EU funded and will be piloted in April, with Liverpool Council's Neighbourhood Travel Team finding homes for the first 100 bikes. Assuming these placements are successful, organisers will apply for more funds and more bikes. Let's hope they are!

(<http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/liverpool-news/local-news/2009/01/29/free-bikes-for-city-100252-22808786/>)



We have been helping accident victims for well over 30 years and have developed a national reputation for our work in this field.

Specialising in a wide range of injury work for both adults and children, the firm has membership of all the relevant specialist panels including those of the Law Society, Headway and the Spinal Injuries Association and is closely involved with Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust (BHIT) based in Reading.

Once again my sincere thanks for your kind assistance and courtesy in dealing with this claim and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

John Green, Kent



We have our own brain injury support group, an in-house case manager and the experience and commitment to ensure that you and your loved ones get the result and support that you need.

Based in Reading, we represent clients nationally and operate a guaranteed no win no fee no deductions policy.

We hope it never happens to you, but if you do have an accident call

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www.boyesturnerclma.com

Other Cycling News

Cheap PR Stunt Demonises Cyclists

CTC - the UK's national cyclists' organisation - has completely refuted claims by car insurance company Liverpool Victoria (LV=) that "inexperienced cyclists taking to the roads in the last 6 months have resulted in a 29% increase in road accidents involving cyclists". The figure appears to be no more than the difference in casualty numbers for cyclists between summer and winter. LV='s estimate of the number of collisions involving cyclists is over nine times higher than official figures and is based on a serious miscalculation of the number of cyclists in Britain. CTC has dismissed the figure as nothing more than a scaremongering publicity stunt.

The 29% that LV= are referring to is in fact an established shift in the average number of accidents between the summer and winter months (See Department for Transport factsheet: Pedal Cyclist Casualties in Road

Accidents 2007). Typically there are about 175 accidents per month over the summer period and 125 through the winter (and could this not simply be to do with the fact more people get on their bikes during the warmer and dryer months)? The 150,000 accidents claimed by LV= is very different from the 16,208 recorded in official police data for July 2007 until June 2008. LV='s huge number seems to be linked to their estimate of the number of people cycling in Britain - a whopping 43% (we wish!) whereas the Office of National Statistics puts the proportion of regular cyclists at about 9%.

Roger Geffen, CTC's Campaigns and Policy Manager, said: "This is Mickey Mouse research and flies in the face of all official published statistics on cycling. There is plenty of evidence showing that cycling gets safer the more cyclists there are. In London there has been a 91% increase in cycle use on the capital's main roads since 2000, and a 33% reduction in cycle casualties in roughly the same period".

He added: "CTC has been researching cycle safety for over a century. Manipulating statistics for a PR stunt wastes the time of the people who took part in the survey. By demonising cyclists and scaring people into staying in their cars, it also undermines the efforts of charities like CTC to encourage more cycling and improve road safety for all."

Singling out cyclists as a law-breaking group is discriminatory and serves only to create aggression and conflict between road users. This is highly irresponsible behaviour for an insurance company professing to care about road safety.

CTC has contacted LV= to set out reasons why they think their figures are incorrect and have requested that they either revise them or withdraw their press release titled 'Road users warned over inexperienced cyclists' dated 16.01.2009.

(<http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopModules/Articles/ArticlesView.aspx?TabID=0&ItemID=153&mid=13641>)

Annual General Meeting

All members are cordially invited to attend the Campaign's Annual General Meeting on
27 April 2009 at 7.30pm,
Silverthorne Room, Reading Town Hall

The existing committee members are:

Adrian Lawson	Chair
Linda Edwards	Secretary
Martin Cook	Treasurer
Ron Knowles	Membership Secretary
Anne White	Events Coordinator
Ros Furley	Reading Campaigner
Keith Elliott	Reading Campaigner
Dougal Munro	Wokingham Campaigner
Tobias Gibbons	Newsletter Editor
John Seto	Website Manager
Vacant	Publicity Coordinator
Vacant	West Berks Campaigner

Nominations for all positions are welcome and will be accepted by the Secretary before or at the meeting.
 All members are welcome and eligible to vote.

Chairman's Letter

Hello RCC members,

Well I hate to start off the first newsletter of 2009 with bad news, but I'm going to do it anyway.

I learnt recently that Reading Borough Council has decided not to add the rights of cyclists to use the Thames Towpath between the two bridges to the definitive map.

Many of you provided me with evidence of use that covers 30 years and in normal circumstances this ought to be enough.

Although there were some objections. I still assumed that our newly cycle friendly council would proceed with some vigour to get the path added to the map, but they decided against it.

So there we have the first demonstration of the councils' commitment to cycling since the launch of the new cycling strategy:

Capitulation in the face of objections.

What is worse is that one of the reasons for many of the objections was the behaviour of cyclists (which I did mention in my article in the previous newsletter).

Other reasons were the threat to wildlife, the increase in use by motorcyclists, and conflict with the Thames Path National Trail policy.

This latter may have some relevance, but it is hardly a rule book. There is another possibly more important policy - the Sustrans National Cycle Network uses this path.

So would more motorcyclists use the path if it was added to the definitive map? It isn't as if this would have made any physical change, nor would there be any more threat to wildlife than has existed over the last 30 years. So that is hardly a valid objection.

The behaviour of cyclists though is becoming a big problem. I have mentioned it before, and will no doubt do so again, but all that hopping on the pavement and ignoring red lights creates the impression that cyclists are a bunch of anarchists. Worse than that, they are likely to bring a crime wave to your neighbourhood if you let them anywhere near it.

I wonder sometimes why we cyclists carry on the way we do. I have concluded that we have been treated so badly we have grown mean. We have to treat intermittent facilities with contempt. We look at a no cycling sign as a sure indication that beyond lies a useful cycle path, if we can only wriggle around the barriers.

A crowded pavement lets us become dominant over pedestrians; a crowded road lets car drivers dominate us with

powerful cars, so we choose the pavement when we shouldn't.

It is of course the Council's fault. They have treated us so meanly they have got mean cyclists.

Not so meanly though as the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and even the coroner, in the case of my friend Anthony Maynard.

Anthony was run into by a van driven at high speed on the road towards Bix from Henley one evening last July. He died instantly. The driver of the van never saw him. When he did hit him he had no idea what he had hit. Yet for approaching 600 yards Anthony and his riding companion Dave Ivory were in full view. Following vehicles saw the remains of Anthony's bike lying in the road and stopped. They stopped their cars and following drivers could see those and stopped their cars also.

So although at the very point of impact the driver claims he was blinded by the low sun, he wasn't before. That seems to indicate to me that he was driving without due care for other road users - itself an offence - and as it resulted in a fatality, a more serious one.

But the van driver was let off by the Crown Prosecution Service, based on the evidence of the police. At the



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Chairman's Letter



harrowing inquest it was determined that Anthony died an accidental death.

Neither of these issues will help get more people onto bikes, and it is critical that we do. There was a time not very long ago that the headlines were full of Global Warming, and cycling was (and still is) a good tool to help us travel without compromising our climate. Then there was the cost of treating poor health caused by inactivity, again offset by active travel, which although it includes walking, is best provided by cycling. That included obesity, and of course cycling is a great way of reducing this, especially if it is a lifestyle that we learn from an early age. But did you know that most primary schoolchildren are regular cyclists? In fact they are the most regular cyclists in our society, but once they leave primary school they start to give it up, so that by the time they are teenagers few still ride, in particular, very few girls continue to cycle (boys do a bit more). By the time they are young adults almost none of them cycles anymore.

Now our headlines are full of the economy. And what better time to promote cycling - a means of travel that can cost less than a tank of petrol. There are bikes neglected in sheds that many people take to the tip, you can buy them sometimes in the Free-ads for £20 or £30. For the

price of a year of commuting into town by bus you could have a very nice bike, which might last you for many years.

And where are we getting? Almost nowhere, possibly even going backwards. Highway engineers are still making changes to the road system that make cycling less safe. The council is still talking, but not actually delivering. At the rate they are going we will be long dead by the time we get a cycle network.

So I feel like riding around with contempt for our laws. After 45 years of stopping at red lights and staying off the pavement (even if some blithering fool has decided to convert it to a cycle path) I fancy getting mean, becoming a cycling anarchist.

But after one tense meeting with the council I cycled home and was passed by a cyclist, and on approaching some red traffic lights I watched as he sailed straight through. The lights changed soon after, and I chased him down and caught him, and told him in plain language what a fool he was.

Don't do it, above all else we must hold the high ground. Behave yourselves out there, please.

Adrian Lawson
Chairman

Updating Our Records

Please let us know if any of your details have changed, such as when you change or get a new e-mail address.

Our newsletters are delivered to the street address we were last told about. Use the form in past newsletters to advise us of any changes to your details, such as your name, address and email. Please send these details to the Membership Secretary at 26 Barrington Way, Reading RG1 6EG.

Data Protection Act: RCC keeps membership records on computer. This information is not disclosed to third parties

YES, I WANT TO JOIN RCC!

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms (please delete)

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

- ☐ I would like details of how I can help with Campaign activities
☐ I am a member of the Cyclists' Touring Club

Signed

Date

How did you hear about the Campaign?

- ☐ Individual membership (annual) £3
☐ Joint membership (annual) £5
 (Two or more living at the same address)
 No. of people under joint membership.....
☐ Unwaged/unior membership (annual) £1
☐ Life membership £35
☐ I would like to make future payments by standing order. Please send me details.

I enclose a cheque for £..... covering my membership and a donation* of £.....
 *An additional donation to help fund our activities would be very much appreciated

Please make cheques payable to **Reading Cycle Campaign** and send together with the completed form to: **Membership Secretary, Reading Cycle Campaign, 26 Barrington Way, Reading RG1 6EG**

Data Protection Act: Reading Cycle Campaign keeps membership records on computer. This information is not disclosed to third parties.

Our Mission



- To campaign for better facilities for cyclists in Reading, in particular a network of safe cycleways linking residential, industrial and commercial areas, and giving access to the town centre.
- To work with Sustrans, the Cyclists' Touring Club (both locally and nationally) and others interested in promoting cycling and the well-being of cyclists.
- To identify the needs of cyclists in Reading, for example the location of safe and secure parking, and to campaign for their provision.
- To work with and advise local authorities and, where necessary, criticise and highlight their shortcomings.

Members Out and About

Juliet and Ros Visit Rail-Cycle Awards

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) honoured train operating companies, local authorities and others late last year at the annual National Cycle-Rail Awards for 2008.

This popular event acknowledges the progress made towards improving integrated cycle and rail travel, as the number of people cycling to train stations rises each year. (There were no fewer than 24 million such journeys in 2007/8.)

Reading Cycle Campaign was represented at the awards by committee stalwart Ros Furley, and by Juliet England, who has written at 'wearying length' (her words!) about the trials and tribulations of the daily commute with two wheels between Reading and Basingstoke.

Ros and Juliet left their bikes at home but caught the train to see world-record-breaking cyclist Mark Beaumont, famous for biking more than 18,000 miles through 20 countries in less than 200 days, hand out the honours at a hotel near London's Euston Station.

There were a string of winners, including First Capital Connect, which took Train Operator of the Year, and

Surrey County Council, honoured for best local government contribution, while Eurostar got top marks for customer service excellence. Station of the year award went to St Albans, Herts.

First Capital Connect created 675 new cycle spaces and improved facilities at nearly 30 stations. Surrey equipped every First Great Western (FGW) station on the North Downs line with sheltered cycle storage, and St Albans has displayed an impressive commitment to boosting facilities and reducing cycle crime during a massive redevelopment programme at the station.

Juliet says: "No surprise that FGW failed to win any awards for their handling of bikes on trains, which was won by Hitrans in Scotland, but they were highly commended for piloting a bike hire scheme with OY-Bikes at Reading Station. It did however make a refreshing change to hear about the good work being done to make a real and sustained difference to cyclists wishing to travel by train.

"It was lovely to look at the super-fit Mark Beaumont, and the morning also presented some good networking opportunities."

Juliet England

Southeast Open Space Networking Day

CTC National Office, Guildford, Saturday 27 September 2008

This was held to see how CTC's activities and networks in Southeast England can be improved. Although I was a little sceptical about how the 'Open Space' method would work, some practical outcomes which are relevant to cycle campaigning were indeed achieved. After each group had finished their discussion the convenor typed out the main points on a laptop and at the end of the day each person attending was given a printed copy of all the topics, which was very helpful.

What is Open Space?

A summary of the background information by Roma Iskander & Sheila Marsh

Open Space is a method for holding meetings that means people self-organise. There are no speakers, no set agenda and the timings are loose. The people who come create the event on the day. They suggest the agenda and they organise their own

Tell us what YOU want!

The RCC committee will shortly be undertaking a consultation with the membership so we can give you even more of what you want.

- Would you like to see more RCC social events?
- Do you think we should concentrate on lobbying the council or encouraging more people to cycle?
- Should the membership have more control or would you rather leave it to us?

Look out for our questionnaire which members should be receiving soon, or join us at our Annual General Meeting.

Prefer a PDF?

Trying to cut your carbon footprint?

Prefer an e-newsletter to paper?

The committee is looking into giving members the choice to opt out of paper newsletters, so let us know, would you prefer your newsletter by email?

Please send your thoughts and suggestions to newsletter@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Members Out and About

discussion groups. They then set their priorities for continuing action at the end using 'dot democracy' via coloured stickers. Often a follow-up group is formed.

So an Open Space event focuses on a key question that matters for the groups or communities involved. The people who come suggest topics for discussion around this question that matter to them - their passions - and they take responsibility for the discussions and for the resulting action. They do not create a 'wish-list' for other people to do.

Both passion and responsibility are key to the success of Open Space. This means that each participant needs to make sure they are contributing and/or learning at all times - if not, the 'law of two feet' or law of mobility means you move on to another discussion which you can contribute to or learn from. Being self-organised means you organise your own time so that you get the most out of the event.

Harrison Owen developed and popularised Open Space from 1985. He felt the best bits of conferences or meetings were always the breaks and aimed to create those kinds of conversations all the time. He drew on ways of holding meetings he saw in West Africa and in other traditional communities. So aspects of Open Space may feel familiar to you. To find out more visit the website www.openspaceworld.org

Alan Stuart, the CTC Right to Ride representative from West Berkshire, led a group on the topic - How can central Government pressurise local authorities into promoting cycling?

Main points of the discussion

- Central government stopped promoting cycling and left it to local authorities
- Training of cyclists (also motorists!)
- Is it any use writing to MPs?
- Is it any use starting a No 10 petition?

The recommendations from this discussion were that money from road

tolls/congestion charges etc should be directed from government to local authorities to promote cycling, get Parliamentary cyclists to lobby for us and ensure that a dedicated budget from central government for cycling is introduced.

I was concerned with the communication between all groups of cyclists, in the CTC and those who we campaign for in Reading. The main points of this discussion were

- Do we work together? If not why not?
- What would aid communication?
- Different groups of cyclists such as off-roaders, racers, cycle tourers are not interested in talking together.
- Should there be a single community of cyclists?
- Should there be joint events that would attract the likes of different groups of cyclists?

It was recommended that there should be one voice for cycling rather than many organisations (BC, CTC etc) and access to a resource here at Guildford whereby people such as local group members and Right-to-Ride (RtR) reps can be put together when they have a common issue to deal with, as well as access to information via online forums, websites, etc. It was also recommended that the CTC website be made more regional, so all it took was a single click to get info on all the events, rides and information for that region.

The one most relevant to the RCC was perhaps the topic: 'How do we get Local Authorities to take us seriously?' The main points of the discussion were:

- How to engage new members.
- No access to cash for RtR people.
- How can CTC raise credibility?
- Sustrans is seen in a different light by local authorities and therefore able to manipulate them.
- Sustrans able to produce new infrastructure.

- CTC is seen as a campaign group for 'cyclists' - it doesn't produce what local authorities want to hear.
- Sustrans routes seen as a better option by government for funding.
- Local cycle groups appear to speak against plans put forward by government.
- Is RTR the correct term for dealing with local government?
- Influence at local level - from which development takes place.
- Local authorities will only engage if they want to - i.e. availability of money or votes.
- Campaigners v Established organisation.

The recommendations were that CTC must have more to offer and should be contacted locally or nationally with regard to all new road structures. Part of the national transport budget must be ring fenced for cycle access and CTC should make a proactive approach to join local council transport forums. It should set up a networking capability including online campaign resources to include ongoing support and should organise competitive benchmarking/auditing between local authorities (which has produced results in the USA).

Another group which I attended discussed the on-line RtR forum which I belong to and which has a great deal of useful information about design guidelines, DfT manuals etc. Which at the moment is difficult to access, so a library of on-line folders for these was recommended.

Other topics included how to exploit the success of cyclists at the Olympics, achieving consistent campaign messages, where do you find information and how to educate the public/engage young people/address the public perception of cycling being dangerous.

It was a very enjoyable and useful day and I would like to thank the organisers very much for all their hard work.

Ros Furley October 2008

Streets Ahead

A Conference held on 15 November 2008 in Warrington for Cyclists and Pedestrians campaigning together, succeeding together. It was billed as 'The essential conference for those campaigning for a more equitable sharing of the roads for cyclists and pedestrians'.

And it was just that! The idea being that if the latter is to be achieved any time soon, all vulnerable road users need to campaign together and not in isolation.

This format was initiated by the Warrington Cycle Campaign, where Rod King is the founder member of '20s Plenty for us' in 2008. This campaign focuses on enabling communities to implement 20mph as the default speed limit for residential roads.

The innovative part of the conference was the 2 hour break from 12.30 to 14.30pm during which the 'Street Market' was held. Those attending the conference could browse the 15 stalls set up by voluntary organisations, attend two presentations and eat their lunch! This was a little hectic and it was impossible to visit every stall, but a great place to pick up new ideas and to network. Some of those

represented were the British Horse Society, CPRE, FoE, RoadPeace, Living Streets, CTC, Why is the NHS so bad at promoting cycling?

Adrian Lord of Arup gave a presentation of the 2008 Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure Design for Cycling England and Joshua Hart showed the 'Impact of Motor Vehicle Traffic on the Quality of Life in Bristol.' In this he exposed very clearly and decisively the difference in the quality of life between those living in lightly, medium and heavily trafficked streets in Bristol.

During the first session Campaigning on the Streets, CTC, Living Streets, formerly the Pedestrians' Association founded 80 years ago and Cyclenation (formerly Cycle Campaign Network), who all support 20s Plenty campaign, set out their current campaigning strategies.

The next session 'Tackling bad driving -how do we get there?' was introduced by Roger Geffen of CTC. He outlined the main areas to be addressed in tackling bad driving:

- a) policing issues eg serious injuries being investigated far less rigorously than deaths, failure to attend the scene,

- b) Prosecution, to include a much greater willingness to prosecute,

- c) Courts and Judiciary, with sentencing reflecting the serious nature of the offence, not the outcome and to end judicial prejudice about cyclists' behaviour and

- d) Parliament, to overhaul the sentencing system.

The aim of this is to introduce strict liability in Britain, which as Amy Aeron-Thomas of RoadPeace explained, is the reversal of the current burden of proof in collisions between motorists and vulnerable road users. The latter would be automatically entitled to compensation unless it could be proved that they caused the incident. This is the norm in Northern Europe and by placing a much greater burden of care on the motorist creates much more civilised road conditions for the vulnerable road user, but this is currently not the situation in Britain. It does not - emphasised the speaker - affect the principle of 'Innocent until proven guilty' since this only applies to criminal justice.

The afternoon session was devoted to actual '20s Plenty for Streets where

risc
world shop

- Pottery •
- Jewellery & beads •
- Unusual gifts & ornaments •
- Didgeridoos, drums & other instruments •
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Streets Ahead

we live' campaigns. Paul Cullen from Oxford and Richard Bearman from the Green Party in Norwich explained how this was achieved in their towns by concentrating not just on road safety but people's daily lives. These campaigns involved health trusts, schools, residents and tenants' associations and bus operators.

John Leech, Lib Dem MP talked about his introduction of a 10-Minute Rule Bill in February 2007 to reduce the default speed limit to 20mph in order to save lives.

Rod King concluded the day, citing 20mph as the default speed limit for residential roads as the golden opportunity, which "should no longer be merely an aspiration but an achievable objective whose time has come in our towns and cities."

I would like to thank those who inspired and organised such a thought-provoking conference very much for all their hard work.

Ros Furley
January 2009

CTC Affiliated Membership

As a member of RCC, did you know you can apply for CTC affiliated membership? Listed below are the benefits:

- 3rd party insurance cover of £5,000,000 anywhere in the world except USA and Canada
- a CTC membership card and the CTC Member benefits giving access to a wide range of discounts and benefits, details available from the website.
- the weekly CTC email newsletter 'Newsnet'

Please note that these benefits apply only as long as you remain a fully paid-up member of RCC.

The cost of the CTC affiliated membership is £13 for a full year.

For more details contact the Membership Secretary on 0118 939 4044

Bikes 'n' Bits

For Sale: Electric Tricycle, 3-wheel electric tricycle complete with two 12 volt batteries; charger; front & rear lights; L/R indicator lights; Sturmey Archer 3-speed; front basket; roomy white fibreglass lockable boot; frame-work in red. The machine is in good condition, and has a range of about 20 miles, at speeds up to 15mph. Asking price £350. Contact Stephen Derek on 0118 9429850.

Wanted: one 'spare' mountain bike to rent (fortnightly payments) due to my bike having been stolen and GP's advice to cycle following foot surgery. Offers gratefully received, 07914 185621.

Wanted: Cheap/free pair of 650x20 (571) racing tyres. New or good condition. Not easy to find or afford these days. Email: dry@tesco.net

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Campaign Diary

Help Out at the Farmers' Market

Our monthly stall at the Farmers' Market is a valuable chance to discuss cycling issues with members and non-members. If you'd like to volunteer to man the stall please contact our Events Coordinator Anne White (see above).

RCC hosts a stand at the Farmers' Market at Great Knollys Street on the first Saturday of each month from 8.45-11.30am; dates are listed below:

Saturday 7 March • Saturday 4 April
Saturday 2 May • Saturday 6 June

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Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Campaign.

Council Contacts

Please let the relevant campaign officer know of anything you've reported.

Reading Borough Council

General cycling queries: 0118 939 0900 x 4881; parking: parkingservices@reading.gov.uk; traffic lights: 0118 939 0611; potholes 0800 626540

Wokingham Borough Council

0118 974 6302

West Berkshire Council

01635 519080 or www.westberks.org.uk

Windsor and Maidenhead

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South Oxfordshire

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