

# East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2012

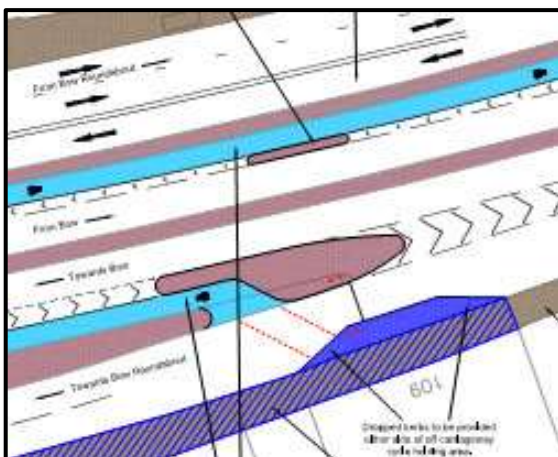
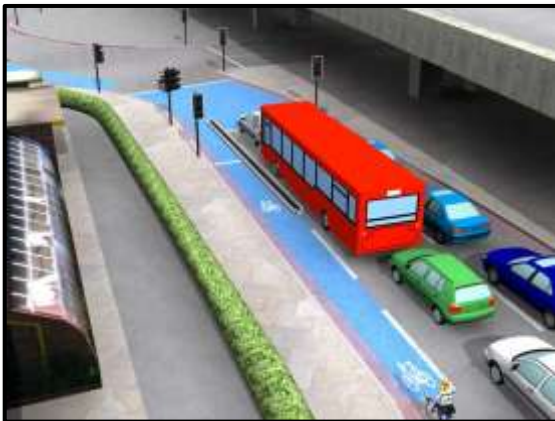
THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS ● LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

## Bow roundabout...

The furore over the deaths of the two cyclists at Bow Roundabout resulted in the promise by Boris Johnson of a review of the junction. We said that a solution had already been proposed in previous reviews so why waste time and money on another? (It may have looked like this on the ground, see: [tinyurl.com/lcc-bow](http://tinyurl.com/lcc-bow)).

TfL now tell us that this would lead to severe delays to motor traffic causing tail backs to Mile End station, thereby also impeding cyclists. This coupled with the Mayor of Newham's obstinacy in refusing the continuation of CS2 into Newham led to the situation we have today.

In early January, TfL published two proposals (pictured) that could be implemented as interim solutions and invited LCC (and the public) to comment the first an "early-start" phase for cyclists at the roundabout and the second, a dedicated lane on the Bow flyover with lights to control access and exit.



As we go to press, LCC have met with TfL on four occasions: to hear the proposals, raise queries and to comment. The outcome of the meetings is that LCC believe the opportunity exists to continue working with TfL on an interim solution on the following basis:

- Providing predictable safety - addressing encroachment and speed of motor traffic.
- Giving priority to cyclists or at least ensure no "disbenefit" for using the early start facility compared to being in the general traffic.
- Reallocation of road space on the flyover in addition to safe passage through the roundabout.
- Addressing the needs of pedestrians.
- That the interim solution will be the start of a long-term redevelopment of the junction.

The LCC delegation has varied but includes senior campaign and executive staff, members of the Campaigns & Active Membership committee and representatives from Newham Cyclists and Tower Hamlets Wheelers.

We believe that these interim solutions could work if there is reasonable priority given to cyclists. If these solutions cause delay to cyclists, then the new facilities may remain unused and any safety benefits will be lost. Furthermore, at Bow roundabout, only cyclists and buses go straight on (non-motor vehicles are banned from the A12). Hence, it could be suggested that there should be a traffic light phase where only straight-on movements are allowed. This could result in four groups of vehicles traversing it simultaneously, with very little conflict between them.

Whatever is proposed will require the cooperation of Newham's Mayor, Sir Robin Wales. Newham control the east and south side of the roundabout and the flyover. TfL say that there are not sufficient serious and fatal incidents to legally require speed enforcement cameras on the flyover, despite the police saying cars reach 60 mph. We are concerned that TfL will not include provision for pedestrians in the pre-Olympics interim solution.

The Bow Intersection needs a radical overhaul; it is blight on the area. An aspirational solution benefits cyclists, residents and visitors affected by the Bow intersection. The key for the next Mayor will be addressing the long-term redevelopment of the junction rather than the technical short term fixes. ■

Steve Collins

• Ken Livingstone visits Bow Roundabout  
(See page 2)

## Stuck in Tower Hamlets?

The geographical location of Tower Hamlets effectively hems the borough in with the Lea to the east, the City to the west, busy borough border running east/west to the north and the Thames to the south.

Of particular concern to us is access for cyclist across the Thames. Cyclists are forbidden to use Blackwall Tunnel, Rotherhithe Tunnel is unpleasant at best of times and is rarely used by cyclists. Tower Bridge is used by a large number of cyclists due to its proximity to the western end of CS3, but there is neither continuation from CS3 to Tower Bridge nor any safety mechanisms for cyclist. The Greenwich and Woolwich foot tunnels have been shut for extended periods of time and still do not have working lifts, while the Woolwich Free Ferry does not operate 24x7 or in bad weather.

Despite these efforts to keep cyclist north of the river, there are still times where there is a need to cross the Thames.

Why are we saddled with a cable car, that doesn't go anywhere that anyone wishes to go, and charges money for that privilege? Why aren't cyclists allowed on the DLR? We think it should at least off-peak, particularly as there are stations adjacent to Woolwich and Greenwich foot tunnels (Woolwich, Greenwich and Island Gardens) and access to the foot tunnels for most cyclists is lift dependent. (Meanwhile in the Netherlands... Rotterdam cyclists commute through the Benelux cycling tunnel) <http://tinyurl.com/bene-tunnel>

Cyclists already have kludges and workarounds - We want physical facilities that fit the purpose of getting people who would cycle if the conditions were better. In 2008 a well-designed bridge for cyclists and pedestrians (Sustrans Thames Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge) was proposed linking Durand's Wharf Southwark and Westferry Road, the feasibility study for TfL (project no. 4920) commented that the economic benefits justified the cost of the project. Whilst that bridge is shelved a specialist British engineering firm has completed an amazing structure, 779m in length, near Amsterdam. The Nescio bridge, £6.5 million, was paid for by the City of Amsterdam.

<http://tinyurl.com/nescio-bridge>

When will we see the British equivalent?

Bob Chew

## Wheelers' Feelers

We welcome collaboration with other cycling groups in Tower Hamlets. To contact us, see back page for details. David Tuckwell (Chair)

## Ken visits Bow

Ken Livingstone visited the Bow Roundabout on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January and met members of Tower Hamlets Wheelers and Tower Hamlets Cycling Club.



Ken brought with him senior Labour politicians: our MPs, John Biggs, our London Assembly Member, and John's colleague Val Shawcross – who sits for Lambeth and Southwark on the London Assembly. Both Labour councillors for Bromley by Bow, as well as Josh Peck, Bow West and Labour leader attended.

At the site we spoke about the problems for cyclists and pedestrians and then demonstrated them by crossing with difficulty to a community hall. Here we expanded on the issues cyclists face with inadequate road planning along the CS2 route. The solution we feel could be found in positive examples from the Netherlands and we spoke to and urged the mayoral candidate to endorse the Go Dutch campaign launched by the LCC for the Mayoral elections.

At a "Tell Ken" event in the evening, during transport questions, he told a Tower Hamlets audience how bad things were at Bow. He showed good understanding of issues and possible solutions, drawing on his vast experience as Mayor and working with TfL. Ken said: "Having witnessed first-hand exactly how dangerous Bow roundabout is, it is clear that there is no time for excuses or delay. Boris Johnson has chosen to ignore London's cyclists, putting traffic flow ahead of cyclist safety. If I am elected I will act immediately to address the safety problems faced by cyclists in Tower Hamlets and across the capital. New safety measures for Bow roundabout and at other junctions where cyclists have tragically lost their lives must be put into place as a matter of the greatest urgency." ■

Gerry Matthews

*Correction... The article on Bats and the ISS credited to Geoff Birch in the last newsletter should have read Geoffrey Richards. Apologies!*

# Go Dutch

Tower Hamlets Wheelers support the LCC Go Dutch campaign. Our community has been devastated by recent cycling tragedies. We want to act now to prevent such horrors in the future. This campaign is not about bad drivers or bad cyclists - it is about bad street design.

Cycling on London's main roads can and must be made safe, enjoyable and convenient for all Londoners, whatever their age or cycling ability.

People of all ages and experience have achieved this in successful cycling nations, such as the Netherlands, where a quarter of all journeys are made by bike. "People should be friendly to each other!" said Katie van Dop, LCC Go Dutch champion for Tower Hamlets.

The solutions exist, and now our decision-makers must find the political will to make them happen here. Making London's main roads 'Go Dutch' - giving them 'clear space for cycling' - will require a new approach from London's leadership, based on a commitment to **Equality, Quality and Continuity**, plus the application of 10 key principles:

- **Equality:** Londoners will be given real equality of transport choice, because cycle safety will be prioritised.
- **Continuity:** Londoners will be able to make continuous, unobstructed journeys across London by bike.
- **Quality:** Londoners will be given the highest quality of provision for cycling.

1. **Safety first:** Londoners young or old, occasional cyclists or experienced ones, will be safe, and will feel safe cycling on main roads.
2. **Best practice:** Londoners will benefit from the best available know-how in street design, public education and rules of the road, whether using best-practice from the Continent or home-grown.
3. **Adaptability:** Londoners will benefit from every infrastructure and non-physical solution to make our main roads 'Go Dutch', tailoring solutions to circumstances.
4. **Easy passage:** Londoner's will enjoy clear and hassle-free passage throughout our city by bike.

5. **Calm junctions:** Londoners will be able to negotiate all junctions safely and conveniently whether cycling or walking.
6. **Harmony with pedestrians:** Londoners will be able to choose to cycle or walk to their destinations without impeding each other.
7. **Harmony with public transport:** Londoners will be able to safely cycle or use public transport alongside each other, and switch easily between the two.
8. **Quality of life:** Londoners from all walks of life will be able to enjoy cycling on main roads, which will be improved to make them more pleasant and attractive places for everyone.
9. **Commitment:** Londoners will have cycling facilities that are properly managed and maintained.
10. **Engagement:** Londoners will be consulted about the way their local main roads should 'Go Dutch'.

<http://lcc.org.uk/pages/key-principles> ■

Terry Patterson



Alex Wareing

As our rides are increasingly popular, we are currently recruiting for volunteers to lead or assist on our rides. Contact Caroline for details! (see back page)

# Rides and events

**Please check our web site, or call the ride leader in advance, as times/details sometimes change!**

## February

**Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> February**

### MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

Meet at St Margarets House, 21 Old Ford Road 7.30-9.00pm - everyone welcome. Followed by a visit to a local pub from 9.15pm. Contact: **Owen**.

**Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> February**

### BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop. Self-help with Dr. Bike if needed. 11am-3pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> February**

### RIVERSIDE RIDE (EASY)

An easy all day ride, taking in both banks of the Thames between Tower Bridge and Woolwich. Meets on top of Green Bridge at Mile End Park. Time: TBC. Contact: **Caroline**

**Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> February**

### COUNTRY RIDE (HARD)

A hard(er) ride out in the country, probably around Orpington in Kent. More details to follow. Contact: **Caroline**

## March

**Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March**

### MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

- See 8<sup>th</sup> February.

**Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> March**

### BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 11am-3pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

### TOUR DU DANGER 2

'Tour du danger' is coming to the East End. Full details to follow...

## April

**Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April**

### AGM

Join us for our AGM, everyone welcome. Full details to follow.

## Contacts

### Coordinator / Newsletter

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### Rides Co-ordinator

Caroline Fenton  
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**Please see our web site for more rides / event information.**

### Wheelers Weekend Away Friday 25<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May

We will return to Palace Farm Hostel near Faversham for the weekend again.

Friday ride out (or train) and then a variety of short and longer rides on Saturday and Sunday.

[www.wheelers.org.uk/weekend](http://www.wheelers.org.uk/weekend)  
Contact: Rob



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