

East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS ● LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Junction review

TfL announced an 'immediate review of all major schemes planned on TfL roads and all junctions on the existing Cycle Superhighways' last November, the day of the vigil at Bow.

Three categories of junctions are under review and details about them can be found here: tinyurl.com/cvj93u2

The process is a two-tier review, a design review group (DRG) that considers options for each junction and a steering group that deals with the policy and looks at the junctions about which the DRG has failed to come to a consensus. LCC is represented on both groups as is Sustrans and Living Streets and organisations representing motorists and hauliers. The groups meet monthly with the DRG looking at three/four junctions a month.

There have been early teething problems (see below), including insufficient time to discuss the junctions on the agenda at the first DRG. ↗

Go Dutch...



We are supporting the 'Go Dutch' campaign. The campaign is calling on the 2012 mayoral election candidates to commit to continental-standard cycling infrastructure in the capital.

Sign the petition:

lcc.org.uk/go-dutch

Come on the Big Ride!

On Saturday 28th April 2012, join us on the Big Ride, London's biggest-ever bike traffic-free ride calling for safer streets for cycling. We want you to come too...

The Big Ride, promoting the LCC's Love London, Go Dutch campaign for safe streets for cycling, will meet in Hyde Park at ↗

We started in a considerable flurry as TfL gave very little notice that this process was underway. Considerable amounts of paperwork hit the LCC office in-boxes in February half-term. Tower Hamlets Wheelers had two of the first three junctions, Mile End/Burdett Rd on CS2 and Horseferry Rd on CS3, with a few days to turn around comments. We are grateful for the input from a colleague from Hackney Cyclists who ran a crash-course on junction design critique. Our recently set up engineering group will be the main forum for THW discussions of the TfL options with input from feedback from users of CS2 (Aldgate to Bow) and CS3 (Tower to Barking). We will also be aided by discussion of the LCC Junction Review Group made up of reps from each of the LCC affected borough groups.

If you have strong views on the junctions on CS2 or CS3 we will be keen to hear from you, as a cyclist or pedestrian.

Please email me direct or contribute to the THW list (See website). You are also welcome to join our engineering group but membership is for LCC members only. ■

Gerry Matthews | gerry@wheelers.org.uk

11.30am and aims to be a fabulous springtime day out in central London, suitable for all the family. The ride will end on Victoria Embankment around 2pm.

We will provide a feeder ride from Tower Hamlets to the ride start and then an escort back to the borough - arrangements to be announced. (<http://www.wheelers.org.uk/diary>)

Visit the LCC's Big Ride page for full details of the event and its background. You can also view the route. lcc.org.uk/bigride

Chinese TV will be following Terry Patterson as she works hard to get signatures for Go Dutch in the week before the ride.

Terry will be petitioning outside major stations, campuses and cycle hotspots all this week, followed by a camera crew! Chinese TV want interviews with LCC and are coming to the Go Dutch champions meetings. So maybe Beijing wants to Go Dutch too? With a traditionally large but declining cycle population, China may well be interested in how we manage shared use in London. Pollution, urbanisation and the impact of the western diet may all be factors making cycling more attractive to both cities. ■

Terry Patterson

March exchanging places

On the mornings of Wednesday 14th March and Thursday 15th March we were part of two Changing Places events at Victoria Park and on Cable Street organised by the council and the Met Police.

When I arrived on Thursday morning, it was quiet and cold. So when the cycle police arrived with a truck cab to show the visibility of cyclists from a truck driver's point of view I took advantage of the offer and sat in the driver's seat with a cycle police officer in the passenger seat. Another officer on a bike moved up the inside of the truck in stages and then positioned himself in front of the vehicle. The cab was fitted with the best mirrors available yet it was still difficult to see the cycle policeman in many areas. Useful to see the other view and nice to sit in a warm cab as the sun had yet to warm the morning.

Bikeworks provided some Dr. Bikes, who were kept busy. (Their toolkit had a beautiful set of coloured Allen keys!) They also gave out leaflets, bags of breakfasts and some cycling goodies.

A couple of police were also carrying out security marking of bikes and had a steady stream of customers.

As the morning went on, the numbers of police on bikes increased to about 10. They spread themselves along Cable Street and occasionally one would whizz past after someone. Quite a few people were stopped and given a talking to or fined, motorists as well. Most of the cyclists were stopped for not respecting pedestrians at the nearby zebra crossing.

Bob and I managed to give out more than 200 of our last newsletter to the usual mix of passing cyclists who ranged from the grumpy to those who screeched to a halt to take a newsletter and have a chat. As Darwin's Deli is just down the road a few of their delivery bikes went past and all the riders took a newsletter, so a 100% record there.

The most common complaint was the lack of consistency of "give way" markings and priorities along Cable Street, including having to give way at Sutton St. I suggested to all of them that they write to the council, as I do to you, reader of this newsletter. If you have an opinion don't tell us, we already know, but your letter or email to Tower Hamlets/TfL adds so much more weight to what we do on your behalf. Don't leave all the campaigning to Wheelers and other cycling groups because your individual voice adds so much to the debate. Go on, don't just push your pedals, press the keys on your keyboard too.

All in all a great event, the weather was lovely and it was good to speak with so many of you. ■

David Tuckwell

Permeability in west Tower Hamlets

Taking a leaf out of developments by the City of London Corporation we would like to see the introduction of two-way for cyclists in the one-way streets of Tower Hamlets.

Starting with streets on the City fringe area, Aldgate and Whitechapel, what would be your nominations? Send in suggestions to me and also remember to log them if you are a Ranger.

Ideas at: lcc.org.uk/articles/city-of-london-embraces-lccs-permeability-principle

and:

cyclelondoncity.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/help-us-get-safer-routes-for-cycling-in.html ■

Gerry Matthews | gerry@wheelers.org.uk

Hire scheme extends...

On 8th March, the Cycle Hire network expanded east, bringing many new docking points to Tower Hamlets including Canary Wharf, Bow, Bethnal Green, Mile end and Poplar, and an additional 2,300 bikes to service them. So far the scheme is very well used.

London's Easternmost cycle hire station is at East India DLR (South side) – This does not appear on the map!.

Our tips:

- Before releasing a bike, check for any obvious damage, missing bits, or flat tyres. (Give them a squeeze!)
- Remember to adjust the seat height before you set off.
- Check that the bike is securely docked when returning it, and the green light shows. Otherwise you could be hit a late return fee!
- When joining as a member, (keys are £3 each) you can request additional keys. However, even if you only use one of the keys, the access fee is charged for all keys. (So, if you have three keys but use only one key for a £1 trip, you will be charged £3 - £1 for all three keys.) Use separate payment cards to purchase keys or casual access to avoid this.

Interesting usage map for the Cycle Hire scheme, updated every 15 minutes, is at bikes.oobrien.com – See full and empty docking stations, and historical usage for the past 24 hours. ■

Rob Lister

Towpath consultation

British Waterways recently consulted on proposals for calming measures as part of their considerate cycling campaign.

These works were at the Islington end, but it brought into users' focus, and enabled feedback, on recent schemes. Generally cyclists, and some walkers, in Tower Hamlets have been critical of the recent speed humps placed at the bridges. They mainly impeded considerate cyclists and those carrying children as well as wheelchairs users and buggy pushers, as nimble cyclists went round them (thereby damaging the verges)!

My own view is that every towpath user regardless of mode of travel needs to alert others of their presence before entering a bridge space (by calling out), and users on foot need to respond to a cycle bell. I would also like to see BW rethink its categories of user and make the distinction between walkers and faster movers, whether cycling or running, when considering who gives way to whom.

However cycling with consideration is a top priority and we would like to remind cyclists to use alternative routes at peak times and crowded sunny weekends.

If you bike the towpath cut your speed, alert when passing other users (including cyclists). Bright lights can dazzle oncoming towpath users, so should be angled down, or a smaller, less-bright light used if possible.

We were able to put our views in a recent ride of the towpath with LCC borough reps from Camden to Tower Hamlets with the new London Towpath Ranger Dick Vincent. He in turn explained suggestions for improvements along the route and some of the upcoming changes when British Waterways hands over to the Canal and River Trust. Dick is always keen to hear from users and can be contacted at dick.vincent@britishwaterways.co.uk

A reminder that Tower Hamlets' Cycling Rangers can add towpath matters to their reports and audits, Dick has access to these. ■

Gerry Matthews

Tower Hamlets women's cycling



The Tower Hamlets Women's Cycling blog has evolved from the Fieldgate Bike Project, set up by Sarah Hammond in 2011.

Working with women and young people on the Fieldgate Mansions Estate in Whitechapel, East London, the aim of the project was to help them discover the joys of riding a bike and provide cycle training.

The social and physical benefits of cycling have also been a focus, as many women within the community experience isolation, as well as illnesses, such as heart disease and diabetes.

The blog has been set up as a hub where local women, especially Asian, can access information about rides, where to receive training, cycle safety and how to buy a bike. Contributors from the cycling community will also be on hand to respond to questions and comments.

towerhamletswomenscycling.com

For more information contact: Sarah Hammond or Annabel Leathes. (tunis1@btinternet.com / leathes4dg@btinternet.com)

Wheelers are looking forward to getting involved with the blog project starting with helping to organise a Women's Ride on Sunday, 1 April. ■

Rides and events

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

April

Sunday, 8th April

THE HELL OF THE EAST (EASY)

In celebration of the "Hell of the North", join us for a 12mile tour of the pavé of Tower Hamlets. Featuring 24 well know and hidden cobblestone sections. Cafe and toilet stop en route. Ending at a secret local venue in time to watch the finale of the Paris - Roubaix race on a big screen.

Meet on top of the Green Bridge in Mile End park at 10.30am. We should arrive at the screening venue in time to watch the last 2hrs of the race. Food and drink options should be available during the screening.. Contact: **Alex**. (07813 104681)

Wednesday, 11th April

MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING (AGM)

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, 21st April

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Saturday, 28th April

THE BIG RIDE

The Big Ride, promoting the LCC's Love London, Go Dutch campaign for safe streets for cycling, will meet in Hyde Park at 11.30am and aims to be a fabulous springtime day out in central London, suitable for all the family. The ride will end on Victoria Embankment around 2pm.

We will provide a feeder ride from Tower Hamlets to the ride start and then an escort back to the borough - arrangements to be announced. lcc.org.uk/bigride

May

Wednesday, 9th May

MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

- See 11th April.

Saturday, 19th May

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Sunday 20th May

BREAKFAST RIDE (EASY)

Another breakfast outing this time to a local scenic Wetherspoons (there must be one somewhere!) for a value breakfast, more details to follow. Contact: Caroline

Contacts

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

www.wheelers.org.uk/diary



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