

## Rides and events please note!

THWheelers suggest people taking part in Wheelers rides be asked to contribute a £1 donation toward Wheeler's funds, this is of course not compulsory, but is simply a donation. The money is spent on among other things, newsletter printing, paying for training for bike buddy participants and paying general admin costs. All of the rides below begin on top of the 'Green Bridge\*', unless specified. Rides are being added all the time so contact Steve or take a look at our online diary:  
[www.towerhamletswheelers.org.uk/diary/](http://www.towerhamletswheelers.org.uk/diary/)

### January 2006

**Saturday, 28th January**  
**Wheelers Bicycle Maintenance Workshop**  
11.00am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall.

### February 2006

**Sunday 5th February, 10:00am Green Bridge**  
**A canal cafe ride up the Lea Valley**  
Leisurely paced, stopping at all cafes.  
Optional short train journey back for 25 miles or return cycle 45miles.

**Sunday 19th February, 9:00am Green Bridge**  
**Chiltern Hills Ride**  
40 miles to pub stop or optional 60miles  
Train from Marylebone 45mins Chesham.  
Some hills.

**Wednesday 22nd Feb 5:00pm Green Bridge**  
**Easy Early Season Afterworker,**  
Lights required, Thames Path and river lights.  
Small ferry fare needed.  
**Pub Social after 9:00 Prospect of Whitby.**

**Sunday 5th March 9:00am Green Bridge**  
**Castle Headingham**  
Short train to Audely Green 30mins.  
To visit castle Headingham for lunch and back,  
through peacefull lanes.  
30 miles.

**Sunday 19th March Green Bridge 6:30**  
**Ride out to Kent.**  
50 miles to early lunch optional 100miles to  
Folkstone, cafe stop afternoon tea.

**Wednesday 22nd March 5:00pm Green Bridge**  
**Easy Afterworker**  
Lights required, Thames Path and river lights.  
Small Ferry fare needed.  
**Pub Social after 9:00**  
**Approach pub Approach Road**

### Distributors always needed

We need help handing out our newsletter to cyclists passing through the borough, this takes place only once every two months and is fun, Colin Waters co-ordinates this. We also need folk to drop off bundles of newsletters to local distribution places, libraries, bike shops etc. If you can help please contact him on 07799 537 504 or [colin@towerhamletswheelers.org.uk](mailto:colin@towerhamletswheelers.org.uk)

### Tower Hamlets Wheelers

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### Contacts

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#### Treasurer

David Allison

#### East London Cyclist

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#### Rides Co-ordinator

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#### Newsletter distribution

Colin Waters  
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**Wednesday, 8th February**  
**Monthly Wheelers Meeting**  
Meet at (venue tba) 7.30-9.00pm - everyone welcome. Followed by a visit to a local pub from 9.15pm. Contact Owen.

**Saturday, 25th February**  
**Wheelers Bicycle Maintenance Workshop**  
11.00am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall.

### March 2006

**Wednesday, 8th March**  
**Wheelers AGM & Social**  
See inside for details

**Saturday, 25th March**  
**Wheelers Bicycle Maintenance Workshop**  
11.00am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall

### April 2006

**Wednesday, 12th April**  
**Monthly Wheelers Meeting**  
Meet at (venue tba) 7.30-9.00pm - everyone welcome. Followed by a visit to a local pub from 9.15pm. Contact Owen.

**Saturday, 29th April**  
**Wheelers Bicycle Maintenance Workshop**  
11.00am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall.

\*The Green Bridge is in Mile End Park. It crosses Mile End Road near the junction with Grove Road and is the one that's yellow underneath. Details of all events: venues, rides meeting times and train times are posted to the email group nearer the event dates. Otherwise phone Owen for further details of meetings and Steve for further details of rides and socials and to check that there have not been any cancellations.

# East London Cyclist

The newsletter for Tower Hamlets Wheelers/London Cycling Campaign February March 2006



## Precarious (in)balance

**Balance:** (v) the weighing of actions or opinions, the wavering of fortune or chance, power to decide

November 2005, our co-ordinator Owen and I attended a planning meeting at the borough transport department in Southern Grove along with officers from TfL, (Transport for London) the LCN+ (London Cycle Network+) and Newham and Tower Hamlets cycling officers.

A week later, a drop in temperature of a few degrees and Dave Tuckwell from Wheelers, officers from TfL, the LCN+, the Corporation of London and JMP the street engineering consultants (but none from LBTH) meet me at Aldgate gyratory for a day cycling up and down the Mile End Road.

Now this may sound like a pretty futile exercise to some folk, but Wheelers own counts carried out a decade ago revealed up to 1100 cycle journeys a day, since then Wheelers own activity and the increase in cycling across London has prompted the authorities to recognise that something must be done to try and improve the routes that cyclists want to use, rather than dictate routes they want us to use, which was the norm in the past.

The point of this is the CRIM and CRISP process some of you will have read about in London Cyclist magazine.

CRIM= cycle route inspection meeting  
CRISP= cycle route implementation and stakeholder plan  
So, Dave and I spent the day freezing our bits off, discussing, arguing and doing our best to try and get what is best for cyclists out of the day.

TfL officers have a favourite vocabulary they regularly

spout off at meetings when they are on dodgy ground, one term they over use is: 'we must achieve a balance' intended to suggest 'we must accommodate all road users', bizarrely in practice this is exactly what they DO NOT mean. By its nature TfL places motor users at the top of its highway hierarchy, always placing the priority default on moving the volume of motor traffic first, and then fitting in the needs of pedestrians, the disabled and cyclists around them.

Halfway through the day our TfL officer tried this platitude on David, who responded by saying 'but you aren't are you', pointing out the anomalies at a junction that required the pedestrians to make *three separate journeys* to cross the junction to the motor users' one journey.

Me, I was mostly concerned with reversing traffic plans that have been put in place by TfL over the last five years to maximise motor traffic volume along this road, removing most of the guardrailing that creates the no-go area motorway/canyon feeling along this route and pressing for a 20mph speed limit.

However, I believe despite my reservations, the day should lead to improvements along this road, we won't get anywhere near all we want, but will get rid of some of the disasters that TfL have implemented.

Most interesting comments of the day?:

**LCN+ Officer:** 'I have never seen so much guardrailing along a road'

**TfL Officer:** 'You have no idea, we take miles out every year, and they (the local authority) put it all back in again'

Gary



## Magic moves

The excellent shop Bicycle Magic, a feature of Whitechapel Road for 13 years has moved home over Christmas. Magic have for a long time actively supported Wheelers by donating prizes for events, and recently giving us a very good deal on a bulk purchase of helmets and mitts that we bought for the Pedal Power disability group in the summer.

The new shop is not far from the old one, it's now just around the corner at the southern end of Greatorex Street, just off the Mile End Road and has been entirely refitted by

Scott Stanners and his team. With much more space to display kit you don't experience the same squeeze-past-rows-of-bikes-and-risk-of-knocking-over-new-machinery that was a feature of the old store. And best of all, all the same friendly, and non patronising staff have moved along to the new shop as well. Magic!

6 Greatorex Street, E1  
020 7375 2993  
Monday-Friday 9-6, Saturday 10-5

## Wheelers Annual General Meeting & Social Night

Wednesday, 8 March 2006

The Boxing Club, Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Road

Never quite as dull as it sounds, the AGM is where we elect our co-ordinator and committee, and you as a member have a chance to make a difference.

**This year there is at least one vacant space on Wheelers committee, that is my job as newsletter editor. If you feel like you want to do it, and think you can produce a newsletter once every two months, contact Owen and ask for your name to be put forward!!!**

As in the past we have a special guest speaker who this year is, John Biggs, the City and East London representative on the GLA (as well as being a cyclist). John will join in a question and answer session after talking about transport issues in London.

So come along, join in and meet the Wheelers who make things happen! Put names to faces, and find out who you have dissed on the e-list!

### Timetable:

7.00pm - Arrivals  
7.15-8.00 - AGM  
8.00-8.30 - Guest Speaker and Q and A session  
8.30-9.30 - Social with drinks and food

All committee posts are up for re-election during the AGM.

If you are interested in standing for any of these then contact Owen. Full details will be published on our website or call **Owen 020 7515 9905**

## 2006 Resolutions campaign

It is a New Cycling Year and what better way to get the year started than with some New Years Resolutions. Better still, why not have somebody really worthy do them for you - the street management department of Tower Hamlets!!

Having a better cycling environment often comes down to lots of those little things, and quite often the local cyclist is most aware of the changes that would make the largest difference to them.

The Resolutions Campaign is designed to get these little problems fixed by sending letters to the Street Management department of the council listing those things that you would like to get changed. An example letter is below:

*Dear Sir/Madam,*

*New Years Resolutions:*

*I am a cyclist in Tower Hamlets and one of my resolutions is to cycle more around the borough this year. I'd appreciate your help in making this easier, and would like to suggest the following changes that would really have a good impact on cycling in my local area. Many Thanks in advance.*

**1- Crossing Roman Road:** *The first 10 yards of Hewinson Street should be made two way for cyclists (currently northbound only). This allows linkage through on quieter roads towards Morville Street and Tom Thumbs Arch.*

**2- Exit Victoria Park:** *From the West Gate of Victoria Park it would be good to have a small linking cycle path onto the start of Bishops Way. This would be very useful for those cycling through the park and continuing West.*

**3- Hackney City Farm Toucan Crossing:** *This crossing on Hackney Road is very useful for cyclists heading North-South. It is currently on a timer which stops the traffic on Hackney Road whether there is anybody who wants to cross or not. For the cyclists crossing, it would be better if it was a quick request light as they would get to cross more quickly.*

**4- Parking at extreme West end of Hackney Road:** *As the road curves towards the lights it is not wide enough to have parking on both sides of the road. Buses in particular often find it very difficult to get through. In the mornings*

*cyclists are forced to pull out round the traffic queue, this is dangerous. If parking was cleared on the South side and a cycle lane put in, this would be safer.*

**5- Advanced stopline West Bound on Hackney Road at junction with Kingsland Road:** *This is a busy cycling junction with as many as 10 cyclists waiting to cross Westbound during each cycle. Currently they are pinned to the right of the lane which is dangerous when pulling away and approaching the narrow section of road opposite.*

*I am happy to provide additional details on each of these locations. Please don't hesitate to contact me. Kind Regards, CW*



**Hopefully Colin's attached article will inspire you to get writing. Meanwhile here's a tasty bit of traffic engineering in the borough. From the footway the give way sign above is partially obscured, from the road the sign is entirely obscured, so rather than attach a 'low bridge' warning to the existing 'give way' sign, our engineers have erected another obstacle on the already cluttered footway for pedestrians to negotiate, and drivers to puzzle at! Oh, and these cost about £200 of council tax money to install.**

The address to send your letters to is: Margaret Cooper  
Head of Traffic And Transportation  
Town Hall Mulberry Place  
5 Clove Crescent  
London E14 2BG

We'd also be really interested to get copies of these letters so that we can see what you think the main cycling issues in the borough are. So please also mail them into [campaigns@towerhamletswheelers.com]

Of course if you are really keen, one of your resolutions could be, that if you spot a problem whilst cycling, such as a flooded cycle lane, pothole etc that you'll drop a quick letter/call

to the council to let them know about it. It is how campaigning is done and how things are changed!

Happy scribbling!

Colin