

## RIDES & EVENTS

### It's all about the cake...

Or Wheelers' long weekend eating (sorry, cycling) in Norfolk Friday 13<sup>th</sup> was definitely a lucky day for some of us – fabulous sunny warm weather, the start of the Wheelers' weekend away and we even had a lucky 13 participants.

Those who could get Friday off work got a train to Norwich in the morning and cycled 47 miles via the Broads (lunch), the crumbling coast at Happisburgh and Mundesley (afternoon tea with excellent coffee and walnut cake) and the Victorian pier at Cromer to arrive at Sheringham Youth Hostel around 18.30. Along the way we cycled some quiet lanes, took a ferry across the River Bure and administered first aid to one of our number who unfortunately did an unplanned dismount in a flood. Bizarre highlight of the day though has to be the sight of a man in an armchair whooshing past the window at about 20mph and 20 feet above the ground whilst we were having tea – closer inspection revealed a paraglider canopy above the armchair.

At Sheringham we were joined by those who had made their own way from Norwich plus those who had taken the train all the way, and as we were getting hungry again by then we repaired to the pub.

Saturday was a day of choices – 4 chose the Steve Collins led "long" route, two opted for the "medium ride" which seemed to involve a closer inspection of Cromer Pier and a visit to Felbrigg Hall (NT) tea shop, and the remaining seven went on the "seal ride" – a cycle ride of about 12 miles to Morston quay and then a boat trip to see the seals on Blakeney point (so now you know why there are so many pictures of seals on what is supposed to be a cycling website). Medium and seal riders met at Cley-next-the-Sea and basked (a bit like the seals really) and lunched in the sunshine. The "long riders" arrived a bit later, having already notched up about 45 miles, one tea stop, two church stops and what they claimed was the steepest longest hill in Norfolk – this no doubt was punishment meted out by leader Steve who managed to lose all his riders in the first 100 yards out of the hostel when they inadvertently followed the seal trippers. After lunch Steve and Simon muttered something about going to Hunstanton (30 miles or so to the West) but we next saw them ensconced in Wells-next-the-Sea Youth hostel having covered all of 10 miles in the afternoon (albeit along an off road coastal path) – so much for the long ride! Everyone else headed firstly to Cley beach, where we watched the birdwatchers watching gannets with massive telescopes, and then on towards Holkham Hall where only some very fast cycling down through the estate got us to the tea shop before closing time. The last part of the route was via Holkham beach (frequented by Gwyneth Paltrow in "Shakespeare in Love") to Wells hostel. The Daves had sportingly offered to be the shopping team and a smoked fish and rice dish was duly constructed by the half of the group who preferred cooking to washing up. Sunday started early for Steve who decided to cycle all the way back to London, and at a more sensible hour for the rest of us who had

Fakenham in our sights for morning coffee (and cake of course). We then cycled via mostly quiet lanes to Gressenhall – an ex workhouse, now rural life museum, but we of course were heading for the café. The last leg of the trip took us through more country lanes and thence to the Marriotts way, an old railway line traffic free path (part of NCN 1) that we followed all the way into Norwich. We just had time to push our bikes down Elm Hill (the cobbles were not bike friendly) and take a quick look at the cathedral before getting the train back to London.

Thanks to all for the excellent company for the weekend – we will definitely plan something similar next year so if anyone has ideas for suitable destinations please let us know. Caroline F

Please check the Wheelers Website for latest on rides. If you have an idea for a ride, a long/short weekend or an upcoming cycling event please email:

newsletter@towerhamletswheelers.org.uk

**RIDE Safety**  
Always tell someone where you are going and when you are expected back.

Going alone to meet unknown others? Consider contacting Wheelers first.

Always bring lights - esp from Sept - May evening rides. Carry a puncture repair kit, spare tube and pump.

Use strong locks D Locks to secure bike to racks and solid objects.

Ride safely and considerately esp. around pedestrians and on cycle paths

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Please refer to the website for full details and dates of Rides

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# East London Cyclist

The newsletter of Tower Hamlets Wheelers/ London Cycling Campaign DEC06 JAN 07

## Seasons Greetings Happy Cycling New Year

### SANTAS HELPER BRINGS PRESSIES



### Cable Street update

The work is progressing nicely and it won't be long now before it is completed. The previous set of works are definitely an improvement to what was there before, especially going westbound. Cyclists going in to town would have to cut across from left hand lane at a roundabout to where the cycle lane previously started on the right hand side of the road, bringing them into conflict with cars and occasional abuse from taxi drivers not expecting it! The new cycle lane is great and now we can "All

Just Get Along" on Cable Street... Well nearly. RL

### BIKE BUDDY SCHEME

The money's all spent...

But hopefully we'll be back with new funding next year. The Wheelers "Bike Buddy" scheme had another successful year in 2006, with funding provided by St Katherines and Shadwell Trust. We worked with Cycle Training UK and the London School of Cycling to provide training for new (or nervous) Tower Hamlets cyclists so that they could gain confidence in cycling in city traffic. We followed this up with our monthly self-help cycle workshop, and access to our programme of rides. This year, we also worked with the Jagonari Centre in Whitechapel to provide an introduction to cycling for members of the centre. We're currently looking for funding sources for 2007, so if you know anyone who would like to start cycling, but needs a bit of help, watch this space .

[www.wheelers.org.uk/bikebuddy](http://www.wheelers.org.uk/bikebuddy)

## Initiative seeks new temporary home

In the last newsletter we asked for any suggestions for the temporary relocation of one of our best initiatives es. We are pleased to be able to run a monthly bicycle maintenance workshop for anyone that lives or works in Tower Hamlets. Our co-ordinator, Owen, says ".....the workshop is probably the best part of the wheelers activities, a really enjoyable day that has a positive effect on cyclists, especially new or lapsed cyclists who want to get their bikes up to a safe standard before returning to the roads".

### What we do....

Tower Hamlets Wheelers offer this service virtually free of charge, all our helpers are volunteers and will help you fix your bike for free. We do ask for a donation which pays for replacing some consumables and renews tools and equipment but accept whatever is offered. All we ask is that if you have an idea of what needs doing then please bring any specific parts with you to the workshop. We have good relations with many of the Cycle shops in the Borough and recommend Bicycle Magic (see ad) if you need some assistance with getting the right part for your bike. We don't have enough time or indeed the equipment for repairing frames nor do we stock parts for specific makes/types of bicycle, however we do have brake blocks, tubes etc. to fit most bikes. Why not drop in and get your bike ready for winter riding? Watch our website for dates of maintenance master classes, learn to maintain your own bike and fix punctures.



Tower Hamlets Wheelers  
London Cycling Campaign



## Cycle Cycle Forum

20th September 2006

The second cycle forum for people who live or work in the City of London (CoFL) was held in the Guildhall Marketing Suite.

Around 60 people attended about half of whom were regular cyclists. The others were officials of CoFL and at least seven City police officers (also cyclists). Chaired by Mark Boleat and after short briefings following the first forum from the organiser Simon Phillips, Kate Collins, Ian Simmons, Ben and David from Cycle Training UK, Ida Bermingham from North Central Travel-Plan Network and Ian Simmons, the police gave a short talk on the history of the Bike Squad. Questions were bursting from the floor throughout but were mostly rebuffed until the second part of the forum when the Question session revolved around the provision of cycling facilities by CoFL versus the naughty cyclist not helping in determining planning decisions. There were some in the room who appeared to want total freedom for cyclists regardless of laws and regulations designed for safety and traffic flow. One cyclist asked for barriers at traffic lights to stop cyclists going across on red!

The main topics were:

**Cycle parking:** This is getting better and suggestions for new places are always welcome particularly where there is enough space and where they will be used effectively. A useful if outdated guide is available from the Corporation of London "City of London Cycling Guide"

**Enforcement:** There will inevitably be more police enforcement of cycling offences. With 20 Cycle Squad Officers the CoFL police are determined to reduce the number of cycle related offences and accidents. Many of the more minor offences such as parking have been de-criminalised (i.e. no longer prosecuted by courts) so freeing up the police to concentrate on moving traffic offences including those committed on bikes.

**Shared Spaces:** There is much work being done to split existing road use for dedicated cycle lanes. New plans for Holborn Circus where CoFL and LB of Camden have identified a problem area for cyclists and a better experience over Blackfriars bridge were given as examples.

**Implementation:** Unspecific target dates for implementation of plans was met by lots of

## Adult cycle training

The City now offers subsidised cycle training for adults who live, work or study in the Square Mile. For a booking fee of £8 two hours of one-to-one training are offered by instructors qualified to the new national training standard. Training can take place at a convenient location, including along your route to work. For more information and to book a training session call Cycle Training UK on 020 7582 3535 or visit [www.cycletraining.co.uk](http://www.cycletraining.co.uk).

comment around new building in the City and lack of recognition of cyclists by planners. Mark Boleat agreed that we all have to work better together. He said that "...its difficult [when so many cyclists are getting all cyclists a bad name] at the planning stage, to get cyclists needs on the table." This contributed to the heated somewhat negative debate that used up much valuable time.

**Simon Phillips** gave a few 2005 statistics, a short summary of which shows that the average proportion of cycles in the City is a round 9% of all vehicles often rising to 20% on some routes, while busses and coaches account for 4%. (but they do hold more people). Shockingly, the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) in 2005 was 14 and the target for 2006 is 5? I failed to ask the obvious question as to why a target of 5 KSI was appropriate when it should always be zero?

**The Police:** PS Goodchild announced that the Blitz on ASLs promised at the last forum will now take place in October. This pleased the audience one of whom asked if it included Motor cycles. It does. He also said they will be targeting busses and taxis and offering them a 20 minute lesson in lieu of a Fixed Penalty... as they already do with cyclists. We wait and see..... a bus load of Oyster card carrying commuters wait in St Paul's Churchyard while the driver has a lesson in how to be good to cyclists... we'll wait and see on that one.... Operation Atrium, the policy for re-education of offending cyclists continues.

**Critical Mass goes Mainstream** (I'm sure there's going to be more on this) when TfL organise their Mass Participation Bike Ride through London. Next year.

The Forum finished with superb canapés wine and soft drinks while everyone chatted, picked up some freebies and circulated until it was time to leave.

**Date for the next Forum** to be announced.

Official minutes are at:

RW

[http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/our\\_services/highways\\_transport/local\\_transport.htm](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/our_services/highways_transport/local_transport.htm)



## Lone Stars

"Difference of opinion" is healthy within an organisation, it keeps it alive and embraces change. So it is with the "Wheelers". One view is that we are a freewheeling bunch who are unrestricted by too many rules, meetings and tight organisation, our members can either join in or not as takes their fancy. Great, if such a view is that of some of the most active members. Those who like to get involved, do so, enjoy it and ask for no thanks. Ideal situation? Well, yes and no. Ideal if those who can "do" and those who don't, have no expectations. We are fortunate that most committee members are willing and able to provide a strong foundation of support; from day to day management of Wheelers to attending the various events and activities and leading rides. Such dedication by the very few for the membership is to be applauded (even if they don't want a clap). However, it would be good to see some of the 370 (and growing) members supporting some of the various cycling campaigns and events the Wheelers become involved in throughout the year. A few minutes help setting up at an event or handing out newsletters, joint events with police or borough officers, campaigning for cycling rights and provision to all day events such as Dr Bike progresses the cause of cycling. The tiny committee are stars but they can't always be at every event. If you can spare a few minutes, hours or a day here and there please keep an eye on the website and just turn up. Better still come to the monthly meetings which inevitably wind up in a local pub. The group is diverse in make up, willing in nature and defies stereotyping. See you soon? Ed.

# Bikeability

## in 29 London Boroughs

Just about all traffic entering central London from the north and east of the City passes through Tower Hamlets the A10, A11, A12 and A13 major trunk routes feeding from our major ports and London Gatwick via the M11. We have also noticed that many drivers from Kent find it easier to enter London via the Dartford crossing and A13 rather than negotiate the South Circular especially with so much work through 2006 on the Blackwall and Rotherhithe Tunnels.

With such a volume of traffic it is difficult to encourage more people to use cycling on our extremely busy roads. However, Wheelers report a steady increase in membership year on year and London itself has had a 100% increase in cycling since 2000 according to City Police sources.

Twenty Nine Boroughs have implemented cycle training pending the roll out of Bikeability from Spring 2007, but Tower Hamlets is not on the list. Of course there are a variety of opinions about the new scheme that many say looks very similar to Cycling Proficiency in a modular form.

Level 1- Children are taught to control their machines off road

Level 2- training with traffic on quiet roads

Level 3- safe riding on busy roads - secondary school aged children.

A certificate, badge, booklet and a letter to parents forms the award.

3000 children across the country are already trialling the scheme.

Margaret Cooper, Head of Transportation and Highways said in an email to the editor:

"We have a Cycle Training scheme in the Borough which is fully compliant with the same standards and highly successful in terms of the number of people who are trained.

Because it operates so well, we have not progressed sign up to the Bikeability scheme. However, following your email we are looking into whether we could sign up without affecting progress on our cycle training scheme."

M. Cooper has encouraged Ashraf Ali to progress "Sign-Up". We await an update.

### Just for info:

To report potholes etc: LBTH Streetline 020 77364 5004  
email: [roadsafety@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Major Roads - TfL 0845 305 1234 <http://streetfaults.tfl.gov.uk>  
LCC: [www.icc.org.uk](http://www.icc.org.uk)

T: +44 (0) 20 7234 9310 F: +44 (0) 20 7234 9319



map map Map Map Map

If you are looking for an excuse to get out and about on your bike this winter and like a technical challenge, then maybe this is it:

OpenStreetmap is an initiative by the open source software community to create copyright free maps and location data that can be used for any purpose, free of charge. It needs

people to go out and about with GPS receivers to gather the data, and even better, to tag up existing data with road names etc. (No cheating and copying it from existing maps!)

The project is really starting to take off, and if it succeeds, the possibilities are endless. See

<http://www.openstreetmap.org/>

Why not give it a go and map a few blocks around where you live? Large chunks of Tower Hamlets still do to!

<http://www.towerhamletswheelers.org.uk/>