

East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2010

THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS ● LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Blue lanes

The 'pilot' cycle superhighways, CS3 and CS7, officially open on 19th July. These are the first of the 12 radial routes, completion 2015, which Boris Johnson launched in spring 2009 with the promise that "no longer will pedal power have to dance and dodge around petrol power-on these routes the bicycle will dominate and that will be clear to all others using them".

TfL have marketed them as "safe, direct, continuous, well-marked and easily navigable routes along recognised commuter corridors". The cost will be £116 million. A sponsorship deal with Barclays Bank, announced in May 2010, for both the highways and the cycle hire scheme will net TfL £25 million over 5 years.

CS7 runs into the City from Morden along the A24/A3 and CS3 to 'Tower Gateway' from Barking. The A13 is the start of the CS3 westbound, the route then turning south after Bow Creek to wiggle round Mulberry Place into Poplar High Street then via Ming St across W India Dock Rd to more wiggling round Westferry DLR to Limehouse Caseway and Narrow Street, then via the contra-flow junction at Horseferry across the Limehouse Link to join Cable St after the toucan at Butcher Row. From there the route runs directly west to end at Royal Mint St/Mansell St.

Does the CS3 do what it says on the tin? Our colleagues in the LCC groups covering Newham, Barking and Dagenham say not at their end and THW have strong reservations and specific criticisms about the TH section. The major impediment westward for even experienced cyclists, the Tower Hill gyratory, has not been tackled (a criticism also from the council), the blue lanes are in many places too narrow, the light phasing at Cannon Street Road is insufficient, there is poor continuity, signage and definition, (in places an 'old' green lane runs parallel), and the dangerous junctions at Horseferry Rd (with Narrow St and Branch Rd) have been incorporated into the 'blue' route. A common problem for the A13 and CS7 is that the blue lanes have no legal status and in places are so wide they are invariably shared with motor traffic.

The view of the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is that the delivery has not lived up to the hype. A better policy would have been to tackle the big junctions (Stockwell / Kennington)

and gyratories, which are issues of political will rather than budget (see the success of the Hackney Cyclist and local business campaigner to restore Shoreditch to two-way traffic). We would like to have seen Cable/Candle St closed as a rat-run, the road widened for bus and cycle westbound and the cycle lane be contra-flow eastbound.

There are some positives, some major junctions have been improved (for us the Dock St crossing) and 'soft measures money' (£250 thousand in TH) has gone into parking and storage facilities and training. However without radical improvement the highways will not be able to cater for the potential growth in cycling in the capital. LCC has suggested to TfL a Zone 1 cycle network taking advantage of spare road capacity (BikeGrid).

The planning stage for phase 2 of these highways is already well advanced even before the paint has dried on the pilots. In east London route CS2 will run from Ilford to Aldgate along the A11 (the City is not receptive to extending the route westward) and makes up part of the 'Olympic route'. We will be evaluating CS3 whilst continuing to work with LCC to get the best possible for cyclists in route CS2. Meanwhile we urge cyclists with concerns to voice them to TfL via the online contact form and to feed back to us. ■

Gerry Matthews

Canary Riverside stops...

The redevelopment of Canary Riverside South has resulted in the loss of the off-road route around the site for more than two years. It seems that the client – JP Morgan – is now having doubts about proceeding with the £1.5bn twin skyscraper HQ, and work has stopped whilst they consider whether to abandon the project.

If this happens, there will be an indefinite delay whilst a new client is found. We have written to Canary Wharf Management Group (CWMG) seeking an assurance that if the deal falls through, they will take steps to re-instate the route until construction re-starts. The closed route was part of Sustrans National Cycle Route 1, and so is intended to be used by families and inexperienced cyclists. The alternative, which involves negotiating the two roundabouts at Westferry Circus is an unsatisfactory work-around, and not at all suitable for children to use. We look forward to a positive response from CWMG. ■

Dave Allison

Bike week 2010

Wheelers had a great time during this year's Bike Week at the end of June. We organised a variety of rides to entice people to join us and try something different to their usual commute. It was easily our best ever attended Bike Week with almost 250 people coming along to our six events.

The week started with our regular bicycle maintenance workshop with about 30 receiving our help and advice on keeping their bikes in good working order.

The next day on Sunday, Gail led 29 on her ever-popular 35-mile ride up the Lea Valley and on to Upshire for cream teas at the church.

On a glorious sunny Tuesday morning we provided our traditional breakfast to 90 or so cycle commuters on Narrow Street. Now on a part of a Cycle Superhighway there was plenty of discussions held about the pros and cons of the project.

On Wednesday evening 14 of us set off east following the river to City Airport before heading back to Tower Hamlets via the Greenway.

It was then time for the 6th Glamour Ride on a warm Friday evening. Fifty joined in with our celebration of glamorous bicycle fashion. A fantastic variety of glamour was on show with the ride ending on the South Bank with prize giving and the Wheelers' Christiania trike drinks bar providing refreshments.

To finish off our week on Saturday Rob led us on a ride across London first to Battersea Park and then onwards to Richmond Park for a picnic and lazing in the sunshine. 24 came along of which for 14 this was their first Wheelers ride. Hopefully they'll be joining us on some more! ■

Owen Pearson

E-Mail updates

Did you know, you can subscribe to our e-mail list and receive updates about our rides and events and/or discussions.

To join the discussion list now, send an email to:
towerhamletswheelers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To join the announcement/event **only** list send an e-mail to:
thw-mailing-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

More information:
www.wheelers.org.uk/egroup.html

HGV perspective...

(Unfortunately the event announced on 16th June was postponed.)

The Metropolitan Police service 'Exchanging Places' events are held at different locations throughout the year, and is due to roll in to **Naval Row (CS3, By the Town Hall)** on the following **Wednesdays** from 07:00-11:00:

- 28th July
- 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th August



Cyclists will be able to sit in a lorry cab and see the road from the driver's perspective.

Even as an experienced cyclist, if you've never been to one of these before, it is really an eye-opener to understand the 'blind spots' and just how limited the view is. It is also interesting to see where the extra mirrors allow the driver to see – and just how much vehicles without them fitted can't see.

The best advice as always is to keep well away from these vehicles, especially at junctions or traffic lights where they may be turning left.

In London heavy goods vehicles were involved in seven of the twelve cyclists' deaths in 2009. Nationally, one in five fatal cycle crashes involves an HGV, although HGVs are only 5% of road traffic. (CTC)

The Met Police has produced a video on You Tube which gives a practical demonstration for cyclists of how to avoid becoming a victim of a collision, and to raise awareness of the blind spots:
tinyurl.com/hgvmet

TfL also has a video to help cyclists and lorry drivers navigate London's busy roads, and each other, safely and tips on cycle safety at: www.tfl.gov.uk/cycling ■

Rob Lister (Photo: LCC)

Cycling for Health NEEDS YOU!

Do you know someone in Tower Hamlets whose health would benefit from starting to cycle? The Tower Hamlets 'cycling on prescription' pilot project at St Stephen's Health Centre with Dr Rachel Bower has been rolled out and made available to all GP practices in the borough.

Cycling for Health comprises of a structured one-to-one cycle instruction course and free bike hire from Bikeworks, next to Victoria Park, plus regular gentle bike rides in a friendly group. "The project needs LCC members to please help spread the word about this service," says project manager Alix Stredwick. "It's open to anyone over 18 who's registered with a GP in Tower Hamlets, for whom getting back into cycling might be beneficial." People with one or more of the following conditions are eligible: Anxiety/depression, Being overweight/obese, Diabetes, Raised blood pressure, Raised cholesterol or hypertension.

Participants must be officially referred on to the scheme by their GP or practice nurse. When patients then register with Bikeworks, they will get a free goody bag, and the one-to-one registration session will explain what they can get out of the scheme. All GPs and practice managers have been informed about it, and they can find out more by getting in contact with their Healthy Lifestyle Programme Manager – they will know who they are.

"Wheelers can help spread the word both by reminding their own Tower Hamlets GP about the scheme, and by telling friends and colleagues in the borough that they can ask their GP to refer them on to the scheme," says Alix. "You don't even need your own bike – Bikeworks can provide a bike (and helmet if requested) to suit you."

Once a patient's cycling skills and confidence are established, they will be invited to join group bike rides which are friendly and sociable, and run every week on a 'drop-in' basis.



Chris, who lives in Bow and took part in the pilot project, has found that it has changed his life. "It was 30 years since I had been on a bike, but after all those years, once I overcame the initial wobbles, cycling regularly has become a lifeline." he says. "I had been suffering with depression and felt very bleak, but cycling each week got me out of the house." Chris has taken part in many of the weekly bike rides, and is working towards his Level 3 Bikeability. "It's got me meeting people...the activity has improved everything."

The project would also like to thank all those Wheelers who helped out on the pilot project by taking time to ride with patients on the Saturday bike rides. "This really helped get the project off the ground, and help give people like Chris the confidence to get back on their bikes," says Dr Rachel Bower, cycling GP at St Stephen's Health Centre.

CUT OUT THIS ARTICLE and give it to your GP to remind them that they can refer patients on to the scheme, or give to someone who can take it to their GP / practice nurse and ask to be referred.

For more information, contact **Alix Stredwick**: tel 020 8525 4512 alix.stredwick@transport-initiatives.com or Chris Baker, Healthy Lifestyle Programme Manager for LAPs 7 & 8 Chris.Baker@thpct.nhs.uk or if you are a GP/practice nurse, contact your local Healthy Lifestyle Programme Manager. ■

Alix Stredwick

Tower Hamlets Cycling Club

Monday	4.30-6.00pm	Children's Go-Ride
Tuesday	12.00-1.00pm	Young at Heart Over 50s ride *
	2.00-4.00pm	Healthy Minds disability ride
	6.00-8.00pm	Men's Bike Maintenance *
Wednesday	1.00-2.30pm	Women's Beginners / Park Riders
	4.30-6.30pm	Youth Racing *
Thursday	10.30am-12.00pm	Home Educated Children's Park Riders
	1.30-3.00pm	Over 50s ride

Spring/Summer Sessions 2010

Friday	11.00-1.00pm	Men's Ride
	6.00-8.00pm	Women's Beginners / Park Riders
Saturday	2.00-4.00pm	Family Canal Ride
Sunday	various	British Cycling SkyRides (All ages)

All rides start at the running track, Victoria Park (St. Marks Gate) except rides marked with * which start at Mile End Stadium.

Phone: 07961 649463 or email towerhamletscyclingclub@yahoo.co.uk for any further details.

Rides and events

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

July

Saturday, 31st July

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop. Self-help with Dr. Bike if needed. 11am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

August

Sunday, 1st August

UPSHIRE CHURCH TEAS RIDE

Another chance to sample the excellent tea at Upshire church. Lots of traffic free sections up the Lee valley and then across Epping Forest. About 35 miles but lots of drop out points. Very leisurely so a good full day out for beginners. NB There may also be a faster/longer option on offer. Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park. (time TBA)
Contact: **Gail** 07900 056359

Wednesday, 11th August

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**.

Thursday, 12th August

ACE CAFÉ RIDE (EASY)

12 mile ride to the Ace Cafe, Stonebridge Park Good and reasonably priced food awaits you at the destination. **Meet ready to leave promptly at 6.15pm** on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park., or 6.45pm outside Madame Tussaud's, Marylebone Road. Other pickup points on the way, see website. Don't forget your lights and call if you think you might be late to the start points.
Contact: **Keith** 07944 177343 for more details. **Owen** will lead from the Green Bridge.

Sunday, 15th August

MUSEUMS OF EAST LONDON

A leisurely ride with a focus on museums but lots of other curiosities thrown in. Time for tea stops too. Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park (Time TBC)
Contact: **David** 07790 387315

Saturday, 21st August

BRIGHTON RIDE

Ride all the way from East London (60 miles) or take the train to Croydon for a shorter option (50 miles). Quite hilly! Freewheel down into Brighton at the end for swimming/ice cream/chips/tea/beer and return to London by train. Meet at tbc. Contact: **Rob**

Saturday, 28th August

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

- See 31st July.

September

Wednesday, 8th September

MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

-See 11th August

Saturday, 25th September

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

- See 31st July.

Contacts

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