

East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2008

THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS • LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Motorbikes in bus lanes

As most cyclists will know one of Boris Johnson's first announcements was the intention to allow motorcycles to share all bus lanes. This has provoked a lot of opposition from cyclists all over London – a petition organised by LCC attracted 3500 signatures and some borough councils (Lewisham and Hackney) have passed motions confirming opposition to it.

There are plenty of aspects of this to consider – from questions about the reliability of the original trials, to what it would actually mean for you as a cyclist, and how it could affect road usage in general in London.

My personal opinion (not necessarily a Wheelers official position) is that I am concerned not just about the practicalities but also the message it sends out. If we truly want to encourage travel by sustainable modes then to give the same “privilege” currently held by pedal powered people to those sitting astride an internal combustion engine seems a little crazy, almost an invitation to “Come on down, you are very welcome on our crowded and polluted streets”. To back up that emotional response consider the following:

- Will new motorcycle journeys be replacing anything less polluting and energy hungry? Large motorbikes are no more fuel efficient than a small car and less likely to carry more than one person, and they may replace trips currently made by public transport or bike anyway.
- Motorcycles still cause more congestion than bicycles, due to their larger size and higher speeds
- If the motorbikes can move out of the lanes they share with cars and vans there will be more room for more cars and vans to move in.
They are generally the noisiest thing on the road (apart maybe from a cyclist who has just been cut up by an errant motorist!) and therefore rather intimidating

There are plenty more factual arguments and issues about, this is just my view. If you oppose the introduction then please write to your MP and/or local councillors to make your views known. ■

Caroline Fenton

Cycle training

Our Bike Buddy and Cycle Training scheme has been hugely popular, so much so that our funding for training is running out! However, Tower Hamlets Council have started offering free group cycle training sessions:

For the list of dates, see “Cycling and Walking” at: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/data/transport>

After your training, contact us at: bikebuddy@wheelers.org.uk or Tel: 07973 815198 if you'd like to arrange a 'bike buddy' to help you find a route, and accompany you until you are confident. ■

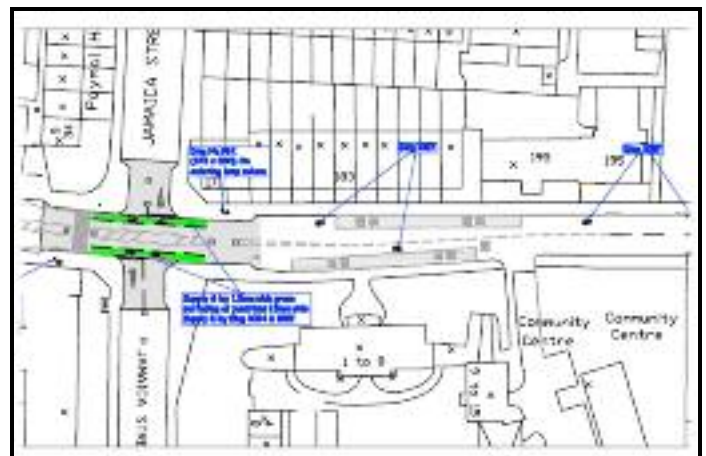
Robert Lister

Stepney Way plans

We are being consulted on the council's plan to formalise a cycle route, and improve bus times along Stepney Way. The proposals include replacing the priority width restrictions with raised tables, and adding the usual cycle route signage.

Wheelers are generally in favour of the plans, except we are concerned about conflicts between small sections of cycle lanes at side-road junctions and car parking bays. This was also an issue at the recent Old Ford Road cycle route improvements.

We review consultations such as these at our monthly meetings. Why not come along if you'd like to get involved....



These are a few of our favourite places...

One of the factors that sway my opinion of a café, shop or bank is whether they look after me as a cyclist, as well as a customer.

I used to use the Cooperative bank in Angel because they had bike stands inside the front doors where you could keep an eye on your unlocked bike with its panniers still on it. How incredibly convenient.

When the Wheelers do rides or tours, we often find pubs and cafés very welcoming and accommodate us in ways London establishments don't usually.

After the monthly Wheelers' maintenance workshop we go to **Vesuvio's** in Three Colt Street for coffee and a snack and they are very accommodating of a large group of cyclists with panniers moving tables around and plonking ourselves down. They once stayed open late especially for us and we had a great meal for twenty-two people.



Anywhere that is positive towards cyclists helps make London more cycle friendly and we believe they should be promoted as part of the positive change in attitudes towards us.

Do you know of somewhere in Tower Hamlets that welcomes cyclists? Tell us and we can spread the word. What better way to reward them than to publicise them and introduce nice, polite cyclists as customers! ■

Words: David Tuckwell / Photo: Neil Clifton

Lock 7

On asking the owner of Sögrene, a bike shop in Copenhagen, "Why don't you stock these bikes in London?", the proprietors of Lock 7, Kathryn & Lee, received the reply: "why don't you?" - enough inspiration to follow their dream, to set up a space not just to sell bikes from, but to devote to many aspects of cycling in a relaxed café atmosphere.



Recently opened, Lock 7's "drop in clinic" already picks up a lot of passing trade from morning commuters heading for Hackney Road, with some bikes left for later collection. Mechanic 'Naked John' (thus known for his naked protests), helps cover the demand for on-the-spot repairs as quickly as is practical. The toolbox is getting larger, and trickier repairs are gradually being taken on. Lock 7 is a work in progress, currently recycling bikes for resale, and with plans to stock select frames for bespoke build & fixed wheel to retro flare, and hiring out Bromptons for daily use, ridden daily by Kathryn & Lee themselves.

With ample space to park inside the cafe it has become attractive to people with pushchairs as well as bikes, based conveniently next to the canal bridge for Broadway market. The balcony view over Regents Canal adds the Feng Shui edge. The healthy breakfast and brunch menu ranges from muesli, croissants, toasted bagels and baked potatoes with various fillings & salads and is soon to include set lunches.

129 Pritchards Rd, E2 (07515 360 721/www.lock-7.com)
London Fields rail. Café and shop open Tue-Sun 8am-6pm.
Walk-in repair clinic open Tue-Sun 8am-10am
and 4-6pm. ■

Bridge of the future

Sustrans has announced the latest stage in its progress towards developing proposals for London's first major purpose-built dedicated walking and cycling bridge over the Thames. If the bridge goes ahead it would be the longest spanning opening cycle and pedestrian bridge in the world.

A detailed technical feasibility study commissioned by Transport for London (TfL) has now been completed. The study, completed by bridge design and engineering specialists Ramboll Whitbybird, builds on the project's preliminary report and looks in much more detail at potential landing sites, navigational constraints, design possibilities and likely costs.

The preferred location for the bridge has now been identified as between Durand's Wharf, a park on the Southwark bank 600m south of Cuckold's Point and the impounding lock on Westferry Road, 300m south of Westferry Circus and adjacent to the planned landscaped park in the Riverside South development. This proposed new location takes into account of the requirements of shipping on that section of the Thames and will link to public transport networks on both sides of the river and puts the cost of the bridge at around £65 million.

The bridge would form part of a wider package of walking and cycling plans designed to address the Capital's transport needs as part of the 2012 Olympic Games legacy. It is planned to span the river, connecting Southwark to Canary Wharf, giving more direct access for thousands of people from south of the River Thames to the Olympic Park, Canary Wharf and the rest of the City and Thames Gateway. The proposals for the bridge are being developed in partnership with the London Boroughs of Southwark and Tower Hamlets and TfL.

Carl Pittam, Sustrans' Director for London says: "Major building projects such as this require detailed thinking before going ahead and the process can often take time. "However this study is crucial as it tells us that the bridge is feasible, the location is right and puts a real figure against its cost. The next step will be a detailed analysis of the potential numbers of users of the bridge. We will continue to work with TfL and the relevant Boroughs to ensure that the process continues to run smoothly and that we build on the positive news this latest report brings."

Further information about Sustrans, including other news releases and detailed online route mapping, is available at the Sustrans website: www.sustrans.org.uk ■

Best bike week...

Wheelers hosted its best Bike Week yet, with all events and rides being well attended, it was great to see so many new faces.

We started on Sunday with the **Epping Forest Ride**, which was a leisurely trip up the Lea Valley and back to take in the forest trails. Monday followed with Mr. Jones providing a Dr. Bike service for council employees at the town hall.

Tuesday, we were treated to a **tour of some of the quirky history of the borough**. (Did you know that we have palindromic street names BARNES and SENRAB Streets...?) On Wednesday, we provided our customary **breakfast al fresco** on Narrow Street, and counted about 400 commuters. Thursday saw the most FABULOUS event of Bike Week in London, the **GLAMOUR RIDE** to the South Bank, complete with its own bicycle sound system, with champagne served in style.

On Saturday morning at 2AM, we joined in with the **Midsummer Madness** ride to Primrose Hill with other like-minded souls.

On Saturday 21st June, we supported the **Tower Hamlets Bike Fest.** in Mile End Park, with a busy stall offering free bike repairs and information.

Wheelers escorted 11 members of the **Jagonari Womens' Centre** bike group to the Bike Fest.

event in Mile End Park via the Green Bridge, which was a safer route than Mile End Road, an opportunity to practice skills learnt over several months of training.

Up and over the Green Bridge gave hill practice not usually found in Tower Hamlets. An enjoyable short trip for all. We hope to see the Jagonari women out and about on future rides!

We rounded off Bike Week with a **picnic in the sun** on Sunday in Victoria Park. **Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out... See you next year!** ■

Gerry/Owen/David T



Tower Hamlets Wheelers is a local group of the London Cycling Campaign. LCC promotes cycling and campaigns for better conditions for cyclists. Membership benefits include a magazine every two months, third party insurance, discounts in many bike shops and local group membership. Why not join us today: www.lcc.org.uk/join or call: 020 7234 9310

Rides and events

Check our web site for the latest information, or call the ride leader. More rides being added!!

We are continuing our popular easy "after work" rides during the summer. See our web site for more details.

July

Saturday, 26th July

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 11am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

August

Saturday, 2nd August

ESSEX/SUFFOLK VILLAGES RIDE (MEDIUM)

Details to be confirmed (see web site)
Contact: **Neville** (020 7537 7821)

Wednesday, 13th 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**.

Sunday, 17th August

THE SECRET BUNKER RIDE (EASY/MEDIUM)

Another ride out into Essex with a visit to the Bunker (so secret that it's marked on the OS map!). Exact route tbc but will include lunch and tea stops. Meet at tbc on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park. Contact: **Caroline**

Saturday, 30th August

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 11am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

September

Saturday, 6th September

ST BARNABAS COMMUNITY FETE

12-6pm at Wennington Green (Grove Rd/Roman Rd junction) www.bowstock.org
We will be there with our info stall and Dr Bike stand. Contact **Keith** (07944 177343) if you can help out on the day.

Sunday, 7th September

THE CUCKOO TRAIL RIDE (EASY)

Always popular Wheelers ride of 30 easy miles starting and ending in Polegate, East Sussex near Eastbourne. Meet at tbc on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park. Contact: **Caroline**

Wednesday, 10th September

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**.

Sunday, 21st September

LONDON FREEWHEEL

Fun mass participation ride to and around central London. Sign-up to join in at www.londonfreewheel.com

Saturday, 27th September

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 11am-3.00pm at Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road.

Contacts

Coordinator

Owen Pearson
07903 018970
owen@wheelers.org.uk

Treasurer

David Allison
dave@wheelers.org.uk

Secretary

Steve Collins
07870 365533
steve@wheelers.org.uk

Rides Co-ordinator

Caroline Fenton
07967 139491
caroline@wheelers.org.uk

Campaigns/Newsletter

Robert Lister
07973 815198
robl@wheelers.org.uk

**BICYCLE
MAGIC**
www.bicyclemagic.com

**EAST LONDONS
LARGEST
BICYCLE SHOP**

BROMPTON

GIANT

ridgeback

CEUMPLER

MADE IN
BROOKS
ENGLAND

DAWES

koga & miyata

**6 Greatorex Street, Whitechapel,
London, E1 5NF. 0207 3752993**