

East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

JUNE / JULY 2009

THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS • LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Tunnel vision

In April we reported that Greenwich Council have obtained funding to carry out refurbishment of the foot tunnel from Greenwich to Island Gardens, including replacement of the increasingly unreliable lifts.



We welcome this, but are disappointed to discover that the council are considering closing the tunnel completely for the duration of the works – likely to be many months. Along with Greenwich Cyclists, we have written to Greenwich and Tower Hamlets Councils, and also to the local councillors and MPS to protest at this:

Currently about 400 cyclists use the tunnel during each of the morning and evening peaks.

- At present there is no sensible alternative to the tunnel for many cyclists, so this would put 400 people back onto public transport or into cars.
- The Docklands Light Railway will not carry cycles at present, and realistically, the trains would not be able to cope with these numbers at peak hours.

We have suggested to the councils that they should look at:

- A means of keeping the tunnel open for cyclists whilst the work is in progress (possibly in the main direction of flow only, which is south to north in the mornings and north to south in the evenings)
- The practicality of providing a ferry service for the duration of the works.

Greenwich council have responded to a letter making the above points and sent on behalf of Tower Hamlets Wheelers, Greenwich Cyclists and other bodies – a meeting is being arranged for May. We will keep you posted about developments in future issues. ■

Dave Allison (Photo: Owen Blacker)

Reshuffle!

Following our AGM in April, Wheelers had a slight shuffle of the volunteer committee posts.

Neville Reid replaces Keith Jones as Events Co-ordinator
Rob Lister replaces Owen Pearson as Borough Co-ordinator
Owen Pearson replaces Steve Collins as Secretary
David Tuckwell took up the new post of Chair
Steve Collins took up the new post of Olympics Liaison

I'd like to thank all the volunteers, past and present, for giving their time and for all their dedicated work!

We still have various posts vacant, including press officer and campaigns/funding co-ordinator. Apply within! ■

Rob Lister

Borough buddy...

Tower Hamlets Council has recently extended their free adult cycle training scheme. In addition to the one-to-one lessons, the council are now offering a 'bike buddy' – someone to accompany you on a particular journey, to give advice about the best route, and help to make you extra happy and confident cycling to work, college, the shops etc, and to apply your cycle training to an actual route you will be using.

Contact Bikeworks for more information: 020 8980 7998 or send an email to cycletraining@bikeworks.org.uk

My bike and I...

Second in a series. Limehouse PCSO **Deborah Lyus** tells us how the bike is now an integral part of the job...

I am a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) based at Limehouse Police Station. I work within a team of six, which includes both Police Officers and other PCSOs. I am part of the Limehouse Safer Neighbourhoods Team, which responds to local issues and concerns in the ward. I have found my bicycle to be invaluable to patrol the area.

The Metropolitan Police initially sent me on a specialist bike course and since that day I have used my bicycle every day. It enables me to be highly visible to the community in which I work and of course cover a wide area. It has the added benefit that I am still approachable to people and can stop and talk to everyone.



On a daily basis I check the condition of my bike and carry out any repairs and maintenance that is required. I then head out and patrol my area. Due to the diverse nature of the Limehouse area I find myself cycling through dramatically different environments. From the canal path of Limehouse Basin, the Thames Path next to Canary Wharf, to the Will Crooks Estate next to Tower Hamlets College. All of these areas are bicycle friendly and I appreciate the flexibility and freedom my bicycle provides.

The roads around Limehouse can be extremely busy however once into the back streets I can travel easily around the local estates and meet the community. The bicycles themselves are specially supplied to the Metropolitan Police by Smith and Wesson. They are extremely robust and ideal to the different terrain that I cover.

In my opinion the bicycle is a significant advantage in my daily work, it allows me to travel throughout my ward and still be approachable to the community.

It has had such an impact that I bought my own bike for the first time in years and find myself using it in my own time; so much so that I have entered the London To Brighton Ride in June. ■

Deborah Lyus

Wheelers weekendng...

Once or twice a year, we organise a weekend away. This Spring's weekend away was at Doddington, Kent. **Dave Allison** sent this write-up...

We had a record turnout of 25 riders, new and familiar faces, with more on the waiting list, so decided to organise a range of rides to suit different aspirations and energy levels. On Friday, a group took a train to Gravesend, then cycled to Doddington via the Hoo peninsula, Rochester and the Pilgrims Way. This is an excellent route along country lanes, and the sun shone all the way. The route crosses the North Downs and involved one impressive hill, but all made it.

On Saturday, three groups set out:

- The supposedly speedy group set off south, over the north downs to Headcorn then south across the Romney marshes, eventually ending up at Camber Sands in the beach café. Return to Doddington was by train.
- The medium and easy pacers chose the north Kent coast, aiming at Margate, or Ramsgate to be followed by a train back. The route went via Faversham, Whitstable (stop for seafood) then along the coast path for much of the day. This route has a good deal of off-road distance (along the sefront) and is excellent for a relaxing day's ride.
- Saturday night, and the Ocado offerings were expertly converted into assorted curries by Aneeta and assistants. The Saturday night cook-up is becoming something of a highlight of Wheeler's trips, and this was well up to the standard.

On Sunday, we had two groups:

- A ride to Dover, via Canterbury, Sandwich and Deal. Hilly up to Canterbury, but flattish from there (until Dover where there is a very big hill). It started out in bright sunlight, but sea-mist rolled in near Sandwich, and things became a bit murky. About 50 miles for the day, followed by a train back.
- A ride back along the Pilgrim's way, the reverse of the way out, for those who hadn't done it (and a few who had but thought it good enough to do in both directions.)

Thanks go Rides Co-ordinator Caroline for her usual high standards of organisation, to Aneeta and her cooking crew, and to all who turned up to make it another enjoyable weekend, I'm looking forward to the next one... ■

Dave Allison

Rideability Vicky Park...

To celebrate the growing number of cyclists that are attending pan London all-ability cycling clubs Bikeworks are proud to announce the first charity fundraiser for all ages and all abilities taking place **17th June (Bike Week) 2009** from 10am – 4pm, in Victoria Park, one circuit is 5k.

Bikeworks would like this to be not only a celebration of individual's achievements through cycling but also the chance to raise money for a few charities.

On the day there will be refreshments, activities and a great chance to meet many other people that love to cycle. Whether this is on adapted bikes or two wheels, support and encouragement will on hand throughout the day for all those involved.

We are currently looking for people to get involved and take part in the ride so if you either know someone who may be interested or want to take part in the ride yourself we need to get some information from you. We will also need volunteers to help during the day so let us know if you want to get involved.

Please contact Bikeworks and ask to speak to someone about the Bike week charity ride. We will then send you out an application and sponsorship form that you will need to fill in and send back to us so we know how many people would like to take part. Then you will need to get practising, think about how far you would like to try to ride and start your training.

It doesn't matter if it's 100 metres or 100 laps it's all about taking part, getting out into the community and having fun!

For more information and the entry pack call 020 8980 7998 or send an email to cyclctraining@bikeworks.org.uk



BIKE WEEK 2009

13-21ST JUNE

www.bikeweek.org.uk

Sunday 14th June 10.00am

PEDALS TO PEDALOS

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park

Easy Ride to a London Park to swap pedals for pedalos, have lunch and eat ice creams. About 12 miles in total.

Contact: **Caroline** 07967 139491

Tuesday 16th June - 7.30am-9.30am

WHEELERS CYCLISTS' BREAKFAST

Narrow Street at Ropemakers Fields (near The Grapes pub) E14

Traditional Bike Week event across London - stop by on your way to work and enjoy some free breakfast. Meet with your fellow Tower Hamlets commuters & Wheelers members, councillors and council transport officer. Contact: **Owen** 07903 018970

Wednesday 17th June – 10.00am – 4.00pm

◀ ◀ ALL-ABILITY CHARITY FUNDRAISER

Bikeworks: Fun sponsored event in Victoria Park

Thursday 18th June – 7pm-late

CHICKEN-RUN II

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park

Well.. how do we explain this...? Funny, easy ride around the borough taking in some very poultry sights indeed....What??

Contact: **David** 07790 387315

Friday 19th June – 7pm-late

THE GLAMOUR RIDE

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park

Dress according to your own definition of glamour; decorate either yourself or your bike or both. It's an easy fun ride, with a break for prize giving and a social at the end. Less than 10 miles.

Don't forget your lights/glitter! Contact: **Leigh** 07957 164619

Sunday 21st June – 2pm onwards

PICNIC IN THE PARK

Meet in Victoria Park (Royal Gate East, Grove Road, near Royal Inn on the Park pub.) End bike Week with a Social get-together.

Contact: **Owen** 07903 018970

**For the latest information on our Bike Week events, visit our web site:
www.wheelers.org.uk/bikeweek**

Rides and events

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

May

Sunday, 24th May

THEMED RIDE – ODDITIES OF EAST LONDON

Meet at 10.00am on top of the Green Bridge at Mile End Park. A ride around Tower Hamlets looking at the odd bits...

Contact: David - 07790 387315

Saturday, 30th May

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Sunday, 31st May

BREAKFAST RIDE (EASY)

Cafe breakfast at about 9:15am, destination will be along the Lea Valley or Thames. 15-20 miles in total. Meet at 8.00am on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park.

Contact: Caroline.

June

Thursday, 4th June

MATERNITY WORLDWIDE CONCERT

Ride to Piccadilly to Maternity Worldwide charity concert. Purchase tickets in advance and contact Steve: 07870 365533 (see www.maternityworldwide.org) Meet on top of Green Bridge, Mile End Park, 6.30pm.

Wednesday, 10th June

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.

13-21st June

BIKE WEEK

National week of cycling events. (Details inside this newsletter) or visit www.bikeweek.org.uk

Saturday, 27th June

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Sunday, 28th June

BREAKFAST RIDE (EASY)

- See 31st May.

July

Saturday, 4th July

DUNWICH DYNAMO

If you are going on the Dunwich Dynamo, good luck! Some of us may be doing it, but we will certainly be in London Fields to see off the riders and then a drink or two!

Sunday, 5th July

ESSEX RIDE

Moderate ride in Essex likely to include sea-side, cream teas and maybe a ferry. See web site for details. Contact: Caroline

Wednesday, 8th July

MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

- See 10th June.

Saturday, 18th July

SUFFOLK VILLAGES

Tour of some of the most picturesque villages in Suffolk, moderate ride but at 50 miles or so, a long day out. (Time TBC)

Saturday, 25th July

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Contacts

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**BICYCLE
MAGIC**
www.bicyclemagic.com

**EAST LONDONS
LARGEST
BICYCLE SHOP**

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GIANT

ridgeback



MADE IN
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ENGLAND

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