

East London Cyclist

www.wheelers.org.uk

JUNE / JULY 2010

THE NEWSLETTER FOR TOWER HAMLETS WHEELERS • LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Superhighways

I write this one-handed, as I nurse my injuries from a recent collision with a car on Horseferry Road. I was following the new contra-lane cycle track, he wasn't expecting there to be a cyclist on the right-hand side of what he thought was a one-way street. So he pulled out of a side turning and hit me.

Bad driving without a doubt, and I made that point to him pretty forcefully. But on reflection, this cycle lane is clearly a poor design. It's completely non-intuitive to a driver that a cyclist will be there, and much of safety on the road depends on things behaving in an expected way - you expect on-coming traffic to be on the left-hand side, you don't expect to be overtaken by things on your left-hand side.

And whilst of course drivers should be careful, if the road layout is confusing, things will go wrong. And the cyclist or pedestrian suffers.

Which brings me to the Cycle Highway. We've written to LBTH recently asking them to formally object to the design of Highway 3. Other boroughs, including Newham and Lewisham have already objected to the highways passing through their areas. Horseferry Road is part of Highway 3, and there's no plan to improve the situation. And it's just one of many places where the route is too narrow, too confusing, on the wrong side of the road, shares space with pedestrians where there isn't enough etc etc. Take a look at the plans for the route at <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/11901.aspx> and look at the implementation schedule - lots of tinkering, but no proper engineering of a cycle route that is designed to handle large volumes of traffic. Take a ride along what's there now (it won't be much different when it's finished), then have a look at this: <http://tinyurl.com/tcycle> - and see how it can be done. ■

Dave Allison

Rob Lister adds: "We're all wishing you a speedy recovery Dave. I had a near miss at this same junction, a dark and rainy evening, and the driver looked right and then pulled out right in front of me. Also, going eastbound I frequently get tooted at by angry drivers who think that I should be in the (westbound only) cycle lane. At a minimum, better signage is needed at this junction."

Beat the thief!



If you've ever had your bike nicked, you will know the feeling when, on returning to the spot where your bike was, you see an empty space. At first, you think... "Hmm... maybe some mistake... maybe I didn't leave it here..." you look about. "No, I definitely left it here..."

After staring at the empty space for a bit, the horrible realisation starts to sink in. It's gone. The stomach churns. Then the anger - first at the situation, then maybe at yourself. "Did I lock it right? Why did they steal MY bike?" Sitting on what seems like the longest bus ride home, ("I could have cycled this in 15 minutes.") thoughts race through the mind... "I'm going to have to replace all the stuff that was on the bike..." "Is it insured?" "Should I report it to the police?" "Do I have a note of the frame number?"

To combat increasing bike theft, LCC have launched **Beat the thief** campaign for 2010.

LCC's eight-point 'Beat the Thief' manifesto calls for increased police activity to reduce theft, shrink the market for stolen bikes and return more recovered bikes to their owners.

1. Creation of a police anti-theft squad
2. Tougher action against selling stolen bikes on websites
3. Code of practice for bike shops
4. Tougher action against street markets.
5. A central repository for recovered bikes
6. Regular stakeholder meetings
7. Increasing secure parking provision
8. Better education for cyclists

For more information, see www.lcc.org.uk.

Southwark Cyclists' Barry Mason kicks off the campaign and presents (with much hand-waving!) a video with tips on how to lock your bike, and shows some examples of how NOT to do it! tinyurl.com/beatthethief

Wheelers will be supporting the campaign with security marking, bike registration and advice on bike locking at our events during Bike Week, and at our monthly maintenance workshops. ■

Rob Lister

Rangers are 'go'

The Volunteer Rangers are now out there in the borough, sending back reports on (1) street faults such as potholes, (2) cycle 'audits', and (3) cycle parking suggestions.

Transport Initiatives has worked with the CTC to link up with www.fillthathole.org.uk for the street fault reporting, so that reports filed by registered Rangers get shown automatically to Transport Initiatives, in order to monitor what happens to the faults reported by the Tower Hamlets Rangers.

Anyone can report faults to www.fillthathole.org.uk, but if you join up to the Rangers scheme we can monitor the situation and see if improvements can be made to faults reported by Rangers in Tower Hamlets.

For the cycle parking suggestions it's just that: making some suggestions where parking in the public environment can be improved. You can choose to do any or all of 1, 2, and 3.

Please contact Alix Stredwick if you would like to join up as a Ranger - you get some free goodies when you sign up (including the all-important cycling snacks) and the chance to input to this exciting pilot. There will be discussion sessions later on for all Rangers to help decide which cycle audits and cycle parking suggestions are high up on the priorities. ■

Alix Stredwick

Slim chance!

Gerhard Weiss, LCC cycling development officer, sent us this picture of the renewed cycle "lane" on Vallance Road. Is this the narrowest cycle lane in Tower Hamlets? If you know of narrower... we'd like to hear from you!



Perhaps the cutbacks are affecting the Council's green paint budget? Far from a safe cycle facility, this incredibly narrow strip of worthless green paint does nothing to improve matters, and maybe even encourage drivers to give cyclists even LESS space! This should be removed for safety reasons. ■

Healthy roll-out

The successful Cycling for Health pilot at St Stephen's Medical Centre is now being gradually rolled-out to other GP practices in the borough.

BikeWorks has received its first new referrals, and now we have two easy rides every Saturday starting from BikeWorks at 12 noon for about two hours each - one entirely off-road, and one that can go on quiet roads occasionally, but mostly off-road.

We're looking for volunteers to help out on these two rides, as having volunteers on the rides during the pilot was of great benefit to the patients.

A number of Health Trainers in the borough, who are part of NHS services to help patients stop smoking, eat more healthily or lose weight, have been trained as Assistant Cycling Instructors. We are going to be incorporating them into the project and hopefully some will go through additional training to become fully qualified Cycling Instructors. We're also teaming up with Cycling Projects, an organisation in the north-west of England who specialise in cycling for health projects, and who will be delivering 'Health Ride Supporter' training to some BikeWorks cycle instructors, volunteers on the Saturday rides, and Health Trainers.

If you would like to get involved as a Ranger, or a Health Ride Volunteer, or to help your GP practice get involved in Cycling for Health; or just to find out more about these projects which are both part of the Healthy Borough programme run by NHS Tower Hamlets and LB Tower Hamlets, contact alix.stredwick@transport-initiatives.com or tel 020 8525 4512 ■

Alix Stredwick

Bicycle Music Festival

• Saturday June 5th

9:00 - 10:00 Look Mum No Hands Bicycle Cafe - Smallish venue mainly for the press www.lookmumnohands.com

11:00 - 13:00 London Fields - Loads of space and lots of bikes

14:00 - 16:00 Stepping Stones Farm Stepney
www.steppingstonesfarm.co.uk

17:00 - 19:00 Surrey Docks City Farm
www.surreydocksfarm.org.uk

21:00 - late - Pangea Project Stamford Hill
www.pangeaproject.co.uk

• Sunday June 6th

12:00 - 19:00 Camden Green Fair Regents Park
www.camdengreenfair.org.uk

HGV perspective...

The Metropolitan Police service 'Exchanging Places' events are held at different locations throughout the year, and is due to roll in to **Canary Wharf** on **Wednesday 16th June** opposite the Underground Station from 7:00am.



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 real 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)



BIKE WEEK 2010

19-27TH JUNE

www.bikeweek.org.uk

Saturday 19th June 10am – 4pm

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road, E14 7HA

Special Bike Week edition of our monthly maintenance workshop.

Sunday 20th June - 9.30am

UPSHIRE CREAM TEAS RIDE

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park E3

A day out up the Lea Valley, morning coffee stop at Springfield Marina, lunch at Chingford, and then via Epping Forest to Upshire for tea at St Thomas's Church. About 35 miles in total. Drop out points to stations if you don't want to do the full route. Easy to moderate pace. On roads, towpaths and good tracks. Suitable for any bike.

Contact: Gail 07900 056359

Monday 21st June – 2:00am (yes, in the morning!/Sunday night.)

MIDSUMMER MADNESS RIDE

Meet at Beigel Bake, Brick Lane E1 6SB

Ride to Primrose Hill to watch the sun come up on the longest day. After stocking up with beigels, we will first ride to London Bridge for 2.30am to meet up with cyclists from all over the capital before heading off to Frith Street in Soho for a coffee stop. Finally, all will ride up to Primrose Hill to watch the sunrise at 4.43am.

Bring warm clothes, as it gets chilly. Contact: Owen 07903 018970

Tuesday 22nd 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.

Wednesday 23rd June – 7pm – 9pm

AFTERWORKER RIDE (EASY)

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park E3

Our ever popular relaxed evening meander around local quiet roads and off-road routes. Don't forget your lights. Contact: Owen

Friday 25th June – 7pm-late

THE GLAMOUR RIDE

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park

Dress according to your own definition of glamour; 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

Saturday 26th June – 10am

KEW GARDENS OR RICHMOND PARK RIDE

Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park E3

Ride to either Kew or Richmond. About 20 miles. Picnic/nibbles if good weather! ride/train back. Contact: Rob 07973 815198

Rides and events

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

May

Saturday, 29th May

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 11am-3pm at **Tarling East Community Centre**, 63 Martha Street, E1 2PA. Self-help with Dr. Bike if needed. Puncture fixing class from 12PM.

Sunday, 30th May

BREAKFAST RIDE (EASY)

Cafe breakfast at about 9:15am, destination TBC. 15-20 easy paced miles in total. Meet at 8.00am on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park. Contact: **Caroline**.

June

Wednesday, 2nd June

AFTERWORKER RIDE

Join us on a relaxing 2 hour ride around local quiet roads and off-road routes. Meet at 6.30pm on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park. Contact: **Owen**.

Wednesday, 9th 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**.

Sunday, 13th June

TOUR OF LONDON GARDEN SQUARES (EASY)

Ride to various gardens and green spaces for Open Gardens Weekend. Advance booking advised. Advance tickets £7.50 for all squares or £9 on the day. Quiet roads and traffic free sections where possible. Cream teas of course but bring a packed lunch. 25 miles or so, but possible to drop out early. Meet at (TBA) on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park.

www.opensquares.org

Contact: **Caroline**.

Saturday, 19th June

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

Monthly Workshop – 10am-4pm. Limehouse Town Hall, 646 Commercial Road. A longer edition of our popular workshop to mark the start of Bike Week.

19-27th June

BIKE WEEK

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

July

Sunday, 4th July

ISLANDS OF ESSEX RIDE (MODERATE)

The highlight of this ride will be a visit to Foulness Island - access to the island is normally very restricted but the public can visit the Heritage Centre on the first Sunday in the month. About 40-45 miles in total, taking in another island, Wallsea on the way. From Foulness we'll go to Southend, in time for tea or chips on the seafront and then back to London by train. Meet TBC.

Contact: **Caroline**

Wednesday, 8th July

MONTHLY WHEELERS MEETING

- See 9th June.

Saturday, 31st July

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

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

Contacts

Coordinator / Newsletter

Robert Lister
07973 815198
robl@wheelers.org.uk

Treasurer

Dave Allison
dave@wheelers.org.uk

Secretary

Owen Pearson
07903 018970
owen@wheelers.org.uk

Rides Co-ordinator

Caroline Fenton
07967 139491
caroline@wheelers.org.uk

**BICYCLE
MAGIC**
www.bicyclemagic.com

**EAST LONDONS
LARGEST
BICYCLE SHOP**

BROMPTON

GIANT

ridgeback



DAWES

koga miyata

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