

DORSET CYCLISTS' NETWORK

www.dcn.org.uk

founded 1992

Newsletter no 57

May 2007

CYCLE TRAINING

Bikeability – the new national cycling training system

DCN believes that one of the essential factors in encouraging people, especially our children, to take up cycling as a normal form of transport, is training.

Many of us remember the Cycle Proficiency Test but in today's road conditions we need something more. The new national training scheme, Bikeability, which is being launched as you read this, promises all the right things. The big question is: will it be adequately funded?

On page 4 in this issue we explain in detail what Bikeability is, followed by information and comment expressing serious concern about its lack of funding and the reason.

If Bikeability is to work, trainers must be recruited, trained and maintained to see that it meets its target of offering training to every primary schoolchild in England by 2012. Otherwise it will be a failure of government to live up to its rhetoric.

IN THIS ISSUE

2 DCN needs help

3 Diary

4-5 Feature on Cycle Training

6 Cycle paths; Macmillan Ride; Global warming: opportunity for action

8 Arts Institute BUG news

9 New Forest cycle rides

10-11 Christchurch news

13 National & international

14 Ferndown; Free to France!

16 Letters: Driver liability; Poole news; Folding bike for sale

17 Buying a hybrid bike

18 Bike theft; How councils encourage/discourage cycling

19 French cycling news;

Critical Mass (letter); Women Drivers!

20 Weymouth & Portland news; Purbeck news

22 Injury claims for cyclists; An anti-cycling policy? ; Reporting potholes the easy way; Cycle Training contacts

23 Useful contacts; DCN discounts

24 Membership and advertising news; Hi-Vis order form

DORSET CYCLISTS' NETWORK

Founded in 1992 and covering most of Dorset, DCN campaigns for a cycle-friendly Dorset by promoting a sustainable mode of transport which reduces pollution and congestion for everyone.

DCN is a member of the Cycling Campaign Network (CCN), the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC), Sustrans, Dorset Agenda 21 and the Dorset Cycling Liaison Forum. We are agents for the Environmental Transport Association (ETA).

See our constitution and policies on our web site or by sending s.a.e. or e-mail to the Chairman
Membership is open to all - see back page

DCN County Committee

Please note changes in our e-mail addresses.

This has been done to stop misuse of our former e-mail addresses by spammers.

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66 Old Castle Road, Weymouth DT4 8QE
01305 772654 weym@dcn.org.uk

Wimborne Michael Evans (see Chairman)

wimb@dcn.org.uk

Can you help DCN?

The vacancies shown above show a disturbing trend. It is vital that local cycling issues be tackled by local cyclists who know their areas and what the problems are.

If no one can represent these areas it's less likely that improvements will be made there. Please think seriously how you, the members, might do more to help our aim to make Dorset more cycle-friendly. Contact me for a chat about it. Michael Evans

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Rides & Events

Visit dcn.org.uk/diary.htm for updates
Entries on this page are free

Saturday 23 June at 2pm

DCN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Parish Hall, The Quay, Wareham

Speaker: Adrian Roper

Regional Sustrans Officer

Anyone interested in cycling is welcome.

Light refreshments. If you can't cycle all the way, cycle the last bit and make a show of bicycles in the town!

REGULAR RIDES

Wimborne Branch

Gentle monthly rides NOTE NEW DATES

27 May, 17 June, 9 September, 14 October, 11 November

Ring David Bourne for details 01202 882721

Purbeck Branch - (Freewheelers)

Family cycle rides - short and longer distances every Wednesday evening until 15 August.

Start 6.30pm Purbeck Sports Centre

Sunday rides twice a month start 10.30am.

John Thraves **01929 554550** or **07780 69742**

West Dorset CTC

Every other Saturday. Start either at Weymouth (RSPB hut, Swannery Car Park) or Dorchester (Top o'Town cafe). 10.15 for 10.30 start. About 25 leisurely miles with pub/cafe/picnic lunch. Quiet lanes, no one gets left behind.

Ring Gail: **01305 261345** www.wessexctc.org/

Salisbury Cycling Campaign (COGS)

Monthly rides. 11 am from Salisbury Leisure Centre 20-25 miles including lunch stop. Please bring lights in case of unforeseen delays

COGS : 01722 325608

New Forest Cycle Rides

See page 6 for dates of five cycle rides in the New Forest National Park especially for DCN members and friends.

Enquiries to **John Vuagniaux 01202 476404**
johnv@spindles11.fsnet.co.uk

Saturdays, Burley & back for beginners.

Meet 8.45am Pioneer Store near Fountain Roundabout A35 Christchurch or 9am at The Oak, Burton. No one abandoned. Minor faults fixed. Under 18s to come with responsible adult. This is not an organised ride. You ride at own risk.

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Rides & Events (continued)

Wednesday 2 May at 7.30pm

Weymouth & Portland Branch meeting
See page 20 for details

Saturday 23 June at 11am

Annual Charity Ride in aid of The Motor Neurone Disease Association & Joseph Weld & Trimar Hospice Trust with CancerCare Dorset Trust. Routes from 5 to 30 miles. Fun day. BBQ 6pm Live music 8pm. Ring David at The Crown, Winterborne Stickland **01258 880838**

Sunday 24 June starting at 12.00.

Blandford Bikeathon (Bike Week Event)
Sponsored bike ride for Julia's House - The Dorset Children's Hospice.
2 routes: Families 12 miles - Cyclists 26 miles.
John Turnbull 01258 452233
www.blandfordstourrotary.co.uk

Sunday 1 July

Macmillan Cancer Relief
Annual sponsored ride starting at Broadstone
See page 6 for details

Cycle training -what is Bikeability?

What is Bikeability?

Bikeability replaces the former Cycling Proficiency Test, and is designed to teach the skills and confidence to ride a bike on today's roads. From this Spring, in the Bikeability award scheme, children and adults will be instructed how to ride bikes to the National Standard for Cycle Training, which sets out the essential training and skills. The standard was developed by over 20 organisations including Cycling England, the CTC and RoSPA and is run by the Cycle Training Reference Group.

Over the next six months, Bikeability will be tried with 3,000 children around the country prior to its national launch. Its aim is to increase the number of children who receive quality cycle training by qualified instructors and by 2008/9 to ensure that as many as half of year 6 pupils are trained through schemes awarding Bikeability. Within five years no child in England should leave primary school without the opportunity to get the training.

There are three levels:

1. Level 1 is usually in a traffic free environment teaching skills and understanding to be able to cycle safely in a traffic free environment and as a pre-requisite to a road trip.

2. Level 2 is on quiet roads with real traffic conditions to teach the skills and understanding to be able to cycle safely to school, work or leisure on quiet roads.

3. Level 3 is on busy roads in real traffic conditions and advanced road features, teaching the skills and understanding to be able to cycle safely to school, work or leisure on busy roads and using complex junctions and road features.

Children and adults will be encouraged to achieve all three levels and learn that there is always more to learn and to enjoy on a bike.

The award is a luminous metal badge, booklet, certificate and for children, a letter to parents.

Bikeability is also about introducing people to cycling as an everyday alternative mode of transport, a pastime bringing a healthier lifestyle and fun, and a skill they will never forget.

For fuller details visit

www.bikeability.org.uk or contact the administrator of the scheme:

**Cycling England, PO Box 54810,
London, SW1P 4XX**

e-mail: **info@cycleng.org**

Cycle training - the money situation

We are grateful to Dorset County Council's Steve Williams (Transportation & Highways) and Robert Smith (Road Safety) for the facts and figures in this section.

Having seen what Bikeability is about, we need to look at how it will be paid for and by whom. The answer is not encouraging as far as rural Dorset is concerned, for one simple reason: cycle training is not something that councils have to provide by law, so they do not receive sufficient central government money to fund it.

Between 2006 and 2011, the County has planned capital expenditure on integrated transport of just over £24 million, of which 9.3% (just under £2¼ million) is for cycling.

The Council believes this demonstrates their commitment to cycling despite very low funding allocation by central government whose annual settlement letter indicated that it mainly recognised cycling provision connected with school travel plans and tourism.

But because cycle training is a non-statutory service, there is no longer an allocation to fund cycle training, which is
(cont next page)

Cycle training - the money situation

(continued from previous page)

now provided by Sports and Leisure Centres. If the County Council wants to promote and support this training (and we believe that it genuinely does) it has to rely on local partnerships and this has led it to approach various bodies, including DCN, to ask if they are willing to financially support a self-help guide to cycle training (on the lines of a "Fit2Ride" set of leaflet now being produced by Devon County Council) at a cost of several thousand pounds. Apart from the fact that we could not afford it, the idea did not appeal to the DCN County Committee, who would prefer to see a more personal approach to training.

To sum up, the County Council recognises the need for cycle training, but because it is not a statutory requirement they are not able to have a budget for it or to support the Leisure Centres who are supposed to be carrying it out, unless they can get money from voluntary sector bodies such as DCN.

Previous newsletters have already shown how patchy is the provision of children's cycle training, with a few Leisure Centres doing great work but others rather less. Adult training, which we regard as equally important, is almost totally unavailable except at the excellent Moors Valley Park (run by East Dorset District Council) – accessible for those around Bournemouth and Poole but not very practicable for anyone living west of Wimborne.

What is to be done about the unsatisfactory situation? Central government clearly has to be persuaded to support their rhetoric about how good cycle training is, and enable local authorities to deliver it by making it a statutory duty and then funding it. What is the good of a scheme like Bikeability if it depends on the discretion of Leisure Centres whether to provide it or

not, and on getting money from so-called "partnerships" which means asking voluntary non-profit bodies such as DCN for their money when their members are already putting as much voluntary effort into assisting councils as they can - including providing voluntary unpaid cycle trainers!

Write to your MP. write to ministers, write to the press about it; you never know, it might make them see how important a role cycle training should play in solving the health, environmental and transport issues that will be faced by our children and grandchildren.

Cycle training in Poole

In response to our request for information about future training in the Borough of Poole, Sally Funnell has sent this reply

I do not have a specific budget to run the cycle training scheme. I have a small road safety budget which I use for buying in leaflets and printing forms etc, but the trainers are all volunteers.

Training these volunteers to the new national standard (they are currently trained to the ROSPA standard), will be difficult because very few of them will be prepared or able to give up 5 days of their time to train - 4 days training plus 1 day of homework and this doesn't include the pre-course bike inspection and post course monitoring. The cost of training these 25 volunteers would be very high.

If we do not deliver national standard cycle training we will not be entitled to make Bikeability awards.

I would add that we train 300 children for approximately £3.5k under the present system and I am also hoping to start up a course this year for people that wish to return to cycling and this will be run by someone who has been trained to the new national standard.

CYCLE PATHS - MUST WE USE THEM?

The cyclist who was convicted last August for riding on the road instead of using a separated cycle path has had his conviction quashed by Shrewsbury Crown Court where the judge told him he was as entitled to be on the road as anyone else and criticised the police action in bringing the case. However this does not set a precedent and each case is likely to be dealt with on its merits. The Cycle Campaign Network advises that someone who rides very slowly might be well advised to use a cycle track if there is one and if riding on the road might be construed as inconsiderate to other road users. Meanwhile the situation is likely to remain controversial because the new Highway Code coming out soon will require cyclists to use cycle facilities 'wherever possible', irrespective of the consequences for their safety. This is despite the huge response by cyclists in the consultation phase, and it is clear we have been ignored. Cyclists will also continue to be recommended to ride around the outside of roundabouts, in the place where conflict is most likely and the rule that they should wear a cycle helmet is also to be retained.

Global warming Opportunity for action

At present there is VAT on new bicycles and spare parts. One school of thought holds that if these items were VAT-free it would be a useful contribution towards reducing our carbon footprint by encouraging more people to buy bicycles. A petition to this effect has been opened on the internet, addressed to the Prime Minister, and it will be available for you to sign until 8 August this year at

[http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/list/
open?sort=signers](http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/list/open?sort=signers)

Macmillan Dorset

Bike Ride

By Peter Smith Nichols

This year's Macmillan Cancer Support ride will be on Sunday 1 July. This annual charity cycle ride has seen an increase in interest and funds raised following the introduction of new courses to the event in 2004. The event again offers a choice of four circular courses along Dorset country lanes, consisting of 15, 25, 40, and 60 miles starting in Broadstone.

Cycling is on the increase in this country and bringing the Tour de France to London this July will encourage even more people to get on their bikes.

Last year's event raised a record £47,211 for cancer sufferers and their families, and that will support local people who are living with cancer now. In Dorset, people with cancer already benefit from 34 Macmillan professionals, including specialist and palliative care nurses, GP facilitators, social workers and information professionals. Macmillan hopes to reach a total of £50,000 this year to further its valuable work in Dorset.


All are welcome to take part. Individuals, families, company teams, all ages and abilities are catered for with the different categories of ride.

To register, apply for an entry form from

**Macmillan Cancer Support, Dorset Bike
Ride, PO Box 1432, Broadstone, Dorset,
BH18 9YE. Tel 01202 601705**

Editor's note: The Dorset Bike Ride was started in 1989 by Peter Smith-Nicholls the year after he cycled from John O Groats to Lands End following the death of his father from cancer. It continues the fund raising he started on that End to End bike ride when 40 people took part and raised £2,500. The event now attracts around 600 cyclists.

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Arts Institute
Bournemouth
Bicycle Users Group
from Simon Adams

We have recently purchased 30 lockers which are being used for free by staff and students who cycle into the Institute. Also we have installed high level CCTV along all the bike racks to reduce the possibility of theft. Currently I am producing an Arts Institute cycling leaflet for staff and students.

I have just won the Dorset Travel Coordinator of the Year Award for 2006 from Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and Poole Borough Council. Also the Arts Institute won the Association for Commuter Transport Public Sector Commuter Initiative Award for 2006.

(Editor's note: Many congratulations to Simon and to the Institute on these achievements.)

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www.grovelodgewimborne.com

e-mail ruthebush@yahoo.co.uk

New Forest Cycle Rides

John Vuagniaux is organising a series of "Continental Style" rides in the New Forest, specially for Christchurch Bicycle Club and DCN members, their families and friends. All rides start at 10am and include a picnic stop. Enquiries to John on 01202 476404 or johnv@spindles11.fsnet.co.uk

Sunday 27th May

Staple Cross, Burton [SZ172938] for "Castleman Trailway Ride" to Setley and BBQ at John V's after the ride.

Sunday 24th June

Lucy Hill Car Park [SU226045] to New Forest Reptile Centre.

Sunday 29th July

Standing Hat Car Park [SU307032] to Hatchet Pond.

Sunday 26th August

Abbots Well Car Park [SU177129] to Janesmoor Pond.

Sunday 23rd September

Holmsley Campsite Car Park [SZ211991] to Knightwood Oak.

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Christchurch

DCN contact Lucy Marstrand

From Lucy Marstrand

Bob Baker said in the last newsletter that the proposed B3037 is a compromise. The Council's aim to create Safer Routes to School is admirable. Two-way cycle tracks can work well, particularly if they are continuous and segregated from traffic by raised kerbs. But provision needs to be made to get them safely across the road (particularly if they are children) to side roads on the other side especially on busy roads.

Government guidelines recommend that the best way to make cycling safe is to make the roads safe. Research suggests that cycling on pavements is not as safe as one might assume, especially when there are give-ways at side roads (see TRL report 462.) Such routes place responsibility on children to look out for motorists at each side road. Pavement facilities also come to an end so that cyclists continue cycling illegally on the footway or rejoin moving traffic on the road. Some pedestrians find it frightening and dangerous to share footways with cyclists separated by a white line particularly if due to visual impairment they cannot see the line.

Pedestrians are more vulnerable than cyclists because they include the young and old, and those with disabilities, visual and hearing impairments. On-road cycle routes give cyclists automatic priority, placing the onus on motorists to avoid collisions.

I agree with Bob when he says he would not wish to see young or inexperienced cyclists [cycling] with only a white line for protection. Ideally there should be a raised kerb. Reducing traffic and slowing it down would also protect cyclists. Putting cyclists on pavements takes space from them and undermines the right of the cyclist to use the road. It reserves road space for motorists, and makes roads cycle-unfriendly. Where traffic and speed reduction have been implemented there has been a marked increase in cycling such as in Poole where there has been a 50% increase in cycling to schools.

Safer Routes to Schools and Somerford Estate

from Bob Baker, Christchurch Borough Council
Further to my report in the February newsletter, I would like to point out the work done outside every school gate in the Borough, plus recent and ongoing work to facilitate safer routes to school. With regard to the Somerford Estate, working with council members and the County Council, three years work will result in the first phase of traffic calming works which began in January. Further finance via the LTP will come on stream in successive years. Recent tragic events did not prompt this work which was a direct response to requests from residents since 2002 to look at suitable calming measures on the estate.

From Peter Dulieu

I am surprised Bob Baker defends the proposal by Christchurch Council to provide a safe route to school along Fairmile when he knows the government and Sustrans recommend that only as "a last resort should shared pedestrian/cycle routes" be provided. Training for children on the unique hazards of cycling on the footway is not covered in any manual for cycling proficiency courses which train them to ride on the road. So why this preference to put young riders on the pavements? There is plenty of research to show that the perception of many parents that their child is safer off the road is totally wrong.

So what should Bob be recommending to his Council? As the East Dorset CTC County representative I suggest he does everything in his power to convince his Council that the way forward is to make the roads safer for cyclists. The government recommends a 'hierarchy of solutions' which is surely known to all Traffic Engineers.

To parents I would say make sure your child is capable of riding safely on the road or accompany your child on his/her school journey. If you still feel your child does not have the necessary skill to ride on the road, let him/her ride on the footway whilst you ride on the safe road that Bob has created so that you can

continued on next page

Christchurch

continued from previous page

from Peter Dulieu (continued)

monitor your child's safety (and good manners to pedestrians) on the journey. If you want to speed up your child's skills and at the same time enjoy yourself on a safe pleasant ride into the forest, family rides leave the Co-op car park every Saturday morning. Details from Terry Walsh tel 01202 247888. It's a 20 mile ride but the youngest, so far, to qualify for a certificate was aged 7, the oldest well over 70. There have been no traffic accidents in over ten years – that's a measure of how safe it is.

Christchurch have compounded the felony by creating shared pedestrian/cycle crossings at the re-designed Stour Road/Barrack Road junction. This can only put cyclists who use the road, as Bob Baker does, in danger as motorists will expect cyclists to get off the road. This is no safe route to school, it's a commuter route.

from Mrs Leyla Payne, Christchurch

I am writing to you with regards to an article in the February newsletter, written by Christchurch's highways design manager Mr Bob Baker re: the B3073 cycle track. As a local mother of three children and in view of the ever-increasing traffic through our local town, I understand fully the need for cycle provisions to protect the well-being of cyclists, particularly those who are most at risk. Can I please ask, why Bob Baker believes it is ok to "compromise" the safety of our children with such proposals? He states himself that "the B3073 cycle track has created a lot of discussion and I agree it is a compromise." The proposals include on path facilities, mainly to provide safe passage to schools. Is Mr. Baker aware of the dangers and confusion children face with such cycle routes? I have an eight-year-old daughter, a six-year-old son and an 18-month-old son who travels in my attached chariot. I have found on many occasions that pavement cycle facilities pose many dangers and can cause confusion, which in itself can be hazardous.

They are not continuous and often mean crossing many junctions and sometimes extremely busy roads. The dangers here speak for themselves, but you must be aware that children can confuse this stop start routine when cycling on road. Surely this is not the situation we should be putting our children in. Many people too have hidden driveways, which lead out onto paved areas. Would it not make more sense to provide safe, wide cycle lanes on road, with cycle filtering at junctions and an alternative road layout at the fountain way roundabout which is both safer for cyclists and pedestrians? If you remained concerned about children and road safety, then make courses such as cycling proficiency more widely available.

Lastly pedestrians do not like to share paths. They make many, especially the elderly, feel unsafe.

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National and International news

Bikes on Trains

On 18th January the European Parliament decreed that "... in future all trains should provide a specially designated area of the train for baby carriages, bicycles and sports equipment." They supported an amendment to new railway passenger regulations introduced by Green MEP Cramer (Germany), the Socialist MEP El Khadraoui (Belgium) and the Christian Democrat MEP Rack (Austria). It was adopted by an overwhelming majority: 529 in favour, 56 against and 14 abstentions.

In response to a petition (to which DCN was a signatory) that all train operating companies should be required to make adequate provision for cycles to be carried on trains, the government responded on 9 February as follows:

"The responsibility for the carriage of bikes on trains rests with individual train operators as is the decision to charge for the carriage of bikes. The Department for Transport has long recognised the value of bike and rail journeys and we will continue to encourage all Train Operating Companies (TOCs) to provide facilities which will help facilitate more bike and rail journeys.

We will also continue to encourage TOCs to carry bikes on trains whenever possible in line with the Cycling Policy document first published by the former Strategic Rail Authority in 2004 and recently adopted by this Department. The policy advises TOCs to facilitate the carriage of cycles on off-peak services and promote the carriage of folding cycles at all times. However, during the peak where capacity is under pressure, there may be circumstances in which it is in the interests of the majority of passengers not to permit non-folding cycles on board.

The franchise replacement process also provides an opportunity to improve cycle facilities at stations, and to address the requirements of cyclists who wish to use trains. Bidders for the South Western franchise were asked to consider cycle-rail integration matters in their bid submissions. The three current franchises that are out to tender, i.e. East Midlands, West Midlands and New Cross Country, have a similar requirement. The InterCity East Coast franchise replacement specification will also require bidders

to consider bike-rail integration and facilities at stations. Whilst there will always be situations where bikes cannot be accommodated during peak travel, we believe that the TOCs now have a better understanding of the benefits of providing for cyclists which we will continue to promote.

We have asked Cycling England, our advisory group on cycling, to look into how we might better encourage bike and rail journeys. They have accepted this remit and are now looking to see where progress can best be made to further improve bike and rail integration."

Why don't more people cycle to work?

Research at the University of Bolton suggests that whatever puts commuters off cycling to work, it is not their perception of danger on the road. Dr John Parkin found that cyclists-only road markings, such as cycle lanes, make no difference to people's view of any potential hazards. He concludes that more road markings are not going to convince the public to get on their bikes and that other solutions must be found.

Dr Parkin said: "This research shows there is little we can do to the roads in terms of minor infrastructure works such as signing and road marking. What keeps people in their cars? Are they just so much more comfortable and require little effort? Issues that need to be addressed include comfort, the attractiveness of the journey, and making cycling journeys more direct, and importantly more direct than the car alternative particularly in urban centres with a lot of traffic management, for example one way streets.'

Lies, damn lies and . . .

Transport Statistics Great Britain 2006 shows that the amount of cycling in 2005 was 4.4 bkm*, up from 4.2 bkm in 2004. Previous totals were 4.5 bkm in 2003 and 4.4 bkm in 2002 (bkm means bike-kilometres).

However, the National Travel Survey, also recently published, shows a fall in the amount of cycling per person from 2004 to 2005 - 39 miles down to just 36 miles. In 2003 it was 37 miles and in 2002 36 miles (that's miles in a year!)

**bike-kilometres*

The Ferndown cycle lane

Last summer there were complaints from cyclists and motorists about the work carried out by Dorset County Council at the traffic lights at the junction of Victoria Road and Wimborne Road. They had placed a cycle lane in the middle of the road because a dedicated left turn lane for traffic was created and a cycle lane to the side of that would have meant cars turning in front of cyclists. The system is reported to have caused confusion and we now hear that the council has decided to return the cycle lane to the side of the road. Traffic control engineer Matthew Williams is reported as saying he knows he made a mistake and that people did not use it as he thought they would when he designed it.

This is yet another example in a long series over many years, of council engineers failing to consult cyclists before they plan anything to do with cycling, resulting in waste of public money that could be better spent. Cycling bodies like the CTC and DCN have regular consultation with councils, we keep in touch with them frequently, advertise their services and help with cycle training free of charge, yet they persist in ignoring us when thinking up their road schemes. No wonder we get frustrated at times and throw up our hands in desperation! When will they get the message that we are here to help? For goodness sake, DCC, when you think you've got a good cycling idea, would it be too much to ask that you ask local cyclists and your own Cycling Officer what they think of it?

Sail and cycle to France free

SeaFrance with The Tour de France are offering FREE travel across the Channel during Bike Week. Cycle over for the day or week. FREE crossings for any foot passenger crossing with a bicycle between 16 and 24 June. To book call 0871 663 2559 and quote FREEFTDAY for a day trip or FREETRWK for up to a week.
Also see www.sailandcycle.com/

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Driver liability

from John Vuagniaux (DCN Christchurch)

On the continent motorists turning right generally give way to cycle traffic travelling straight ahead. Continental drivers are not better people, just better motivated. Over there, if someone drives into a pedestrian or cyclist it is the driver's fault, by default, unless the driver can prove that the cyclist or pedestrian was doing something wrong, and penalties are large and immediate.

Without "driver liability" many cycle-friendly things they have cannot be implemented here. It's why our engineers are reluctant to give cycle lanes right of way over side roads. The idea of taking out all the lights and road markings so that every road user looks out for everyone else works only when motorists are as scared of bumping into a pedestrian as pedestrians are of being run down. Since so much else hinges upon it, I feel that driver liability should be at the top of our campaigning objectives.

Editor's note: DCN's policy is like that of the CTC, namely that we want the law on driver insurance to be amended so that non-motorised road users will be able to claim injury damages from drivers who hit them unless it can be shown that the non-motorised road user behaved recklessly. Drivers would not be criminalised under such a law, which is already in place in some European countries. They would merely be required to drive safely, and to take the requisite care around children and other people who can be expected to act unpredictably.

DCN Member's advert

For Sale - Redlof Folder

Converted for touring. 26-inch wheels, Shimano Dymo and Deore rear hubs with Alessa rims and marathons. Deore transmission with stronglight cranks, Kelly take-offs, V-front and Sun Tour self-energising rear brakes. MKS folding pedals, Brooks saddle, rack etc. all in as-new condition - including carry-bag

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News from Poole Council

(from Sally Funnell by e-mail)

There are new on-road cycle lanes at Sandbanks Road between Elgin Road and Evening Hill; Ringwood Road between Constitution Hill roundabout and Dorchester Road; Wimborne Road between Oakdale Library and Fleetsbridge roundabout; and Wimborne Road between Serpentine Road and The Tatnum.

In the Spring we will be offering 'Peddle again in Poole' to encourage people that haven't ridden a bike for some time to join group rides. It will operate from Upton House and bikes and equipment will be available. The leader of the group is trained to the new national standard. A small charge will be made for the course which will be spread over 3/4 weeks.

We have a new adult cycle trainer trained to the national standard. He offers one-to-one training and can teach people to ride a bike for £10 per hour.

On Sunday 10 June the Company of Cyclists will again be visiting Poole Park to offer riders the chance to have a go on different types of bikes.

A new Poole cycleway map is being produced in co-operation with Bryant Homes. The map will detail circular routes of differing lengths for people who wish to improve their fitness and cycling stamina. The existing Poole Cycling and Walking map and the Conurbation map are both being updated at the moment.

The successful bike purchase scheme run by Sunseeker, which was mentioned in a previous newsletter, has appeared on the Cycling England website in the engineering section under 'scheme of the month'.

(Letters continued on page 19)

Buying a trekking (or hybrid) bike

by John Vuagniaux

General description

Trekking bikes have really come to the fore with the introduction of the Sustrans National Cycling Network. Whether it's a weekend ride on local country lanes, on forest tracks, the daily commute or shopping trip there will be a model to match your needs.

A "Trekking" bike is also referred to as a "Hybrid"; they are ideally suited to the majority of leisure cyclists and a broad section of commuters.

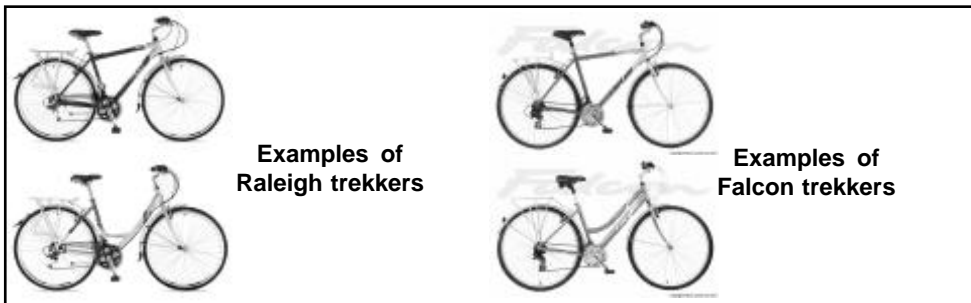
They originated when customers told bicycle manufacturers that the mountain bike was too cumbersome, heavy and slow, and they needed a bike to suit their needs. The trade listened and took the best elements from mountain bikes, touring bikes and road bikes to build a bike

Better models are "fully equipped", i.e. they are supplied with factory fitted mudguards and pannier racks; high-end trekking bikes offer suspension forks, suspension seat pillars and adjustable rise handlebar stems.

"All-in-All" the trekking bike is the best all-round bike there is. It is perfect for tarmac riding, even for longer journeys, and yet it is more than capable of being taken onto disused railway lines, canal footpaths, bridleways and forestry tracks.

Pros

Lightweight, wide range of gears, equally at home on road or on well made forestry tracks and disused railway lines and canal towpaths. Good for commuter rides as the trekking bike will not suffer from "tyre drag resistance"



which met their requirements. Trekking bikes now feature the best elements from three styles of bike.

A trekking bike is fitted with 700c wheels (the same diameter as fitted to road bikes) but with wider tyres and rims (on average 35mm). These tyres are generally multi condition, in that they have a smooth centre tread for efficiency on tarmac, but have knobbly outer tread, to give good traction if the bike is ridden on a non tarmac surface. They are fitted with the same gear systems as mountain bikes, with between 21 and 27 gears, flat handlebars and V-brakes.

associated with mountain bikes when cycling on tarmac.

Cons.

Not suited to severe mountain tracks and extreme off-road conditions.

Expect to Pay

Basic trekking bikes can be bought for around £160, but expect to pay upwards of £300 for a good one.

John Vuagniaux 01202 476404

johnv@spindles11.fsnet.co.uk

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More about Bike Theft

Last month we carried several articles about this subject and the action some authorities are taking to help reduce it. Since then, Lucy Marstrand, DCN's Christchurch contact had her electric bike stolen from Christchurch Railway Station where she had left it locked on the platform. The bike is a Giant Twist and pretty useless to anyone without the battery charger and battery key. A station employee said it was the 5th bike reported stolen from the platform that week. So far Network Rail have not decided to put in CCTV.

According to *The Independent* (17 Feb) the current rate of bike theft is 1,200 a day, and half of them are not insured under home insurance "All Risks" clauses. It is easy to dispose of them through internet auction sites, but when one cyclist spotted his stolen bike for sale on the internet he decided to pose as a buyer. Luckily he happened to pass a van full of police while on his way to confront the thief and asked them to help. He got his bike back but his triumph was short-lived – his bicycle was stolen again few weeks later!

Bike theft is a large problem but we owners must help ourselves too. In addition to using a good quality lock, we must maximise the chances of getting it back if it is stolen. This means getting the police to mark it, and it's worth getting it registered with a reliable security company (e.g., Selectamark - for a one-off lifetime fee. Tel 01689 860757 or visit www.selectamark.co.uk and mention that you were introduced by DCN which receives a fee for every registration.)

You should also ask your home insurance company whether bikes are covered against All Risks (i.e. being stolen away from the home.) If not, get them added to the All Risks section and if they are over the maximum value, buy extra insurance.

Dorset Police have arranged a Bike Security conference in Bournemouth on 2 May, at which DCN will be represented. A report will be in our August newsletter.

Putting people off cycling Norfolk style!

Active Norfolk ("Our mission is to make Norfolk an active, healthy and successful sporting county - and to have FUN doing it!") has a strange way of encouraging people to be active when it comes to promoting cycling. Here's the advice they give:
An excellent exercise for many people, but not for everyone. In general, cycling, even for quite short periods, will bring positive health benefits. However, we live in a county where there is little industrial base and many people earn their living sitting down: to sit down again to exercise might not be the best option for those who already suffer with a rounded upper back and forward head position. Neck and back aches could worsen. Occasionally, a person's walking gait also makes cycling unsuitable with a risk of twisting at knee and ankle joints. Incidentally, an excessive amount of cycling over a long period of time can compromise male fertility; traditional bike seat design with a long horn shape at the end of the saddle has been shown to be damaging to men's health.

By the time they've read that, many who need to exercise most will have been thoroughly put off!

(See www.activenorfolk.org/)

How to start them right!

Cambridge has a better approach than Norfolk. Cycling & Walking Officer Clare Rankin devised two schemes designed to encourage parents with young families to cycle.

Recognising that it's not easy to cycle into town with very small children if you then have to walk round the shops with them, she has arranged that parents can cycle into town with a child and park the bike with an attendant who will lock it and lend them a push chair.

Parents can also borrow a cycle trailer to try out, and find out that it is not as hard to use as they might have thought.

Now that's positive thinking!

French cycling news

Is France on the right track? A recent report in the online French magazine 01MEN states that 10 years after the introduction of a law to encourage cycle usage, the situation is improving but it is very patchy. Cycling represents only 3% of journeys in France compared with 27% in the Netherlands, 18% in Denmark, 12.6% in Sweden and 10% in Germany and Belgium. France has a target of making cycling represent 10% of journeys by 2010 and last year the government appointed a "Monsieur Vélo", a sort of "Cycle Czar" to accelerate the process. The general impression of cyclists is that political thinking has not really changed much. One prominent cycling figure said "It is PC to talk about the bike, but it remains a leisure tool. There is a lack of communication, and great disparity of provision between the centre and the suburbs, which does not encourage people to change their car journeys for the cycle."

Since 1998 local authorities have been legally obliged to create cycle routes but many do not. The Cyclists Association in Caen where only 1% of journeys are by bike, said "Investment for the car is massive and has priority, and cycle lanes are either not provided, or are provided only

where they are not afraid of upsetting local residents." Some cycling groups, e.g. in Valence and Lille, have taken legal action to force councils to make provisions for cycling. Others have had less success and some criticise their councils for deciding on cycling provisions without consulting cyclists.

Parts of Paris have improved, but not so much as Bordeaux where 10% of journeys are by bike (even 30% in the city centre) and Lyon with its city wide Vélo-V public cycle hire scheme (*see DCN Newsletter no 56*). Strasbourg is good too, with 4,000 cycle parking places and 200 cycle contraflows in one-ways streets. La Rochelle and Rennes are also making progress.

In Paris, research has discovered that air pollution has been reduced by 32%, one fifth of this being due to the increase in cycling, the rest being by improvements in vehicle technology and anti-congestion measures. Half of all car journeys in Paris are less than 5km, where cycling is not only faster than the car, but is getting more beneficial for the lungs!

*Source: 01men., 26 rue d'Oradour-sur-Glane
75504 Paris Cedex 15 France
www.01men.com/article/337238*

Women Drivers!

To illustrate how careful we chaps have to be on motorways, driving to the office this morning, I looked to my right and there was a woman in a brand new BMW using her rear view mirror to put on her lipstick! I looked at her for a couple of seconds and then saw that she was veering towards my lane! It scared me so much that I dropped my electric shaver, knocking the bacon roll out of my other hand. As I tried to straighten up the car with my knees my mobile fell from my ear into the coffee between my legs, causing it to splash and burn Big Jim and the Twins. I screamed, making the cigarette fall out of my mouth, burning my shirt and I was disconnected from a very important call.

Women Drivers!

(sent by e-mail by too many to mention)



Critical Mass

from Anna Finch, DCN Sherborne

I am responding to Mike Keatinge's comments in DCN56. For just 2 hours a month, on a few roads in the capital, cycles dominate. Parked cars and moving traffic dominate and for many blight our lives **all the time**. The taxi driver who was convicted of killing a cyclist: the fact that he was frustrated by a Critical Mass ride was surely not part of his defence. There is NO EXCUSE for hitting cyclists and causing death.

To take part in a Critical Mass ride is a liberating experience and a joyful non-violent celebration of cycling.

Weymouth & Portland

Contact: Ken Reed

Support the Bridge project!

It would be a great help to us
if you would log on to

[www.sustransconnect2.org.uk/projects/
pledge_support.php?id=29](http://www.sustransconnect2.org.uk/projects/pledge_support.php?id=29)

to support our bid to build a pedestrian/cyclists
bridge on the Rodwell Trail, Weymouth
and improve green access to the Olympic
sailing venue on Portland. Thank you.

Meeting

Local cyclists were invited to a relaunch of
the Branch on Wednesday 2 May at 7.30pm
at St Nicholas Hall, Buxton Road,
Weymouth to discuss local issues and
action.

There will be a report in the next
newsletter. Meanwhile please phone Ken
Reed for further information.

Purbeck

Contact: John Thraves



Purbeck Freewheelers enjoyed an excellent ride on Sunday 22 April.

13 riders of all abilities left Wareham for
Studland and back via Rempstone Forest,
half of the ride being off road.

We do a 25-30 mile ride with lunch stop,
from Purbeck Sports Centre starting
10.30am every 2nd and 4th Sunday all
year. Every Wednesday evening in the
summer there is a 15-18 mile ride.

Ring John Thraves for details.

**Purbeck Sports Centre Wareham 7 / 8 / 9 June - meet THE COMPANY OF CYCLISTS
with their display of different kinds of bikes and equipment.**



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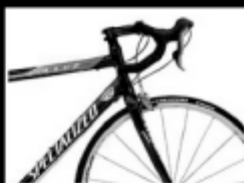
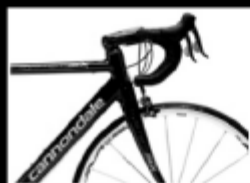


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Injured on your bike?

The Cyclists' National Helpline claims to be a free service for cyclists offering immediate advice on cyclists' rights and the obligation of other road users and highway authorities. In the event of an accident, Cycle-Aid solicitors offer to pursue injury and uninsured loss claims on a fully funded, no win, no fee basis. They can be contacted on 0808 100 9995 or www.cycle-aid.co.uk.

DCN has no experience of this service, and we would be grateful if members who have used it would let us know their experience of it.

An anti-cycling policy?

Private Eye (issue 1179 2 March) has come up with an interesting theory to explain why the government fails to promote cycling enough. The theory runs that the Treasury is so jealous of its road revenues that it will not allow them to be reduced by anything that deters car use. For this reason, the *Eye* continues, cycling on roads has been officially discouraged because cyclists don't pay fuel duty. A similar argument is used to explain why pedestrians are still deliberately discouraged by dingy underpasses and unhelpful traffic light phasing, and why rail passengers have to pay so much for the privilege of getting out of their cars. Could it all be true? Does anyone know?

Reporting potholes and blocked rights of way

The CTC have come up with two websites where anyone, including non-members can easily report hazards encountered on a cycle ride.

www.fillthathole.org.uk and www.clearthattrail.org.uk

Log on, click "**Report a hazard**" or "**Report an obstruction**" and fill in the boxes.

CTC will report it to the appropriate highway authority.

They acknowledge you immediately with an e-mail,

stating that your personal details will not be passed to the local authority.

If you prefer, you can of course report defects direct using the phone numbers on page 23

Cycle Training

Dorset County Council

Phase 1 (Year 3 and above, off road) Phase 2 (Year 5 and above, on road) To enquire about training for young people, contact your local Leisure Centre

For phone numbers visit www.dcn.org.uk or get a leaflet from 01305 224558 or roadsafety@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Bournemouth

Claire Elkins Transport Group, Development Services, Town Hall Annex, St Stephen's Road, Bournemouth BH2 6EA
01202 454636

Poole

Sally Funnell 01202 262066

Phase I and II and individual adult scheme

Moors Valley

Cycling for Beginners, the More Confident and Further Afield, including picnic and bacon butty rides! Cycle hire available. Booking essential. Brochure available on request.

Moors Valley Country Park, Horton Road, Ashley Heath, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 2ET 01425 470721

Web: www.moors-valley.co.uk/ee (choose a month to see the available training at that time)

USEFUL CONTACTS

COUNCIL CYCLING OFFICERS

Poole Borough Council
Sally Funnell 01202 262066
Bournemouth Borough Council

New cycle schemes

Martin Dover 01202 451378/07881 908768

Safe Routes, Green Travel Plans

Richard Barnes 01202 454645

Christchurch Borough Council

Bob Baker 01202 495083

Dorset County Council

Andrew Bradley 01305 224269/01305 224837

ROAD DEFECTS

Bournemouth 01202 451463

Poole Potholes & overhanging vegetation 01202

262200 Litter and glass 01202 261700

Christchurch 01202 495054

Rest of Dorset 0800 232323 (CLARENCE)

CTC

Right-to-Ride rep Dorset Ken Reed

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anneandken@neale.net

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SUSTRANS RANGERS

Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch

John Vuagniaux 01202 476404

johnv@spindles.fsnet.co.uk

Purbeck, East & North Dorset

John Thraves 01929 554550

purbeck@dcn.org.uk

West Dorset Mike Keatinge 01935 389377

michaelkeatinge@supanet.com

North Dorset Jude Hopkins 01747 830617

dropkins@phonecoop.coop

REPORT ROAD CRIME

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

REPORT SMOKY LORRIES

01506 445216

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Directory of Sustainability Organisations

www.dorsetagenda21.org.uk/sus_orgs/index.htm

DA21, PO Box 5789, Dorchester DT2 8ZR

01305 21 37 21

DISCOUNTS FOR DCN MEMBERS

on production of a current DCN membership card

Bicycle World Ham Lane, Longham 01202 590414
and 6-8 Christchurch Rd, Ringwood 01425 470835

Bikes (Branksome), 431-433 Poole Road,
Branksome, Poole BH12 1DF 01202 769202 fax
762377

Revolutions, 21 West Street, Bridport 01308 420586

Cycle Experience Brookley Road, Brockenhurst
01590 624204 and Barrack Road Christchurch 01202
486278

Forest Leisure Cycling 1143-1145 Christchurch
Road, Bournemouth 01202 424945 & Village Centre,
Burley 01425 403584

Horswills, 1 Ensburry Avenue, Ensburry Park,
Bournemouth BH10 4HE 01202 512761 fax 514234

Lawsons Cycles, 29 Somerford Road, Christchurch,
BH23 3PF tel & fax 01202 486633

On Yer Bike, 88 Charminster Road, Charminster,
Bournemouth BH8 8US 01202 315855 fax 319533

Primeria Sport, 244-248 Charminster Road,
Charminster, Bournemouth, BH8 9RR 01202 775588
fax 775599

Samways & Son, 70 Leigh Road, Wimborne BH21
1AJ 01202 882960

Raleigh Cycle Centre, 42 St Mary Street, Weymouth
DT4 8PU tel 01305 781831 fax 01305 767062

Westham Cycles, 128 Abbotsbury Road, Weymouth,
DT4 0JS 01305 776977 fax 775477

Xtreme, 111 Commercial Road, Lower Parkstone,
Poole BH14 0JD 01202 741744 fax 749569

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

JOINING

Individual and family membership

Send details of all cyclists in your household, with your cheque for £6.00 payable to DCN, to the Membership Secretary (*address on page 2.*)

Group membership

DCN welcomes cycling clubs, Bicycle User Groups and similar associations as Group Members. Subscriptions depend on the number of members and the means of the group.

POSTAL/E-MAIL ADDRESS CHANGES

It would help if you would please tell the chairman and membership secretary when you change address

SUBSCRIPTIONS

£6.00 per household per year. Payable every 1 October to the Membership Secretary.

Standing Orders

We thank the 140+ members who pay by this method, helping us to budget more efficiently and removing the need to remember to renew. Standing order forms can be obtained from the chairman, membership secretary or www.dcn.org.uk/downloads/standingorder.doc A form is also sent out annually with the membership card and renewal reminder.

THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

E-mail or write to the **Membership Secretary**

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members and their support for a cycle-friendly Dorset

Mr & Mrs G Duly & family
Poole

Mr J Hickish *Blandford*

Miss S Lawford *Bournemouth*

Lynne Lawrence *Bournemouth*

Mr & Mrs R Needs *Swanage*

Mr & Mrs O'Conner & family
Wimborne

Mr G Ottewell *Lyme Regis*

Mr & Mrs K Payne & family
Christchurch

Mr & Mrs D Powell *Wimborne*

Mr J Ramsden *Weymouth*

Mr & Mrs E Rowe *Weymouth*

Mr & Mrs Tomblin *Weymouth*

Mr J Vuagniaux *Christchurch*

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Email your text and jpegs to adv@dcn.org.uk or write to **Chairman DCN** (*address p.2*)

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Quantity M L XL XXL

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(£3 per garment including p & p)

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Alternatively you can collect for only £2.50

by making an appointment with Jonathan Aris on 01202 718000

The newsletter is compiled by the Chairman and published in February, May, August and November.
Deadlines are 1st day of January, April, July and October. Send copy by e-mail or clearly typed
to Chairman DCN. Images in JPG please. Send s.a.e. for return of photos, cartoons and other artwork