



The federation of cycle campaign groups

NEWS

No 45 March 2000

First European Car-Free Day – but no UK Government support

The governments of nine EU countries have signed a charter, pledging to take part in the first Europe-wide car-free day on Friday 22nd September 2000. Other governments have committed themselves to excluding cars from town centres on the following Sunday.

The UK Government, however, has no current plans to support the venture at all. It says that it is a matter for local authorities, who may organise initiatives if they choose. So far only a handful – Camden, Dover, Edinburgh, Poole and Newcastle – are looking at this seriously, with only Poole actually committed.

The proposal for a Europe-wide event stems from hugely successful initiatives in France and Italy over the past two years. In those countries more than 4 out of 5 people were enthusiastic about the events and said that they wanted them repeated – in fact a quarter of those asked wanted car-free days at least once a week! Shopkeepers in French cities came on board when their fears of reduced takings proved unfounded.

With the shortfall in Government enthusiasm, the promotion of the car-free day in the UK is being co-ordinated by the Environmental Transport Association (ETA). It wants many more authorities to support the initiative, with plans ready by 31st July.

The ETA wants towns to set aside one or several areas for pedestrians, cycles and public transport from 7am until 9pm. This could be done through the 1984 Road Traffic Regulations Act, Special Events or the 1847 Town Police Clauses Act. This is tame by European standards, where whole town centres are being closed.

Some towns are going much further – in Palermo cars are to be excluded from a number of city centre areas on the first Sunday of every month. But it might at least demonstrate what could be achieved through greater priority for the non-car modes.

Jointly-owned events would be the most successful and input and support should be sought from traders, residents, schools and community organisations. Excluding cars also provides an opportunity for inhabitants to rediscover their town, and subsidiary events should be promoted to make it a very positive experience.



Cyclists and cycling groups should encourage their local authorities to take part in European Car-Free Day, and are also asked to write to the Prime Minister to urge our Government to get into line with its European partners by giving the event its full backing.

The real purpose of the car-free day must, however, be part of a wider strategy for transport. According to French minister Dominique Voynet, the day will serve little purpose if governments do not at the same time develop ambitious political programmes to reduce emissions, combat the greenhouse effect and introduce ecotaxes on energy use. Our Prime Minister could be reminded of this, too.

- Car-Free Day web site: <http://www.22september.org.uk>
Environmental Transport Association: richard@eta.co.uk;
Write to The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, 10 Downing Street, London, SW1A 2AA.

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Velo Mondial

The programme and registration form for Velo Mondial 200 in Amsterdam in June are now available.

The theme of the conference is a comparison of world-wide experience in planning for cycling, with particular emphasis on the Dutch experience which the conference organisers are taking as a model. Coincident with the conference is a bicycle festival, and seminars on cycle parking and sustainable cities in the developing world.

The cost of attending Velo Mondial for cycle user group members is • 400 before 15th April and • 450 after.

Information: www.velomondial2000.nl,
info@velomondial2000.nl.

Dutch cycling courses for foreigners

Although daily cycling is commonplace in the Netherlands, certain groups of inhabitants have never learned to ride a bicycle, such as immigrants from countries where cycling is less popular.

In the 1980s the Centre for Foreign Women (CBV) in Tilburg began to offer courses for immigrant women and this continues to be oversubscribed. Now the course material is used across the country and includes an instructional video for teachers.

According to CBV, mothers who do not cycle do not teach their children to ride a bike either. A cycling course should be part of the policy to integrate foreigners into society.

- European Cyclist, January 2000. CBV: rask@knot.nl

Cycle Industry for free

Cycling clubs (and, by inference, other groups) are now being offered a free 3-year subscription to *Cycle Industry*, a monthly digest of product reviews and industry news.

Register by writing to: Cycle Industry, Mark Allen Publishing, Freepost SO6080, Salisbury, SP3 5BZ.

The same publisher is also shortly to issue the 2000 edition of the Cyclists' Sourcebook, a reference guide to most things cycling. The cost is £20 from the same address.

SpokesFest recognition

Leicester City Council has included Leicester Spokes' SpokesFest festival of human powered vehicles in Leicester Festival 2000, a £400,000 project to promote the city's existing festivals and help create a wide variety of new ones.

According to Spokes, "It is very encouraging that a city the size of Leicester is actively supporting a local campaign group in establishing an exciting new type of cycle festival. We are also receiving much support from businesses who are keen to make Spokesfest a city wide event."

Spokes hopes that the cycling world will help it take full advantage of this unique opportunity.

The web site www.spokesfest.freemove.co.uk gives more information on the event.

Audit for Birmingham

Birmingham is one of the first five cities where the European Bicycle Policy Audit will be applied. Together with Ferrara, Grenoble, Troisdorf and Zwolle, Birmingham will be assessed as to how conditions for cycling may be enhanced.

The BYPAD audit consortium comprises Langzaam Verkeer, Amor and the European Cyclists Federation. Before the audit is applied, it will be tested in Graz and Gent.

Rights reduced in Australia

Following on from Spain's decision to restrict the rights of cyclists on roads, Australia has now passed new laws to similar effect.

Cyclists must give way to all motor vehicles leaving a roundabout, including those following behind (making legal progress around a busy roundabout impossible); cyclists using a cycle path must dismount to use road crossings; and cyclists must not move into the path of a motor vehicle (so cannot take a lane to ride defensively).

Rough justice

According to a Canadian newspaper, a police officer in Florida handcuffed a nine year old cyclist because s/he was not wearing a cycle helmet.. Helmets are mandatory in the State of Florida for children under 16.

CCN e-group launched

Following a successful trial of an e-group* by the CCN Steering Group, a new e-group has been set up for the distribution of current news and information to CCN groups and cycle campaigners.

Messages will be posted to the e-group from time to time in order to keep groups informed of developments and to seek action on urgent issues. Groups will also be able to submit messages for the attention of others, but it is intended to impose some control over the nature of messages that may be submitted in order to limit the mail received by participants and to maintain a high standard of information. The e-group will not be available for the purposes of general chat and discussion.

For reasons of security it is necessary for the e-group to be a closed group, which means that access must be granted by the moderator. All groups are encouraged to nominate one person as their point of contact for the e-group, who should submit their name and e-mail address to Quinze@Compuserve.com with the subject 'CCN e-group'. Details of how to use the e-group will be sent when access has been set up. Security procedures ensure that the nominee must subsequently confirm willingness to participate in the e-group before mail is received.



* An e-group is an electronic mailing list through which subscribers receive copies of messages posted to a single e-mail address.

CCN Web site active

CCN's web site is now active at www.bigfoot.com/~cyclecampaignnetwork.

Information of general interest to groups will be posted on the site, and there are also copies of current and past issues of *CCN News* in Acrobat format. *CCN News* will appear on the web site soon after the beginning of each month of publication, well in advance of when the printed copy is despatched.



ACTION POINTS

This symbol indicates items for action by groups, to which they should give particular attention

Jonathan Porritt to give keynote speech at Spring conference

Jonathan Porritt, the environmental campaigner and member of Cheltenham Cycle Campaign, is to be the principal speaker at the CCN/CTC Cycle Campaign Conference in Cheltenham on 15th April.

Subjects on the busy agenda include countryside issues in relation to cycling, legal issues, the latest findings on helmets and safety and the best ways to produce cycling maps. There will also be the usual social programme, including rides around the Cheltenham area on Sunday morning.

A conference web site has been set up at <http://freespace.virgin.net/cheltenham.cyclecampaign/conf2000/conf2000.htm>. This will be updated with the latest information and attendees are encouraged to look from time to time. There is also a booking form that may be used for registration.

Booking for the conference is now open and demand is expected to exceed the 140 places available. Please, therefore, book as soon as you can. The conference fee is £12 per person and cheques are payable to Cheltenham Cycle Campaign. Bookings should be sent to: Cycle Campaign Conference, 63 Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0JG.



Off-road seminar

The CTC is holding an Off-road Seminar on 1st and 2nd April at Sherwood Forest YHA. The programme includes off-road strategy; working with other groups such as the National Trust; the Countryside Bill; definitive map orders; Trailcare Initiative and CTC off-road centres. Informal workshops, presentations and group discussions will form the framework for the day.

The Seminar is ideal for CTC Right to Ride representatives, off-road coordinators or any cycle campaigners who have a keen interest in off-road cycling and want to know more!

The cost of full-board for the weekend is just £9.00 for CTC Members and £25.00 for non-members, including an off-road ride on Sunday through Sherwood Forest and a working lunch with the National Trust.

Information and booking forms from Julia Samson, Andy Green or Mick Ives at CTC, Tel: 01483 417217.



The Transport Bill

The Bill is in committee and a working group from C-PAG is very busy lobbying. They have been successful in influencing cycling amendments to important clauses. It is expected that this stage of the Bill will be completed in March.

Left turning lorries

An appalling number of fatalities and serious injuries to cyclists are due to left turning lorries. A bleeper fitted half way along the near side of a lorry may help to reduce these. Details available at www.brigade-electronics.co.uk.

Tackling Congestion and Pollution consultation.

The consultation document can be viewed on the DETR website. It is significant that 1996 traffic levels are not seen as realistic targets.

Bike and Rack bust

The company providing bike storage and hire at London Waterloo and Victoria stations has ceased trading.

Top Gear biased.

The BBC has admitted that the Top Gear programme about traffic management in Oxford, broadcast last November, was biased, inaccurate and unfair. The makers are required to make a second, more balanced programme following protests by the Oxford Bus Company and Oxfordshire Chamber of Commerce.

Ronan McDonald

More bikes on trains

Transport Secretary John Prescott has issued instructions to the Franchising Director asking him to promote the use of bicycles by seeking the provision of "reasonable facilities on board rolling stock and at stations".

- ♦ Railway Magazine, March 2000

Speed kills

The Slower Speeds Initiative (SSI) has produced a very informative pamphlet setting out the argument for lower vehicle speeds. Although of immediate use in trying to influence the Government's speed review, the content of *Speed Kills* will remain valuable for the campaigning that will continue to be needed.

SSI is asking cycling groups and others to back its calls for:

- ♦ Lower speed limits: 20 mph in built-up areas, with a maximum of 30 mph for rural communities and a 'safe route to school' for every primary school child;
- ♦ Better enforcement of speed limits: more resources for police and more speed cameras;
- ♦ Tougher penalties for drivers convicted of speeding.

- ♦ The Slower Speeds Initiative, 213 College Road, Norwich, NR2 3JD. Tel: John Stewart, 0207 737 6641. www.speed-campaign-info.fsnet.co.uk

Countering the backlash

The Transport Activists Round Table has produced a briefing paper setting out the counter-arguments to charges being made by the motoring lobby, Conservative Party and some of the media that the Government's Transport Bill is anti-motorist.

Thus the rhetoric that motorists are taxed too heavily, lower speed limits are unfair, and that cycling can only appeal to a small minority of people are given the response they deserve.

Countering the Backlash can be obtained through Transport 2000. Contact Denise Carlo on 0207 613 0743, fax 0207 613 5280.

Transport Bill

Also available from Transport 2000 is a briefing on the Transport Bill that is currently going through Parliament. It explains what's in the Bill, who's on the Standing Committee, and what changes are needed. The support of groups in achieving these changes is solicited, and contacts are given for the various elements.

The full text of the Transport Bill is available on-line at www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199900/cmbills/008/1000008.htm.

- ♦ Transport 2000, 0207 613 0743, fax 0207 613 5280.

Journey Solutions

Several major bus and train operators are now working together in an initiative under the banner of Journey Solutions. This introduces a family of integrated kitemarks or national standards to let people know that they will find a quality integrated facility in place wherever they see the sign.

The project aims to set common standards for bus/rail integration based on best practice, and to award kitemarks to schemes around the country. Kitemarked initiatives will include walking and cycling links to bus stops and interchanges. A National Rail Access Audit will look at towns or more than 10,000 population not on the railway network and try to link them to railheads using buses.

Stagecoach is one operator that is keen to promote Journey Solutions. Cycle groups may find it worthwhile to contact their local bus and train companies to ensure that cycling links are developed to best advantage.

Sale of railway land

Property and land owned by the British Railways Board is to be transferred to the Strategic Rail Authority under the new Transport Bill. Lists of land for disposal will be published, but there may be a prohibitively high charge for examining these lists in order to know whether disposal is in the wider public interest.

Cycle groups should try to keep aware of railway land in their area that might be the subject of redevelopment. Liaison with the local authority may be useful.

Helmet costs outweigh benefits: official

A report from the Road Accident Prevention Research Unit in Western Australia has produced the first official recognition that the costs of cycle helmets outweigh their benefits. The most favourable estimate of the financial benefit of the Australian helmet legislation was found to be only AU\$2m, and this excluded any costs associated with the acknowledged reduced cycle activity.

The paper also admits that there are differing views as to whether helmets have been successful in reducing head injury. Evidence examined for this study suggests an injury reduction around 11% – much the lowest estimate so far from official sources and accompanied by a great many optimistic assumptions. →

Cycle lane withdrawn after casualty rise

A cycle lane on a roundabout at Weymouth, Dorset has been removed after leading to an increase in injury crashes to both cyclists and other road users. In the 20 months following the lane's introduction there were 13 injury crashes, 9 involving cyclists, whereas in the 36 months prior to the lane there were only 6 injury crashes in total.

Dorset County Council believes that the distinctively coloured cycle lane has caused confusion to both cyclists and motorists. It also notes that many cyclists preferred not to use it.

EU transport statistics

A handy pocket book published by the EC includes comparative data about cycles and cycling between European countries and with the rest of the world.

In the EU almost as many cycles are made each year as cars (14m), whilst world-wide there are twice as many cycles (101m) as motor vehicles (cars 37m, goods 14m). The EU makes 13% of world cycles, but 37% of cars. Italy is the most important EU country for cycle manufacture (3.4m), followed by Germany then France and Great Britain (1.3m).

Cycle use in Europe averages 5% of journeys (0.7% in Spain to 27% in Netherlands. UK 2%). Switzerland is 9%, USA 0.7% and Japan 14%.

The distance cycled per person per year varies from 893km in Denmark to 20km in Spain. The UK comes tenth out of the 15 countries with 76km.

The two countries where most cycling is done are Germany (23,500 million km – 34% of the EU total) and the Netherlands (13,300 million km).

- *EU Transport in Figures, Statistical Pocket Book 1999*. European Commission EG VII, Luxembourg. ISBN 92-828-722-2. Enq: figures-transport@cec.eu.int. Also updated every 3 months at <http://europa.eu.int.en.comm/dg07/tif>.

Deadline for next CCN News

25th April 2000

- *An Economic Evaluation of the Mandatory Bicycle Helmet Legislation in Western Australia*, Hendrie, Legge, Rosman & Kirov, University of Western Australia, November 1999

Cyclists left standing by firms' cars

Walking or cycling to work may be good for your health and the environment, but it does nothing for your self image or status in the office, according to research.

Even if people were near enough for it to be feasible to walk, they would rather show off the company car. Cycling exposed the rider to the elements and to mud, and put off those who believed up-and-coming employees should be seen wearing smart clothes in the office.

Rachel Goodman of Staffordshire University surveyed attitudes at a local hospital, a city council, a further education establishment, and a military establishment - each a public body where the status of company car and dress code were important.

Exhortations to use alternative and sustainable transport had to overcome the culture of the workplace. 'It is all to do with workplace image and dress code,' she said yesterday. 'People make all sorts of excuses, like the weather, about not walking even less than a mile; but when questioned it was their self image that mattered.'

If commuting patterns were to be changed, parking restrictions and removal of company cars would be a necessary first step, she concluded.

Another researcher from Staffordshire, Rodney Tolley, found similar problems with attitudes to using a bicycle for work. Although people like cycling, it had an image problem: what was needed - as well as safe secure routes, and somewhere secure to store the bike during the day - was a revamp that made cycling sexy.

- Guardian, 7th January 2000

Recent DETR Traffic Advisory Leaflets

- 12/99 Cycling for Better Health
- 13/99 Historic Core Zone: Bury St Edmunds
- 14/99 Traffic calming on major roads:
Costessey, Norfolk
- 15/99 Cyclists at Road Works
- 16/99 The Use of Above Ground Vehicle
Detectors
- 17/99 Code of Practice for Traffic Control and
Information Systems

Available free of charge from 0207 944 2478
or e-mail to tal@dotdirm3.demon.co.uk

Mixed effect of painting bike lanes blue

The City of Portland, Oregon, made a study of the effect of painting cycle lanes blue. The reason for adding the distinctive paint was to reduce the danger at places along the bike lanes where the lanes caused cyclists and motorists to be in conflict.

The result of adding the paint was to increase the proportion of motorists who yielded to cyclists (where this was required) from 72% to 92%. The proportion of motorists who slowed down or stopped for cyclists also rose from 71% to 87%.

However, cyclists' behaviour generally became worse. The proportion of cyclists who turned to observe traffic went down from 43% to 26%; cyclists who gave hand signals reduced from 11% to 5%; cyclists who yielded declined from 28% to 8%, and cyclists slowing or stopping went down from 11% to 4%. Also the proportion of motorists who signalled correctly declined from 84% to 63%.

Although overall the conflict rate went down, this was almost entirely due to changes in motorist behaviour. Cyclists generally rode less safely and more of them restricted their riding to the cycle lanes than hitherto.

- *Evaluation of Portland Blue Bike Lane Treatment*, Hunter et al, Transportation Research Board.

Cycling great for health – but only if you keep at it

Research for the DETR into the health benefits of cycling has shown that even a small amount of cycling can lead to significant gains in fitness. However, this benefit is lost quickly if a person then stops cycling.

91 volunteers were recruited from people who did not regularly take exercise. Of these 70 continued to cycle after six weeks and 40 after 4 to 5 months. The onset of winter weather and dark nights then brought a fall in the amount of cycling by those remaining.

The researchers note that for new cyclists significant deterrents remain for some time. If long-term health benefit is to be realised through cycling, then there is an ongoing need for support, advice and training.

- DETR Traffic Advisory Leaflet 12/99 gives further details of this research (*see panel*).

National Cycling Awards

Nominations are sought for the 2000 National Cycling Awards, to be presented by the CTC and CCN for achievement towards the encouragement of cycling.

This year there are to be three awards: **Promotional Activity, Engineering Measures and Complementary Initiatives.**

New criteria have been laid down, to make the awards fairer, more objective and to set high standards by which to raise the general quality of schemes that are introduced for cycling.

Conditions of nomination

1. Schemes must have been operational for at least 3 months at the time of nomination.
2. Nominations should be accompanied by evidence of performance, preferably in the form of a before and after comparison.

Criteria to be met

Schemes should be shown:

1. To have enhanced the image and attractiveness of cycling to the wider community.
2. To have resulted in an overall increase in cycle use.
3. To have encouraged good riding practice by cyclists and not to have led to bad behaviour by any category of road user.
4. To be consistent with the IHT hierarchy of solutions and to meet the key requirements of safety, coherence, directness, attractiveness and comfort. (*)
5. Not to be detrimental to the interests of any group of cyclists or pedestrians.
6. To be capable of application more widely.
7. To be maintenance-friendly, with an effective maintenance plan in place. (*)

(*) these criteria to apply to Engineering Measures only.

Judging for the awards will be carried out by representatives from CTC and CCN and will include location visits to determine the final winners.

Nominations now

Please send your nominations for the 2000 awards to Stuart Reid at the CTC as soon as possible.

Government publishes Road Safety and Speed reviews

On 1st March the Government produced its long awaited strategies for road safety and vehicle speeds.

Included are more ambitious targets for casualty reduction. By 2010 there is to be a 40% reduction in deaths and serious injuries compared with the average for 1994 - 1998. For children this reduction is to be greater at 50%. Slight injuries are to be reduced by 10% over the same period and this will be linked to travel distance, making it a target for reducing the casualty rate rather than just the absolute number of injuries.

A Road Safety Advisory Panel is to be established to oversee the road safety strategy, and the DETR is working with the CTC on cycle training for adults.

The Government has recognised the influence on casualties of vehicle speeds. More publicity is to be given to this and some penalties may be toughened, but action to address the problem is limited. Like most of proposals, action falls largely to local authorities, for reducing speeds is still seen primarily as applicable to local minor roads, which the strategy suggests is where vulnerable road users should be.

The perceived needs of the economy continue to take priority over safety on main roads and no great changes are likely there. An argument against the widespread use of 20mph limits in urban areas is that CO₂ emissions are minimised at 30mph, but the same argument isn't used to reduce higher speeds.

The main thrust of proposals for cycling continues to be the promotion of helmets, although no evidence is advanced in favour of their effectiveness. Whilst many potentially useful actions must wait on further studies and research to prove their validity beyond doubt, the helmet promotion campaign is in gear without further question.

Both the road safety strategy, *Tomorrow's roads: Safer for everyone*, and the speed review, *New directions in speed management*, may be downloaded from the DETR's web site at www.detr.gov.uk.

They are also available, free of charge, from DETR Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, LS23 7NB, tel 0870 1226 236.

**For your own copy of CCN News contact Colin Langdon (see back page)
Subscriptions £6 per annum**

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Contributions on disk or by e-mail if at all possible (plain ascii text or rtf).

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European Cyclists' Federation: John Franklin: *see above.*

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E-mail: gordonselway@gn.apc.org. (*Also Millennium Festival of Cycling*)

Transport 2000: André Curtis: *see above.*

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