

BIRMINGHAM Cyclist

The newsletter for *push*  *bikes*



**BIRMINGHAM
CYCLE REVOLUTION**



Birmingham's Cycle Revolution underway?

This August the government announced the winners of the Cycle City Ambition bids.

Announced in January with £42 million of funding available for only a couple of cities, it required the bidding cities to submit long-term strategies for cycling which the money could kick-start.

In response, Birmingham City Council (BCC) submitted an ambitious 20-year plan for a comprehensive network of cycle infrastructure. The strongest competition was seen as Manchester, which was prematurely announced victorious by one Manchester politician.

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Getting Birmingham
in the saddle

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Birmingham's Cycle Revolution underway? Continued from front page....

In the end it seems easier to say who lost than who won. The government added in an extra £52 million of central government money and spread it around with 8 cities, including Birmingham and Manchester, and 4 national parks receiving money. Birmingham has received £17 million, topped up with £7 million of BCC funds, to spend over 2 years on the bones of a cycle network. It has been rightly pointed out that this money barely amounts to £1 per person per year in England, compared to the £10 per person per year that has



It has been rightly pointed out that this money barely amounts to £1 per person per year in England, compared to the £10 per person per year that has been called for by the CTC and The Times.



been called for by the CTC and The Times. Taking a parochial view for a moment though, this money does represent £10 per person per year for Birmingham, which is more than we have had previously. The danger for Birmingham is that we do not know what funds will be available once that £24 million runs out. BCC has promised a 20 year plan, but will the money be forthcoming to fund it?

This money does represent the start of a revolution in Birmingham, but it is essential that long term funding is secured for cycling across the UK. Without that, the promise of this revolution will not be met. Going forward it will be necessary to offer constructive criticism of BCC's infrastructure plans to ensure this money is not wasted, but also to campaign nationally for secure annual funding, rather than unreliable lotteries which we may have benefited from this year but could lose out on next. ➡

Chris Lowe

Let's Get Moving On Air Pollution

Let's Get Moving
on air pollution



 www.get-moving.org.uk



In June, Birmingham Friends of the Earth launched our new campaign “Let’s Get Moving” with a couple of stunts in the city centre.

For our launch we wore gas masks whilst holding our campaign banner at iconic city centre locations near main roads, to highlight the problem of Birmingham’s shocking air quality. The campaign aims to tackle this by calling for better investment in active transport to reduce traffic.

Why have we decided to launch a new campaign on air pollution? And why are we focussing on more investment on active transport as the solution? Air pollution is an issue which has gone off the radar a little bit in recent years. However it is still a problem which needs to be addressed and is not being tackled anywhere near as much as it needs to.

This is something which is very much supported by a ruling by the UK Supreme Court on 1st May. The court ruled that the UK Government was failing in its duty to protect its citizens from harmful and illegal levels of air pollution in 16 cities, including Birmingham. The court also ruled that the UK government could be fined by the EU for failing in this duty. The majority of local authorities have air pollution levels which are above the EU legal limits, and of those that are within limits, two are in rural Scotland.

What do we mean by air pollution? Simply put, we mean abnormal levels of certain chemicals in our air. These are generally chemicals other than CO₂, and they all have serious adverse health effects. They include Nitrogen Oxides, Ozone, Sulphur Dioxide, Particulate Matter, Carbon Monoxide and

Benzene. The main problems in Birmingham are the Nitrogen Oxides, but the other chemicals are still an issue as well. Traffic is the main cause of the problem. However, not all of it is from tailpipe emissions, with non-tailpipe emissions, such as particulate matter produced by braking, also a problem.

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**the best way to
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ier for people to
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cycle rather than
take the car...**

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So why have we decided to try and address this problem through calling for more investment in active transport? As the main cause of air pollution in Birmingham is traffic, we felt that we could have most impact by calling for improvements in active transport. As I am sure readers of this newsletter don't need reminding, cycling and walking

improvements are cheaper, and have a much better return on investment, than any other form of transport. Therefore the best way to tackle air pollution is to make it easier for people to choose to walk or cycle rather than take the car, and thereby reduce traffic levels.

There were some good recommendations coming from the recent cycling scrutiny inquiry, and the Council's bid for the Cycle City Ambition Grant shows some thinking in the right direction. However, even if the Council are successful in this bid, on its own this will not be enough for the kind of change we (and I am sure Pushbikes) would like to see. Whether the bid is successful or not, the council needs to have ambitious targets for walking and cycling journeys to really prioritise gaining investment in active transport to make these a reality.

To try to make this happen as part of the Let's Get Moving campaign, we'll be staffing stalls, talking to other organisations, doing actions and organising events. We'd love to see Pushbikes supporters or members getting involved in Let's Get Moving. If you would like to get involved then email julien@birminghamfoe.org.uk Hopefully we'll see you at a cycling event in the near future! ➡

"Cycling – the new golf"

I first heard this phrase about 7 years ago. A colleague (a keen cyclist) returned from a business trip to Silicon Valley in the States with an article he'd clipped out of a local newspaper with this as the headline.

It spoke of deals being brokered, employees being hired and friendships being cemented on rides into the Californian hills – not on the golf course. We were intrigued and decided to give it a go ourselves.

It was all pretty amateur. We decided on a start point, set a date, rang round some contacts we knew were into cycling and then waited to see who turned up. It was immediately clear that the idea had traction – the drop out ratio was much lower than other events. We had a ride leader, a pub lunch and time on our hands. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and so it became an annual event.

By last year the event had grown to such an extent (we had people ringing asking if they could join us!) that it needed a more formal structure. Thus was born the "Squire Sanders Sportive" which had its second annual outing in the Cotswolds in late June this year. The idea is probably not unique but, despite asking around, I'm not aware of other companies doing this as pure corporate hospitality in the Midlands. There are, of course,

plenty of charitable corporate cycling events. For example, some 500 people, mostly businessmen and professionals, recently completed the Deloitte "Ride Across Britain", a 969 mile End to End ride in support of the British Paralympic Association.

Networking through cycling even made it into the April 2013 edition of The Economist. To quote a contributor to that article: "When you play golf with somebody you have to decide if you're going to beat them, or let them beat you. If they're a client and you don't want to beat them you have to sort of cheat in order to lose." Compare that with the collaboration which is inherent in group bike riding (with people taking turns at the front, helping out when mechanical problems strike etc) the attractions of cycle networking are easy to spot. The article refers to a London based architects practice which estimates that an astonishing 75% of its workload has come directly or indirectly from contacts made on a particular annual charity ride. I can't claim anything like that kind of conversion rate from our recent Sportive but I do know that we have already had one new piece of work which will cover the costs of running the event several times over. So it just makes sense – at lots of levels. After all, where would you rather be - stuck at your desk

or out on your bike?

So cycle networking may be good for business but are there any wider implications? We all know that cycling in the UK is enjoying a remarkable renaissance, fuelled by GB track and road cycling success. An important chunk of that new market is down to so-called MAMILs – your archetypical cycling networker. There are those that see this as a creeping threat to grassroots cycling; that over time,

cycling will become elitist, rather like golf. They are missing the point. You can ride anywhere; you don't need club membership (but many will bolster cycling clubs); there are no green fees; more cyclists on the road is in itself a good thing; and critically with this group, they are often influential people. If cycle campaigners can harness them as a resource, they could help make a difference quicker. ◀



Tunnel Vision

With the closure of the Ring Road tunnels until 2nd September,

Birmingham City Council, AMEY (their maintenance contractors) and Centro (the public transport authority) have been imploring commuters to find alternatives. Cycling is one option being encouraged.


Mike Cooper (of Smarter Travel Choices at BCC) has put together a formidable package of schemes to facilitate and encourage cycling with the hope that enough commuters will turn to cycling and ease the anticipated congestion. We shall see!

They include:

- Marked key routes with laminated signing branded as “BrumTunnels Closure, Cycle Routes”.
- An extra 100 cycle parking places in the city centre.
- Led rides (Bike Trains) along these routes into city centre on Friday 19th July (pre-closure taster) and on Monday 22nd July as first working day.
- Large scale promotion to major employers and businesses.
- Production of High Vis jackets with “New Cyclist and beyond” branding to show new cyclists converting from car and to promote careful driving.

- Distribution of cycling ‘tube’ map, cycling and walking map and other information to motorists at BCC car parks using Bikeability instructors.
- Four separate detailed maps for the following routes (all with blow up city centre map showing cycle parking etc):
- River Rea route and Grand Union Canal
- Stratford Road Parallel Route
- Harborne to City Centre including Harborne Walkway and Birmingham Canal
- North Birmingham Route to incorporate Newhall Valley Route mapping from Bike North Birmingham but entering City Centre
- Gyms in city centre to provide showering and lockers to cyclists not able to access facilities
- Place all above details on BCC webpage and BCC campaigns page.

Centro join in!

Not to be outdone, Centro are organising bike trains and Dr Bike sessions (and maintenance courses), skills training and led rides throughout the summer. Details at www.mynetwork.org.uk or email: cycling@centro.org.uk 

Helmet cameras and the law – what's the deal?

Most helmet camera users will say that having an independent “witness” to incidents involving damage to property, personal injury or worse is a key reason for using a camera. But what does the law say about helmet camera usage and what happens to video evidence?

Occasionally objections have been raised by those “caught on camera” that helmet camera use breaches data protection laws or even their human rights. Happily, the Information Commissioner has confirmed in writing to several UK helmet cammers that what they do is lawful. Human rights cases can only be brought against the State and not against other private citizens so that is just a red herring.

Moving on, Inspector Stuart Bill of Digbeth Police Station, a keen cyclist and helmet camera user himself, has some useful things to say about helmet camera use generally and video evidence in cycling-related criminal cases:

Helmet camera users may have a false sense of security through camera use – it doesn't protect from harm, it only helps after the event.

Using a camera as a threat in an already highly charged situation (“I've got you on camera - expect a call from the police”) can have unpredictable results – good or bad. It is probably best to let the footage speak for itself afterwards.

Helmet camera users often have footage of bad driving and sometimes send it into the police. However, the criminal standard of proof (beyond all reasonable doubt) means that it is often not possible to prosecute unless they can establish who was driving the vehicle i.e. the video needs to show the driver's face clearly.

Helmet camera footage is, however, excellent when confrontations occur as there will normally be good images of the assailant.

Where footage contains usable evidence, it is critical that the cyclist does not compromise its use. This can happen if the video is edited and / or posted online as this gives defence lawyers an open goal to shoot at. The best advice is to burn a few copies of the complete ride, hand one over to the police and not to post any footage online. If the cyclist needs to pursue a claim for damages, a copy can be provided to their solicitors too.

Potentially the helmet camera itself may become evidence, not just the video output.

Even when video footage clearly captures violent behaviour or aggressive driving, there is no guarantee that the police will prosecute – see, for instance, Steve Perrin's experience on page x.

But helmet camera videos have positive uses beyond providing digital evidence. Some examples

Helmet cameras and the law – what's the deal?

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include:

They can be educational (for others). If you haven't discovered Silly Cyclists on YouTube yet, I suggest you check it out. This should really be compulsory viewing for all cyclists, particularly urban commuters.

They can improve the camera user's cycling. It doesn't take long for most camera users to realise that above all else, the video shows one thing, namely the cyclist's own behaviour. A video handed to the police showing routine law breaking may be viewed less sympathetically than

one showing safe and lawful cycling.

Praising good driving. It's easy to trace drivers of liveried vehicles if you have video footage. Many camera users take the trouble to thank companies when their drivers have shared the road in exemplary fashion. This spreads goodwill towards cyclists.

Helmet cameras are here to stay and are likely to increase in popularity. Used sensibly they can be a force for good on our roads by improving safe cycling standards and enabling bad drivers to be prosecuted. ➡

Centro Personalised Travel Planning Project

Warwick Road A41 and Coventry Road A45 corridors.

As part of the Local Sustainable Transport Funds that Centro has received, they are introducing a 4 year Personalised Travel Planning Project (PTPP) for residents along 10 travel 'corridors'. The first of these 'corridors' was the Pershore Road; now Centro is looking at the Warwick and Coventry roads.

Centro plans to visit 8,000 houses along each road to offer information on the best routes for walking and cycling, as well

as providing cycle training and supplying many of the information leaflets now available. Push Bikes has pressed that cycle training should include road training and preferably on the actual route that a resident would want to use, both to and from their destination.

Centro will also look at the corridor infrastructure, such as difficult junctions, and Push Bikes has asked that it be consulted at an early stage for each one. ➡

Road Rage Report

Local cyclist, Steve Perrin, was assaulted in a road rage attack in Moseley earlier this year.

The attack was captured on his helmet camera and went viral when Chris Boardman tweeted it to 80,000 followers: "Get Britain cycling? There's a lot to do when @wmpolice think it's okay NOT to charge/warn 4 this". The Police responded: "Cyclist accepts under Home Office guidance that officers' hands were tied and were unable to take him to court".

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It was a very brutal and unprovoked attack... The driver went mad and kept punching the cyclist.
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The driver was interviewed under caution but Police said that Home Office Guidance prevented them from prosecuting. This guidance is a "Gravity Factors Matrix" referred

to in a Ministry of Justice note about "out-of-court disposals" (but which does not seem to be publicly available). If the offence scores enough points, prosecution follows; if not, it normally won't. Steve Perrin accepted the Police's "hands tied" explanation and agreed to a "local resolution" (involving some compensation and an apology (of sorts)).

But under a very similar matrix for Young Offender cases (which is publicly available), Police still have discretion to prosecute. It has also been suggested that they classed the attack as "common assault", not ABH (which has a higher score and so more likely to result in prosecution). This was despite (according to an eyewitness for The Sun): "It was a very brutal and unprovoked attack... The driver went mad and kept punching the cyclist."

With cyclist numbers increasing rapidly, Police need to take protecting vulnerable cyclists more seriously. This can be done at least two ways within the Young Offenders Matrix: (a) treating such assaults on cyclists as hate crime (which are automatically prosecuted); or (b) using their discretion if the score threshold is not met. Hopefully, WM Police have reflected on their decisions and will act more decisively in future. ➡

She Spoke of Bikes.

Donna Norford introduces her new cycle blog: She Spoke of Bikes. Donna is a Sustrans Active Travel Champion, and does a lot of cycle advocacy work.

She Spoke of Bikes in Birmingham is my 3rd attempt at bike blogging. I began to blog about cycling in Birmingham because in 3 years as a commuter cyclist as I was surprised at how many people I met who saw cycling as something unusual, something of a novelty and not as a realistic and sensible choice of transportation.

She Spoke of Bikes in Birmingham aims to focus on people who use cycling for transportation in Birmingham. I do this by conducting 5 minute recorded interviews with people I meet on a daily basis and by talking to them about their bikes, where they got them, why they commute by bike and where they go on their bikes. By presenting these real life stories, I could hopefully paint a picture for cyclists, non-cyclists & maybe cyclists, that presents transportation cycling in



I was surprised at how many people I met who saw cycling as something unusual

Birmingham as realistic, accessible and sensible choice.

The blog also looks briefly at leisure cycling, cycling groups that people can join and great places around Birmingham and the West Midlands to visit. My hope is that people who stumble upon She Spoke of Bikes in Birmingham will either find inspiration to try cycling, an idea for a type of bike, something or someone that they can connect with, or a new place to go.

She spoke of Bikes in Birmingham will be looking for more people to interview across the city to cover the Autumn & Winter months. So if you could spare a 5 minutes to talk about you, your bike, and your journeys in Birmingham, please email donna42@btinternet.com

The blog can be found here: <http://shespokeofbikesinbirmingham.blogspot.co.uk>

TNT Ladywood in Holland

In July, TNT Ladywood (tntnews.co.uk) visited Holland. Roberto Acland De Llano (12) writes about his experience of cycling there:

In Amsterdam cycling is amazing. The problem is getting into the right lane, and knowing not to stop, as cyclists have right of way!

If you used bikes regularly you would probably buy your own bike but as a tourist we shopped around the hire shops and found one that hired bicycles for £2.00 for 24 hours, which is cheap. We were surprised that few people wore helmets.



In Amsterdam cycling is amazing. The problem is getting into the right lane, and knowing not to stop, as cyclists have right of way!



We were told there are about 881,000 bicycles in Amsterdam - that's more than one per person - and 75% of all Amsterdam people own a bicycle. There seems to be a problem of where to put them as pavements are covered with them. I don't really know how people can find where they have left them!

I didn't cycle in the city centre, because I felt the roads were too crowded, mainly with other cyclists, who out-numbered car drivers. Getting used to bicycles as a pedestrian might be difficult because bikes come from all directions and some riders are quite aggressive.

Fewer youngsters were on bikes in the city but as we travelled we noticed that small villages had enormously wide well used cycle tracks that were separated from the roads. Many more youngsters used bikes in the country. Also you can take your bike on trains and buses which is great for travelling longer distances.

We felt there is no way that Birmingham could cope with that many cyclists and we'll be interested to see how the city planners think they can encourage more people to use bicycles. We were told there are about 250 miles of cycle paths in Amsterdam - there is no way that Birmingham could do that! 🚲

Bike2Life Update

Bike2Life is a Community Interest Company based in Mere Green, Sutton Coldfield.

Bike2Life recycles bikes, provides bike maintenance training and access to tools and workshop facilities for anyone to use. Bike2Life provides advice, guidance, support and encouragement to people of all ages about bikes and cycling. Bike2Life has also hosted Bikeability instructor training.

Bike2life is a Christian organisation that occupies Mere Green Chapel. The technical skills, equipment and

knowledge it provides are built on physical, mental and spiritual development for all people in the community.

Bike2life has minimal overheads, which keeps bike costs down and ensures that as many as possible are returned to use, often after years of shed storage.

Bike2life is open to all on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month to visit, chat and tinker. It aims to broaden its work to provide more formal training. It provides ride leadership for groups on demand. ➡

Birmingham Bike Foundry Summer 2013 Update

Birmingham Bike Foundry is a three member worker co-op based on the Pershore Road in Stirchley.

We sell donated bikes which we refurbish and sell at affordable prices. We sell new and second hand parts and accessories, carry out repairs and give training courses. The course we run are:

- Bike Basics - a three hour introduction to working on your bike
- Home Mechanics - a detailed two day class in which we strip

a bike down to its frame and rebuild it

- Wheel Building - in which we teach students how to build three cross wheels from scratch.

Our co-ops aims to encourage people to cycle regularly as a means of transport by removing barriers such as the inability to maintain a bike, or the high cost of accessing a good quality bicycle.

You can find out more about us at birminghambikefoundry.org ➡

Sustrans update

In August Sustrans will be hosting Pedal On UK. Between 16th August and 7th September, starting at the Olympic Park in London, groups of volunteers, headed up by celebrities and sports stars, will take Pedal On UK to over 35 communities in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, ending in a final celebration in Glasgow. Along the way the cyclists will inspire local bike rides and stop off to join local people at free community celebration events.

On 30th August to mark the arrival of the ride in Birmingham there will be a family fun day with exciting activities and entertainment in Sutton Park between 1100 and 1600. Come along to celebrate walking and cycling, and in particular the new Connect2 route linking the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Towpath, Sutton Coldfield town centre and Sutton Park with The Plants Brook Valley. For more information and to register please visit: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/events/pedal-uk-birmingham> ➡

Cyclechain Update

Cycle Chain is based on the narrow Boat Carina, on Cambrian Wharf behind the ICC. Our vision is to turn this into a central cycling hub. We provide various services including sales of reconditioned bikes, service, repair and secure parking for commuters into the city centre. We also hire bikes on an hourly or daily basis to Birmingham visitors allowing them to see Birmingham's rich heritage from the saddle.

Cycle Chain was established in 2002 as a social enterprise business

limited by guarantee. The original vision was to create employment for the visually impaired. This has evolved to broadening learning opportunities for people with specific learning needs using the bicycle as a learning tool.

We currently work with a number of partner organisations including WM Police, who provide recovered bicycles which we recycle and sell and BCC for whom we provide services to the Bike North Birmingham Project. ➡

Cycle Confidently and more Safely



Cycle training is a proven way of improving your cycling confidence on the road. It's also an effective way for non-cycling adults and children to get cycling easily and quickly. We offer:

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The Chairs Opinion on Changing Policing Attitudes

Although the cycling successes last year of British sports people made cycling 'cool', it still appears that crimes against cyclists are not taken as seriously by the police as they should.

It seems that many people ignore the damage that is caused by motorised vehicles every year, to rationalise our dependancy on cars. The Highway Code is routinely ignored, with one judge recently referring to how 'the majority of people would drive' rather than the actual rules of the road. See also the road rage piece on page x

Push Bikes is supporting the CTC's Road Justice campaign, and we would like everyone to sign their petition (link below). The campaign aims to get police to investigate road crimes properly, so that driving in a way that puts other people at risk is seen as unacceptable, rather than just a risk of using the roads. ➡

Petition: www.roadjustice.org.uk/police-petition

Chris Lowe - Pushbikes Chairperson

A Members Opinion on 20mph Limits

Although reducing the speed of vehicles to 20 mph increases the survival of pedestrians, and particularly children crossing residential streets, as a cyclist, the thought of extensive 20 mph limits worries me.

For me, implementing a lower limit by signage only is the only viable option that will not make a road infrastructure worse for the cyclist, as physical changes to the road create problems. Speed bumps are

awful to cycle over, while chicanes and other road narrowings will be ignored by drivers attempting to squeeze past cyclists.

But I do not want 20 mph at all. I have never had any problem with the speed of vehicles – if anything they are going too slowly – I am in a queue or one is taking ages to overtake. When it is safe to overtake, don't dither – do it decisively please! ➡

Graham Hankins

To Test it - Ride it!

As reported previously in this Birmingham Cyclist, Centro and Birmingham City Council are planning improvements along Bristol Road to promote sustainable transport.

Centro have announced that they plan to plug the gaps in the cycle infrastructure that currently exists. Push Bikes has advised the team planning the improvements that one of the best ways of understanding what improvements cyclists need is to ride the route and observe the difficulties in riding it.

The essence of the points made by Push Bikes during consultations with Centro and BCC are:

The aim of the investment is to attract additional cyclists (and pedestrians)

Over most of its length Bristol Road is a fast, free-flowing highway. Some cyclists are willing to use the

carriageway but many find it too hazardous. So, to attract additional users, the proposed improvements are intended to upgrade the off road alternative on shared paths.

This will only happen if the paths are continuous, comfortable and safe which they are not. They are overgrown and never maintained, with surfaces so poor that they are extremely uncomfortable and hazardous to cycle on. Ride it and you will see! BCC must negotiate with Amey to co-ordinate maintenance work along this route.

Widening to ensure safe shared use, and re-surfacing is essential to provide the sort of smooth surface that attracts users.

An attractive surface colour would enhance and help identify the paths' continuity.

Continuity is important to cyclists -stopping and re-starting is both time and energy sapping. Some interruptions to cycle movement at side junctions are inevitable but these can be minimised at less busy junctions by the use of raised platforms and careful positioning of the crossing.

Entrances/exits from adjacent private property should be expected to give way to passing pedestrians and cyclists

Keep the signage simple and unobtrusive - well away from the line of travel. ◀



Push Bikes has advised the team planning the improvements



Join Pushbikes and help improve cycling for everyone in Birmingham



CycleBirmingham

The rides & social part of Push Bikes

Wednesday evening rides

A view from a Ride Leader with "L" plates!

19.06.13 – Catherine de Barnes

To give Simon a chance to enjoy the company of a Wednesday evening ride, I took the helm for a change. We seldom go out East, so this seemed a good destination as, once we had reached Digbeth (from the Bull Ring), it was canals all the way.



Birmingham provides a great choice of traffic free routes to use – not just from Sustrans, the City Council's cycle paths, or through our numerous and glorious city parks



Birmingham provides a great choice of traffic free routes to use – not just from Sustrans, the City Council's cycle paths, or through our numerous and glorious city parks. The canal network is great for crossing the city centre, or for a group of riders to meet centrally and explore outwards i.e. what we did. Of course, the fact that it is mixed in with a social is an added bonus! Add in the knowledge and experience of the other riders and you have a ride where the conversation itself is invaluable.

The Boat Inn was a great venue. After an easy 9 mile sunny evening ride from the Bull Ring, we had crossed the Birmingham / Solihull border, cycled past Birmingham Airport and numerous farms and the pub was next to the canal.

All of our rides follow the same format. We don't race, we have a leader and a back marker to ensure that no one gets lost, and we all cycle together. Therefore, whatever your ability, we will always welcome you on a Wednesday. We generally pick a venue near to a train station, so if you want to build up your fitness and cycle one way to begin with, this is an option.

As the summer months move into autumn, there is lots of choice for all:

Weekly Wednesday Evening Rides:

Distance to the destination varies

from 2 to 12 miles. There is often food available at the destinations if you don't have time to eat after work. We usually meet at either the Midland Arts Centre in Cannon Hill Park or by the Bull statue outside the Bull Ring Shopping Centre, meeting from 7:15 pm and setting off at 7:30 pm.

Weekly Saturday Gentle Cycling Rides

Short family/beginner rides from Bournville at 10am using off road routes and at a relaxed pace.

Monthly Sunday Rides:

These rides vary in length from 15 to 40+ miles in a round trip. The main starting point is Kings Norton railway station.

Routes:

We always try to pick quiet(er) routes: cycle-paths, parks, towpaths, quiet side roads and country lanes.

The important bit – Information on our rides:

1) Facebook: CycleBirmingham
www.facebook.com/groups/cyclebirmingham/

Click 'Join group'. 'Closed' just means posts and photos are only visible to group members. We place a post and create an "event" for each ride to ensure that each Group member receives an invite to the ride.

2) Twitter: @cyclebirmingham

<https://twitter.com/cyclebirmingham>

3) Birmingham Cyclist website - below the profile of our group on this site: www.birminghamcyclist.com/group/cyclebirmingham

This site is for the benefit of those people who are not on either Facebook or Twitter.

(If you join the Birmingham Cyclist website as a member and then join our group on there also you should get notified when we post something new on the group profile).

If anyone has a question, you can email the Rides Team Members at pbrides@pushbikes.org.uk – we are always happy to answer any questions you have – whether it is about the ride's destination for that week, the route (and therefore terrain) we will be using, or just a general cycling question you may have! ➡

***Happy and Safe Cycling,
James***

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skype: redspokes

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Gentle Cycling

The Gentle Cycling Rides initiative aims to attract people of all ages looking to explore their neighbourhood or the countryside by bike.


Many people have unused bikes languishing for years so need an incentive to get out on it again - maybe a group ride, exploring local paths and parks and a chat and a coffee too.

Are we succeeding?

We've had rides every Saturday (but one) since March with an average of 12 each ride. Thirty different people aged from 9 to 79 have ridden. Starting mostly in Bournville (Bournville Village Trust sponsors the rides), destinations have included Harborne, Woodgate, Kings Heath, Brindley Place, Maypole and Cofton Hackett, using paths or largely traffic free roads. Speed is not important. The essential thing is to enjoy the ride, the company, the coffee and (occasionally) discover entirely new routes and places - even close to home. With a following wind, some participants will make cycling their preferred transport for local journeys of (say) under four miles.

Volunteer leaders

We hope to keep Gentle Cycling Rides going throughout the rest of the year. However, the rides rely on people to lead them and advise anyone who needs

assistance. Continuing success depends on finding volunteer ride leaders to share the load and bring fresh ideas: new start points and destinations; rides at different times or on different days. We are not looking for professional 'leaders' but rather willing guides - everyone on the ride takes responsibility for their own safety. Give it a try - you would be very welcome and it is very rewarding and stimulating. Contact John Bennett (0121 459 9319) or jmbennett@sumari.co.uk 



We hope to keep Gentle Cycling Rides going throughout the rest of the year. However, the rides rely on people to lead them and advise anyone who needs assistance.



Contact Us

We are based in the Friends of the Earth building:

'The Warehouse', 54-57 Allison Street, Digbeth, BIRMINGHAM B5 5TH

Telephone: 0121 632 6909

E-mail: secretary@pushbikes.org.uk

Facebook: facebook.com/PushBikesBrum

As a voluntary organisation, the office is not manned on a regular basis. The most effective means of contacting us is by e-mail.

We hold meetings on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 19:00.

Say Hello



Join Pushbikes

Birmingham has done much for cycling, but there is still a lot to do.

We currently have several campaigns in progress and are in frequent contact with local councils over cycling issues whether raised by cyclists or matters the councils contact us about, as they believe they might affect cyclists and therefore ask for our views. With the new funding for cycle

infrastructure announced by the DfT in August 2013, it is even more important that we influence local planners and Centro and local councils to build good quality infrastructure that increases the safety of cyclists.

Your support for PushBikes will help benefit cyclists in and around Birmingham and Solihull.

Please fill in the form to the right to join us. 

Push Bikes Members' Discounts:

Push Bikes members receive a 10% discount in a number of shops.

Please note that you will need your Push Bikes' membership card to claim the discount.

Shop	Location	Exceptions
Scott's Cycles	Hall Green (B28 9HW)	Bikes
Scott's Cycles	Rubery (B45 9HY)	Bikes
Bike Pro Racing	King's Heath (B14 7JZ)	None
iCycle	Harborne (B17 9QH)	None
Red Kite Cycles	Shirley (B90 3DX)	Bikes
Sprocket Cycles	Digbeth (B5 5TH)	None
On Your Bike	Digbeth (B5 6HY)	Bikes
Fletchers Autostores	Duddeston (B7 4LS)	None
Mechanix Bicycle	Moseley (B13 8EH)	None

Join Pushbikes

Contact Details			
Name(s)			
Address			
Post Code		Work Tel.No	
Mobile Tel.No		Home Tel.No	
E-mail Address			

Subscription Type <i>(please tick the relevant box)</i>			
Individual, Waged Paper Newsletter £15	Individual, Waged E-Newsletter £12	Individual, Un-waged Paper Newsletter £7.50	Individual, unwaged E-newsletter £6
Family/Joint, Paper Newsletter £18	Family/Joint, E-Newsletter £15		

Optional Donation	£	Total	£
Payment By	Standing Order <i>(see form on reverse)</i>	Cheque	Cash
Signature			
Date			

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I/We Would Like To Help Pushbikes By <i>(please tick the relevant box)</i>		
Letter Writing	Helping On Stalls	Organising Bike Week Activities
Reviewing Plans	Writing For The Newsletter	Setting Up Bike User Groups
Leading Rides	Assisting With Newsletter	Newsletter / Leaflet Distribution

*Please send completed forms and subscription payments to Pushbikes, 'The Warehouse'
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Standing Order Form

To <i>(your bank)</i>		
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Account Number		Name	
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Please cancel any previous standing order in favour of Push Bikes under the reference given above. *Delete as applicable. www.pushbikes.org.uk

Send (with membership form if joining) to: Push Bikes, 54-57 Allison Street, BIRMINGHAM, B5 5TH