

# BIRMINGHAM Cyclist

The newsletter for *push* bikes



## Council Launches Radical Mobility Action Plan Consultation

**The debate and direction changes over the past 2 years for transport in Birmingham have continued apace with the launch of a consultation draft of a Birmingham Mobility Action Plan (BMAP).**

Our headline calls this a 'radical' document, following the usage (p 16) of 'radical' by the consultation document to describe the changes

that it proposes. This document presents itself as going beyond the Cycle Revolution launched in April 2013, to develop a holistic and unified view of Birmingham's transport system, in an attempt to avoid 'carmageddon' (as the Birmingham Mail has dubbed it).

The visionary, and radical, future presented by BMAP is "[a] city where people can easily live

**Issue 123 Winter 2013**  
[www.pushbikes.org.uk](http://www.pushbikes.org.uk)

Getting Birmingham  
in the saddle

# Contents

<b>Front Page</b>	Council Launches Radical Mobility Action Plan Consultation
<b>Page 4</b>	A Members Opinion on 20's Plenty
<b>Page 5</b>	A Members Opinion On Trade Responsibility
<b>Page 7</b>	Pavement Cycling And The Law
<b>Page 8</b>	A Members Opinion on the Stratford Road / Highgate Road Junction
<b>Page 9</b>	Cllr Steve Bedser: Leading by example
<b>Page 10</b>	CycleBirmingham - The rides & social part of Push Bikes

➤ Copyright 2013 Push Bikes, the Birmingham Area Cycling Campaign.

➤ No part of this newsletter may be reproduced without the express acknowledgement of the copyright.

➤ Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect official Push Bikes' policy.

➤ **Address:** 'The Warehouse', 54-57 Allison Street, Digbeth, BIRMINGHAM B5 5TH

➤ **Telephone:** 0121 632 6909

➤ **E-mail:** [secretary@pushbikes.org.uk](mailto:secretary@pushbikes.org.uk)

➤ **Facebook:** [facebook.com/PushBikesBrum](https://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.**

## Council Launches Radical Mobility Action Plan Consultation

Continued from front page....

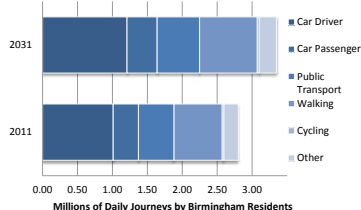
without feeling that car ownership is essential, aspirational or the norm.” (p.18) This is to be achieved through recognising that road space is a valuable commodity, and that single occupancy car journeys do not use that valuable commodity to its full capacity. To achieve this, road space is to be reallocated to a network of rapid transit bus routes, which will be mainly segregated from general motor traffic, to achieve a speed and reliability of service more associated with trains than buses. There will be 9 rapid transit routes travelling into the city centre, with the Inner and Outer bus routes also being converted. This will all be



**The visionary, and radical, future presented by BMAP is “[a] city where people can easily live without feeling that car ownership is essential, aspirational or the norm.”**



**Changing Travel Demand**



underpinned by a single payment system, in the same way that the Oyster card joins together different public transport modes in London.

With regard to cycling, BMAP positions the Cycle Revolution as a key part of this radical change, describing a vision of “a city where cycling is a mainstream mode of transport”, but suggests that a condition for this might be that increased numbers of people cycling are needed to make it acceptable to give more space to cycling. To wait for this to happen while spending many millions on re-engineering main roads for Rapid Transit buses could be a wasted opportunity.

Other parts of BMAP, though, such as the push for 20 mph and a focus on promoting health through active travel, fit in well with improved conditions for cyclists. BMAP notes that about 25% of all car trips in Birmingham are less than 1 mile, and suggests there must be a change in attitude, so that people

## Council Launches Radical Mobility Action Plan Consultation

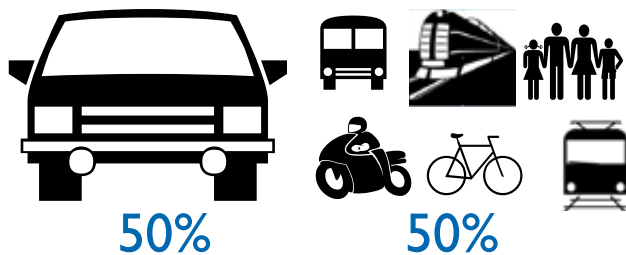
Continued from page 2....

think first about walking or cycling, rather than driving. The network of routes outlined in the Cycle Revolution leading into the city centre should be replicated for all local centres, to link them with residential areas. Plans for making high streets more attractive for pedestrians are also presented, backed up by research that shows how retailers overestimate the importance of car drivers to their business. Similar research, missed by BMAP, has also shown that cyclists are more valuable to retailers than car drivers.

The timescale for the projects outlined in BMAP is seen as 20 years, a similar length of time to the Cycle Revolution. This time scale, however, will be heavily

dependent on securing funding. One revenue scheme mentioned is council borrowing from the European Investment Bank, based on the future increases in revenue from the benefits of the scheme. Push Bikes notes that cycle infrastructure returns on investment is considered by the DfT to be excellent with at least £4 for each £1 invested, and we will argue that investment in cycling should be considered at the front of the queue for this type of borrowing. Overall the proposals in BMAP do represent a radical change in attitudes in Birmingham, but we will have to watch carefully how planning for bicycles is fitted into these changes. Reply: 20mph in Birmingham. 🚲

### Birmingham residents make around 2.8 million journeys each day



West Midlands Household Travel Survey (HHTS)

## A Members Opinion on 20's Plenty

**In response to the opinion article against 20mph limits in the last Push Bikes newsletter, here is a counter opinion.**

The speed of motor vehicles is a major concern of many adults who might otherwise choose to cycle and a 20 mph speed limit would help to get more people cycling (and walking) more often. This has been shown in Portsmouth where a 20 mph limit has resulted in a 12% increase in cycling and walking and a 22% decrease in reported



**if you are hit by a car at 20 mph, your chance of survival is 97%. At 35 mph, the chance of survival drops to only 50%, meaning that 20 mph offers a significant reduction in risk.**



casualties. In addition, if you are hit by a car at 20 mph, your chance of survival is 97%. At 35 mph, the chance of survival drops to only 50%, meaning that 20 mph offers a significant reduction in risk.

A major concern about 20 mph limits has been the infrastructure changes, such as speed bumps, which can be expensive and inconvenient. But the 20 mph limits being considered by Birmingham City Council, no longer need these infrastructure changes, which means that they will be pleasant for cyclists, with the added benefit of being relatively cheap to implement.

An unexpected side benefit is that lower speeds can smooth the flow of traffic through junctions, improving traffic flow. Lower speeds also reduce repair and legal bills, reduce stress for drivers, reduce noise, reduce air pollution and reduce road repair bills. These have quantifiable economic benefits, to which the economic benefits of reductions in obesity and heart disease through cycling and walking can be added. Overall, the longterm benefits of implementing 20mph limits outweigh the costs of implementation and slightly longer travel times for a few journeys. ➡

**Esther Boyd**

## A Members Opinion On Trade Responsibility

**All too often we hear of cyclists who die or are injured (sometimes with life changing injuries) or are involved in scary near misses. This raises the question of how cyclists can be helped to travel more safely on our roads, and who is responsible for this?**

This is a complex question with many answers: Our legislators, highway engineers, town planners, the police, driving instructors, schools and others can all, in their own way, make meaningful contributions to cyclists' safety. But almost completely ignored in this



**This is not about victim blaming; simply a suggestion that the trade can do more for cyclist safety as part of a holistic approach to the issue.**



mix is the bike trade.

In my view the trade can, and really should, do more. This is even more pressing the case when cycling is resurgent in Britain. The trade sell bikes to novice and returning cyclists some of whom go out and promptly put themselves at risk by the way they ride. But if nobody explains some of the golden rules of road cycling safety, how will they know any different?

The trade is uniquely placed to talk face to face to customers about road safety issues, beyond simply selling them bikes, helmets, lights and hi-viz kit. It should quickly be apparent if a shop is dealing with an experienced cyclist or not. Either way, how hard is it to direct the conversation for a couple of minutes onto road safety? Or how much would it cost to make sure every bike buying customer (or someone having an old bike restored) was handed a CD with a video on cycling safely in traffic? A few pence probably.

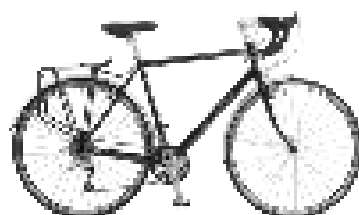
This is not about victim blaming; simply a suggestion that the trade can do more for cyclist safety as part of a holistic approach to the issue. After all, a dead customer is not as good as a grateful repeat customer. ➡

**Philip Sutton**

# SCOTTS CYCLES

Official Suppliers of  
**Dawes, DiamondBack BMX  
Electric PowaBike, Probike**  
**Custom builds available**

*Member of Association of Cycle Traders*



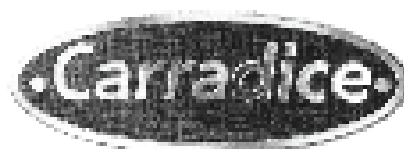
**PICK A NUMBER**

**1 2 3 4**

ANSWER IN SHOP



wheel building service available



**YOUR LOCAL CYCLE SPECIALISTS FOR SALES,  
REPAIRS & SERVICE OF ALL MAKES OF CYCLES**

**1345 STRATFORD RD HALL GREEN**

**(OPPOSITE WAITROSE SUPERMARKET)**

**0121 777 2532**

**COMPARE OUR PRICES!!**

**ALSO AT: 132 NEW RD. RUBERY, 0121 453 3148**

Discount 10% on cash, 5% on credit card, (except bikes) on production of  
Push Bikes membership card

# Pavement Cycling And The Law

## [Second in a series of articles on legal issues related to cycling by Philip Sutton]

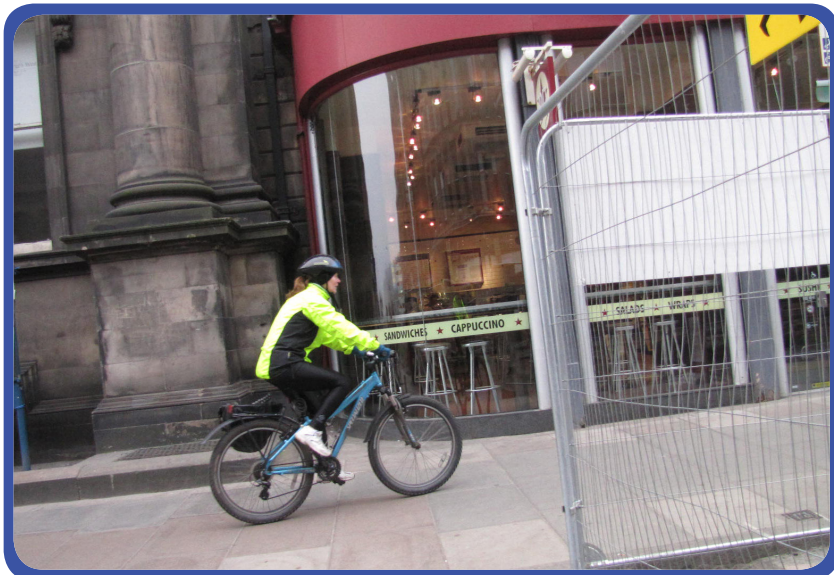
Before writing this, I had no idea how technically complex an area this was! Bottom line, though, is this: pavement cycling is illegal (Highway Code: rule 64) and is punishable with a fine of up to £500. Pavement cycling does not have to be dangerous or careless (but, if it is, may warrant a separate charge punishable with a fine of up to £1,000). Police generally exercise discretion and deal with pavement cycling via a £30 Fixed Penalty Notice. Note that the Police cannot issue FPNs to under 16s but that the age of criminal responsibility

is just 10. So, in an extreme case, an under 16 could get a criminal record.

Where a “pavement” has been designated as a cycle track (like the Selly Oak New Road), these may be segregated or unsegregated. Where these are signed as segregated, cyclists must keep to the correct side (HC: 62). The lawfulness (or otherwise) of cycling in pedestrianised areas depends on local bye-laws and should be indicated by signage.

So, to avoid police intervention, don't cycle on pavements unless it is clearly signed as allowed.

**Philip Sutton**





## A Members Opinion on the Stratford Road / Highgate Road Junction

**In the last few months, a junction on A34 Stratford Road, one of the city's arterial roads and a key route for many cyclists entering the city from the south, was redeveloped.**

Now work has been completed, it is possible to fairly assess how well BCC's highway engineers are taking into account the needs of cyclists at the design phase. Unfortunately, on the evidence of this junction, the answer is not at all. In fact, the new design introduces new unmanaged risks for cyclists heading north towards the city.

On this stretch, the road is dual carriage with narrow lanes and no central reservation. Pre-redevelopment this was a traditional crossroads governed by traffic lights, with no ASL or any

**// the new design introduces new unmanaged risks for cyclists heading north towards the city.**

other design features for cyclists. The purpose of the recent work was to introduce a corner-cutting filter lane for vehicles turning left onto Highgate Road, which means that cyclists in the left hand lane now have to negotiate their way across a lane of left turning traffic, to go straight on. I have witnessed several cyclists becoming "trapped" by this design and one case of conflict between a cyclist and a driver. On road and pavement based solutions to the new risks have evidently been ignored. BCC even refused to introduce an ASL (as requested by Push Bikes) on account of "traffic flow modelling".

Marks out of ten? Zero.

I have referenced this junction in correspondence with BCC on cycling-friendly highways design. The reply is potentially encouraging.

"We are aware that there have been previous schemes that have not perhaps catered for cycling as well as might be wished, however the new priority and support that the current administration wishes to give to cycling will mean that cycling will be fully considered in future."

We'll see... ➡

**Philip Sutton**

## Cllr Steve Bedser: Leading by example

**Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Steve Bedser (Kings Norton), gave up his car this summer, after returning to cycling just 18 months ago. With the new Birmingham Mobility Action Plan calling for a radical change in Birmingham's transport network, he is putting his money where his mouth is.**

***Why was it that you decided to give up your car?***

I made the decision when my insurance needed renewing. I had reached a point where I was cycling so much that when I used my car I was worried the battery would be flat. After some financial calculations, I realised it was time to say goodbye.

***What has surprised you most about this change?***

The biggest surprise has been what little impact it has had on my life. I still have access to my husband's car for the rare trips that need a car, and I've signed up to but not

yet used Car2Go. I also rely a lot on trains, which would have been impossible 10 years ago.

***Is there anything that you particularly miss about having a car?***

Honestly, no, and on the rare occasions that I am in a car or a taxi, I spend my time thinking "It would have been so much quicker to have cycled."

***What were the biggest barriers, and how did you overcome them?***

There have only been small barriers. I fitted Schwalbe Marathon tyres to stop punctures. It took me 12 months on quiet roads to build up my confidence, but now I can happily tackle Bristol Road. The biggest was space for changing at work, but we reached a critical mass of cyclists so space had to be provided. And then there is random macho abuse from motorists, which is just baffling.



# CycleBirmingham

The rides & social part of Push Bikes

## **Wednesday evening rides report:**

This summer has treated us really well, with the Wednesday evening rides having remained mostly dry. We've covered all corners of Birmingham this year, from Hockley to Halesowen and Northfield, but as the nights have grown darker we're starting to keep the rides a little more local.

Unfortunately, the closing nights did not treat our leader, Simon, so well. On the 16th October he was hit by a car on the Belgrave Interchange as he was pulling off onto Pershore Road. After several weeks in hospital with broken ribs and collarbone, we are happy to report that he is back at home. To send him your best wishes, the CycleBirmingham Facebook group is the best place to get hold of him, as he is busy filling it with cycling links while he is out of action. Get well soon Simon!

Our Wednesday night rides are continuing, usually meeting at either the Midland Arts Centre in Cannon Hill Park or by the Bull statue outside the Bull Ring Shopping Centre, at 7:15pm for a 7:30pm start. We also have weekly Saturday Gentle Cycling rides starting at 10am from Bournville, and monthly Sunday rides, which are longer in length and general start from Kings Norton railway

station. 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](http://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclebirmingham)  
Click 'Join Group' to see the posts and photos. An 'event' is created for each ride so that each group member receives an invite.
2. Twitter: @cyclebirmingham
3. Birmingham Cyclist website:  
[www.birminghamcyclist.com/group/cyclebirmingham](http://www.birminghamcyclist.com/group/cyclebirmingham)

Information on the Birmingham Cyclist website is open for anyone to see, and if you join the group then you will get a notification when there are new posts.

If anyone has a question, you can email the Rides Team Members at [pbrides@pushbikes.org.uk](mailto:pbrides@pushbikes.org.uk) – we are always happy to answer any questions you have.

**Chris Lowe**

# Join Pushbikes and help improve cycling for everyone in Birmingham



# www.cycleinjury.co.uk

Specialist lawyers to advise and represent  
cyclists with all types of accident claims

## Have you been injured?

Speak to Tim Beasley, Push Bikes member  
and specialist in Cycle Accident Claims

- Specialists in Cycle Injury Claims
- Home and hospital visits arranged
- Receive your compensation in full
- No deductions for lawyers  
or insurance



Call us on

# 0121 212 0000

Offices in Birmingham and London  
Email: [tbeasley@levenes.co.uk](mailto:tbeasley@levenes.co.uk)

**Levenes**  
SOLICITORS

## 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 <b>£15</b>	Individual, Waged E-Newsletter <b>£12</b>	Individual, Un-waged Paper Newsletter <b>£7.50</b>	Individual, unwaged E-newsletter <b>£6</b>
Family/Joint, Paper Newsletter <b>£18</b>	Family/Joint, E-Newsletter <b>£15</b>		

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

<b>I heard about Pushbikes From</b>	
-------------------------------------	--

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'  
54-57 Allison Street, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5TH.*

## Standing Order Form

To (your bank)		
Address (inc. Post Code)		

Please pay The Co-operative Bank, Birmingham Branch Sorting Code 08-90-01 for the credit of Push Bikes account number 50011748

The sum of	£	
Commencing (date)	__/__/__	Now*
And thereafter every year on (date dd/mm)	__/__	
Until you receive further notice from me/us* in writing quoting reference		

and debit my/our\* account accordingly:

Name of Account		Sort Code	
Account Number		Name	
Signature		Date	

Please cancel any previous standing order in favour of Push Bikes under the reference given above. \*Delete as applicable. [www.pushbikes.org.uk](http://www.pushbikes.org.uk)

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