



Your chance to build a better Brum - It's up to YOU

This is a once in a lifetime chance to get Birmingham cycling. It is now a year since the Cycling City award to Birmingham amounting to over £24 million to invest in the city's infrastructure and facilities, and now the first consultations on major changes to Birmingham's roads are coming out.

This newsletter is mainly devoted to updating you on the plans and the consultation process. What is now needed are the views and feedback from individual Push Bikes members (and their friends) to influence the details before the Council implements them.

YOU can contribute to improving road and path design, how to overcome problem areas, opportunities for better facilities. The consultations are listed on the Birmingham Cycle Revolution website (<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/BirminghamCycleRevolution>) - follow the link to 'See all current consultations' half way down the page. In addition, your councillors have a duty (as well as self preservation) to listen and respond to constituents. You can tell your councillors your views and ideas at www.writetothem.com.

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Getting Birmingham
in the saddle

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➤ *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.*

Space for Cycling update

In April, Cyclenation and the CTC, with backing from the Bicycle Association, took national the London Cycling Campaign's Space for Cycling campaign. The first stage of the campaign is to encourage local councillors to sign up to the 6 general principles, shown in the graphic below. The CTC has now launched a map showing the level of support across the country, which you can view at this website: <http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaign/space-for-cycling/space-for-cycling-your-councillors-views>

In Birmingham, at the time of writing, we have 14 councillors signed up to support Space for Cycling - 12% of all Birmingham councillors. While this is better than we might historically ex-

pect in the city of the car, we should be aiming higher. Newcastle, for example, has 36% of their councillors signed up, and Manchester 20%. Please check the list and write to your councillors if you can't see their name on there.


In September, Birmingham will host the Conservative Party conference, and Push Bikes will be organising a Space for Cycling ride, pencilled in for Monday, 29th September, 6pm. Please keep that evening free in your diaries.







The objective of the ride will be to show the support there is for providing Space for Cycling and asking for the money to achieve that.

Chris Lowe 

We need Space for Cycling

By improving the design standards of our streets, we can all enjoy the health benefits, improved air quality and reduced congestion that cycling has to offer. Join the call for:



	Protected space on main roads		Cycle-friendly town centres
	Removing through motor traffic		Routes through green spaces
	Lower speed limits and 20mph in residential areas		Safe routes to schools

Challenge your Council to create safe space for cycling at:
www.space4cycling.org.uk

20 mph consultations

As part of the Birmingham Cycling Revolution the city council has adopted a policy of introducing 20mph speed limits on residential roads, and other appropriate locations including primary or secondary shopping frontages, near schools, parks, health centres, hospitals, and transport hubs. 'A' and 'B' roads will retain their existing limits outside these locations.

Implementation will be on a phased basis commencing with a pilot scheme, covering the city centre inside the ring road plus all or part of Aston, Nechells, Ladywood, Edgbaston, Harborne, Selly Oak, Bournville, Moseley and Kings Heath, Springfield, Sparkbrook, South Yardley, Bordesley Green, Washwood Heath and Hodge Hill wards.

Public consultations on which roads should be included are running over summer. Although Push Bikes will respond to each consultation, but we encourage everyone to respond about any roads that you think have not been given an appropriate speed limit. The views of local residents are important for supporting the implementation of 20mph on the roads they live on.

The first consultation for Central South Birmingham, covering Kings Heath up to the middle ring road, finished on the 4th July. The second consultation, covering Central East Birmingham finishes on the 8th August. We expect further consultations to be posted over summer, so keep a look-out at the

20mph page (see the link at the end of this story).

Take a look at your area - and please respond to the consultation! Should other roads be included? Or excluded? Are there inconsistencies in the proposals?

Your views count, so make sure you contribute.

Push Bikes supports the implementation of 20mph limits. The speed at which vehicles travel is directly linked to how severely injured a person might be in a collision. At 20 mph, a pedestrian in a road collision is likely to suffer slight injuries, while at 30mph they are likely to be severely hurt and at 40mph or above are likely to be killed. Councillor James McKay has said that the total cost of traffic collisions in the city is about £1.5 billion/year.

There will be an accompanying publicity campaign to persuade people of the benefits of driving at 20mph on residential roads. As a start, the council have produced a 'myth busters' document explaining the merits of 20mph speed limits, which can also be found at the 20mph page.

Birmingham City Councils' 20mph page: www.birmingham.gov.uk/20mph

John Bennett 

Birmingham Big Bikes

As part of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution 5,000 'quality hybrid' bikes are being bought by the city council. Tendering for the supply to a unique design that will 'brand' the bikes is currently being evaluated, and it is hoped to have the first bikes available later this year. Big Birmingham Bikes project manager John Carrigan says "It's nothing like the London scheme. We're not looking at the heavy, bulky Boris bikes. Ours are going to be quality hybrids. I want the best bikes I can get so that people want them and enjoy using them. They will be colour coded bespoke to the project. There will be no sticky labels."

The bikes will be distributed in the following ways:

- 2,000 bikes will be given away free to residents in deprived communities, aiming to upskill potential cyclists with cycle proficiency and bike maintenance training, while improving access to employment and education as well as boosting health. They will be available to anyone living in a priority area who has a Birmingham Leisure Card and agrees to attend a cycle proficiency course.

- A further 2,000 bikes will be available on a cost-free long-term hire basis for six to 12 months.

- 1,000 more will be held at the 20 community hire hubs (listed on the website) launched around the city for

day hire and short term loans. The hubs will be located at leisure centres and parks (in the city centre, Selly Oak, Hodge Hill, Ladywood, Yardley, Hall Green, Northfield and Perry Barr). Each hub, open seven days a week and run by paid instructors with support from volunteers, will offer a programme of activities including cycle training and led rides.

The council is expected to work with Birmingham's current cycling champions to roll out the scheme, with support from Centro and BikeRight as well as Northfield Ecocentre in the south and Sustrans in the east.

Councillor McKay thinks the Big Birmingham Bikes scheme will build on the city's Be Active scheme which offers free leisure centre and swimming pool sessions to card holders at specific times of the week. He said: "That's now an internationally recognised public health intervention. Look at the figures: forty per cent of 11-year-olds are overweight and one-in-four is obese. There are currently financial barriers to cycling and not everyone can afford to go out and buy a bike straight away, but short-term loans, long-term loans and bike maintenance should help to break down those barriers."

More details and updates be available at www.birmingham.gov.uk/bbb

John Bennett 

Details of the main routes

The work on the off-carriageway routes for BCR is now well under way. Indeed the tow path from the city centre up to Winson Green is now complete. However, it is the huge amount of work going into the design and consultation phase of the on-carriageway routes that is more remarkable, because for the first time Birmingham is taking away space from motor vehicles and dedicating it to cycling. Push Bikes very much welcomes this. It will be achieved with a combination of mandatory lanes and lightly segregated lanes. For the light segregation Birmingham favours “wands” (reflective deformable bollards). These can be deployed quickly and cheaply,

which is important given the tight constraints of the Cycling Ambition Grant. Experience elsewhere suggests that motorists are deterred from driving through a line of these by the perceived risk of damage to their vehicle. Standard mandatory lanes obviously do not offer this deterrence, but drivers who drive or park in a mandatory lane can be fined. The design team is aiming to achieve a width of two metres (in each direction), though in places they will be narrower than this.

Supplementing the new lanes there will be changes to junctions, such as tighter radii on corners (to slow down motorised vehicles), the removal



Example of the ‘wands’ that might be installed in Birmingham. Image courtesy of <http://madcyclelanesofmanchester.blogspot.com>

Details of the main routes (cont.)

of traffic lanes to provide space for cycling, and advanced stop lines.

Unfortunately there is plenty that is not so good. There will be places, such as local centres, where almost no assistance for cyclists will be provided. There all that is on offer are 20mph speed limits and bike icons painted on the carriageway. Elsewhere cyclists will be expected to share bus lanes, though they will be widened to reduce the difficulties caused by leapfrogging. These weaker sections will undoubtedly deter people from cycling, whilst those that are not deterred may opt for the pavement.

As a stakeholder group, Push Bikes has been involved in the planning process. Each month Push Bikes committee members have joined in scrutinising the plans, along with other stakeholders such as Living Streets, Sustrans, and Friends of the Earth. So far we have seen plans for the Alcester Road corridor, the Hagley Road corridor, and the Soho Road corridor. Next in line is the Coventry Road corridor. Birmingham is tackling the main commuter routes head on.

Most of these routes are out for consultation now, so have your say.

Robert Latham 

Current consultations (at the time of going to press):

Closing date 8th August, 2014:

20mph speed limit changes in Central East Birmingham (Bordesley Green, Washwood Heath, and parts of Nechells, South Yardley and Hodge Hill).

Closing date 15th August, 2014:

Alcester Road corridor cycle route improvements
Bristol Street corridor cycle route improvements
Harborne Road corridor cycle route improvements
Soho Road corridor cycle route improvements

Birmingham Cycling Design Guidance (A document to guide future construction of cycling infrastructure in Birmingham)

During the consultation, there will be opportunities to look at hard copies of the the plans at different venues around Birmingham - see Birmingham Cycle Revolution website for details of when and where these are.

Towpath resurfacing work schedule

Another part of the BCR scheme is the resurfacing of the canal towpaths within the city boundary (up to a 20 minute cycle ride of the city centre). The work is being supervised by the Canal & River Trust (CRT). It will necessitate a programme of rolling towpath closures (current details on the map); for updates go to <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/cycle-revolution-project/birmingham-towpath-works>.

The resurfacing will be to a high specification of a bitumen bonded gravel (tar, spray, and chip) finish which is felt to be long wearing and in keeping with the natural environment. It will be graded to avoid water collection and where possible the towpath is being widened, to a target of 2 metres. New entry points are being planned at Five Ways and Selly Oak. Push Bikes will be closely

monitoring the quality of the surfacing and giving feedback to CRT and Birmingham City Council. Please let us know if you have any comments.

The first to be completed is a 2.2km path running from Winson Green and the Sandwell border to the NIA and Brindleyplace, a route used by more than 50,000 cyclists each year. Councillor James McKay, speaking at the opening of the upgraded canal route, said Birmingham's canal network is key to bringing cyclists into the city centre, alongside main roads and quieter parallel routes, but previously the towpath surface wasn't fit for purpose. It was potholed and you'd turn up to work covered in mud, but the new bonded gravel surface will be appropriate for all users.

John Bennett

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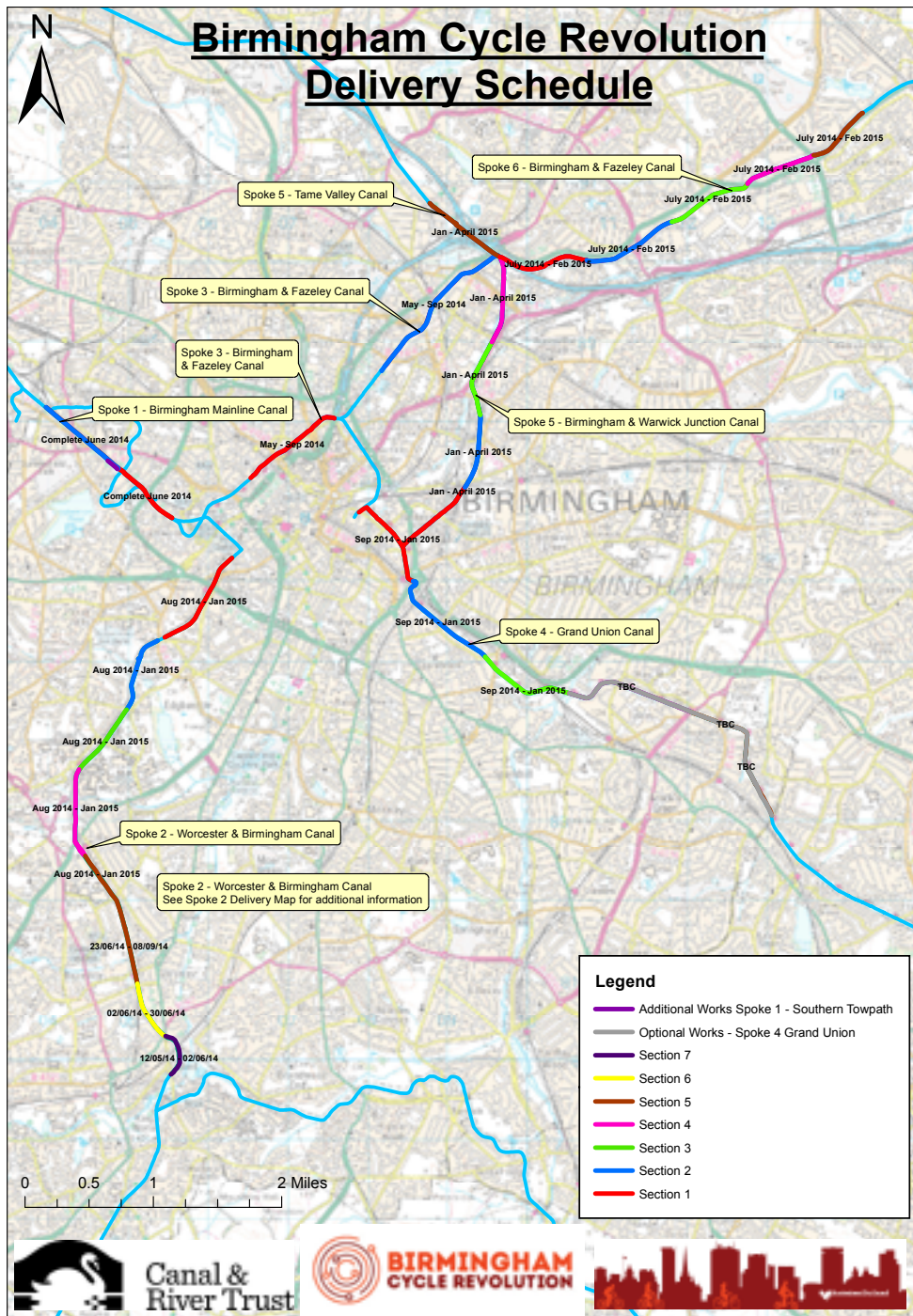
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Web: www.cycleinjury.co.uk

Call us on:

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CycleBirmingham

The rides & social part of Push Bikes

Our **Wednesday night rides** usually meet 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 Rowheath Pavillion, Heath Road, 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.

Information on our rides:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CycleBirmingham

This Facebook page is publicly

viewable - you do not have to have a Facebook account to see this page. It has updates about all the rides, so bookmark this page to see what is going on.

There is also a group for people with Facebook accounts to join: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cyclebirmingham/>

Twitter: [@cyclebirmingham](https://twitter.com/cyclebirmingham)

Birmingham Cyclist website: www.birminghamcyclist.com/group/cyclebirmingham 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.



The Sunday ride on the way to Hartlebury this April

Dr Ewan Hamnett, City Champion for Tackling Physical Inactivity

In spring this year, Dr Ewan Hamnett was appointed to be chair of the Well-being and Physical Activity Group, part of the Health and Wellbeing Board. He recently made headlines in the Birmingham Post saying that it is ok to be fat, as long as you are fit. Push Bikes spoke to him to find out how he sees cycling fitting into this.

Dr Hamnett himself is tall and lean. He used to play racquet sports until in 2004 when arthritis and a hip replacement meant he needed to take up some lower impact sports. He started off with just cycling, but then moved on to triathlon. He wasn't new to cycling, having cycled down to Spain while at university, but had hardly cycled since. It is through swimming that Dr Hamnett met Cllr Steve Bedser, at Harborne Baths through a BeActive session. This chance meeting led to him being invited to be involved in promoting physical activity in Birmingham.

Although Dr Hamnett himself is very lean, he is clear that the issue is not how much somebody weighs. He argues that many issues that GPs deal with stem from inactivity, and that their jobs would be easier if there was a higher level of activity in society. Although doctors spend a lot of time discussing problems like obesity and diabetes, this is because the metrics to check these are very simple. In fact, things like obesity and diabetes should be considered visible measures of

physical inactivity, and it is this underlying issue that should be focused.

He sees his role as getting physical activity higher up the ladder in terms of general practice - exercise on prescription, so to speak - so that this underlying issue can be tackled more directly. He would also like the wider issue of 'well-being' to be considered by the NHS. To illustrate this, he gave the example of 'ParkRun' (www.parkrun.org.uk), where volunteers are involved in the running of the events. Not only does this promote physical activity, but the act of volunteering and helping others promotes a more general 'well-being' in the volunteers.

The first step for encouraging GPs to promote physical activity is to run a trial in the Ladywood and Northfield, to find out what works best and what organisational problems need to be ironed out before tackling the whole of the Birmingham area.

On the topic of promoting cycling, he believes that both encouragement and infrastructure have important roles to play. "If you make biking visible here, then it will help everything else fall in place." Push Bikes hopes that Dr Hamnett is successful in assisting the BeActive bike hubs to be a success. As he pointed out, there are more people with a BeActive card than people who voted in this year's local elections.

Chris Lowe 

You will notice from now on your GP will be talking to you more about avoiding a condition that is a very serious risk to your health It is

6 times as likely to kill you as obesity

4 times as likely as a high cholesterol

2 times as likely as smoking

5 times as likely as diabetes

CURRENTLY ABOUT **69%** OF BIRMINGHAM
HAVE THIS CONDITION AND THE TREATMENT IS
NOTHING TO DO WITH SEEING YOUR DOCTOR

It is called

ACTIVITY

INACTIVITY

The medication is called

It doesn't matter how
you take this medicine
... as long as you get
your **PULSE RATE UP** for

★ 30 minutes

★ 5 X a week

CYCLING

GARDENING

BRISK
WALKING

TAKING THE DOG OUT

...EVEN SEX


If none of the above appeal information on alternatives
will start appearing in your doctors surgery shortly

Join Push Bikes

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 Push Bikes 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 Push Bikes

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

Subscription Type (please tick the relevant box)			
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Signature			
Date			

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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

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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

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