



## The CYCLING Campaign Group for Leamington, Warwick & Kenilworth

Welcome to 2015 to a mood of more optimism for the expansion of cycling. Much of this optimism can be placed on the significant shift in the policy environment. In 2011, the Coalition Government published its White Paper on transport, *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon, Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen*. Its focus was twofold, helping to create growth in the economy, and to tackle climate change by cutting carbon emissions. The latter bringing a strong support towards cycling.

Following on from this, last year the Dept. for Transport, (DfT), published a draft Cycling Delivery Plan. In it, it made very clear the wider benefits that could accrue through cycling, The case for cycling as the natural choice for shorter journeys is strong, and the resultant benefits wide reaching....Cycling means healthier, fitter citizens, less congested cities, less pollution, and a more productive workforce.

The Plan sets out the goal of doubling cycling by 2025. Should a local authority, such as WCC, sign up to this commitment, they would receive incentives and priority access to funding, as well as knowledge sharing/expertise to enable this goal to be achieved.

This Cycling Delivery Plan is an opportunity for serious consideration by WCC officers and our councillors.

Rodney King

### **Cycling: A solution, not a problem**

Cycling: A solution, not a problem: A 72 page review of the cycling provision in Warwick and Leamington. The review was carried out by a group of us in Cycleways, prompted by complaints over a period of time by members of the public. Sixteen schemes were examined, of these:

Six on-road schemes have problems, and all of the off-road schemes have problems.

An analysis of these problems highlight a number of important issues:

There needs to be:

- *Transparency and openness in planning by WCC*
- *A Framework Route Plan made up of coherent network of routes*
- *A balance between funding for sustainable transport and increased road capacity.*
- *Better staff training in design for cycling*
- *Adherence to published policies and design guidance.*

These targets are not difficult, given the will amongst Councillors and Officers of the County Council. Our review offers solutions to the problems of traffic congestion and pollution, particularly in respect of major new housing schemes already taking shape around the District.

Despite Government attempts to weaken the powers of local authorities to impose conditions on these developments, there are still opportunities for District planners to ensure that cycle routes and other sustainable transport options are designed in. However, without an overall Framework Route Plan, the new housing still will not have cycle friendly connections to all the desired destinations: schools, hospitals, train stations, and town centre shopping. So possibly the most important of our recommendations is indeed that WCC should produce such a Plan.

The main part of the review shows the irrefutable detailed evidence of past failures, but readers do not need me here to attempt a summary. We all know already about incomplete and disjointed cycle lanes, dangerous crossings of side roads, and time after time failure to work to published standards and guidance. What we need to do now is to make the best use of this powerful document. We have produced a crowbar which can shift opinions. Now we must apply our combined strength to it, and get real change. Contact your local Councillors, write to the papers, use social media, and let us all help to make local cycling safer and more enjoyable.

Chris Begg

## The Local Plan

In June 2013 Warwick District Council (WDC) put out for public consultation, a Revised Development Strategy of its Local Plan, a plan to provide for some 13,000 new houses and 10,000 new jobs over the next fifteen years. In its planning brief, WDC placed particular emphasis on the role of sustainable transport:

- **Maximise the number of journeys by sustainable transport**
- **Deliver an integrated approach to transport**
- **Reduce the impact of car based travel on the local and strategic highway network.**

Such objectives are also consistent with the Government's transport strategy, a strategy designed to tackle climate change by cutting carbon emissions. One of the key features of this strategy is the focus on the short every day journeys, as it notes:

**Two thirds of all journeys are under five miles—many of these trips could be easily cycled, walked or undertaken by public transport.....it is about offering people choices that will deliver that shift in behaviour in many more local journeys.**

In the Warwick District, all of the development areas are less than five miles from the town centres of Warwick, Leamington or Kenilworth, all easy cycling distance.

In its response to the Local Plan, WCC, as the highway authority, produced a Strategic Transport Assessment, STA4, as the transport strategy for the District. However on examining it, we found that rather than maximising the number of journeys by the sustainable modes, the focus of STA4 was on increasing road capacity, particularly at junctions, to benefit motor vehicles.

Where cycle routes were listed, little or no detail was provided as to how they would be achieved, in

stark contrast to the wealth of detail provided for junctions for motor vehicles. Specifically, two crucial features were missing for the cycle routes, connectivity of trip origins to key destinations, and the treatment of junctions. In a number of instances, junction improvements for motor vehicles listed provided no details on how the needs of cyclists or pedestrians would be met. Such examples can be seen with:

Spinney Hill roundabout the widening of all the approaches to the roundabout

Smith St./St Nicholas Church St/Priory Rd signalised to provide for better flow of traffic

Castle Hill/Mill St gyratory part signalisation, and with a left turn slip lane

Bath St/Spencer St/High St/Lower Avenue as a gyratory system

In their SWOT analysis WCC quoted "a well developed cycling network." A statement in significant contrast to reality, as the Cycleways' review highlights.

Overall, one was left with the impression that a cycling component had been "stuck on" to an extensive plan for motor vehicles, rather than providing a well integrated strategy for sustainable transport, leading us to conclude that the proposals put forward by WCC in its STA4 would not deliver the objectives set out by WDC:

- **Maximise the number of journeys made by sustainable transport**
- **Deliver an integrated approach to transport.**

Neither would the STA4 deliver the Government's Transport Strategy objectives of cutting carbon emissions, or of making travelling by bike more attractive.

An additional feature in the Government's Transport Strategy was the importance of involving the local community, there was no public consultation by WCC on its STA4.

Cycleways were not alone in their condemnation of WCC's STA4, other community groups were also highly critical of the dominance of a car based strategy. The result of this combined opposition led WCC to bring in a firm of consulting engineers, Atkins, to develop a sustainable transport strategy specifically for Warwick and Leamington. Last year a series of workshops were held involving the community groups, councillors and representatives from the large employers to discuss how such a strategy could be developed.

We will now wait to see how WCC deliver.

Rodney King

## Obituaries

### Simon Peter

**8<sup>th</sup> April 1936 – 25 December 2014**

Simon Peter cast his friendship net widely so was known variously to a great many individuals and groups around Leamington. Latterly he was always known simply as Simon Peter, but some of us knew he had a different name at birth, when he spent his early years in the US with his mother who was estranged from his father. In the early days of the Green Green Shop Simon would go on 'dawn patrol' and sign himself off by a variety of names and it became a running joke. In the end we asked him to settle for one and he chose Simon Oliver Peter and stuck to it.

He could definitely be described as one of Leamington's endearing characters, or at least endearing when he wasn't in his 'determined to get his own way' mode. And even then he got away with it, because he was who he was.

I have many memories of him dating back over the years, and remember him especially riding his cranky old black bike. We did chide him that he needed a better steed, but he was happy with that one and determined to keep it going.

I remember thinking more recently that he was doing a rather better job of preparing to pass over to the other side than most of us. He involved many of us in that process. I helped to remove stuff from his really nice flat in Chandos Street. Others

helped him to write a will and make preparations for his burial and the party he wanted us to enjoy.

I heard he'd moved to a more sheltered housing up in Lillington. But I used to see him around town on his mobility scooter, or, on his better days, coming in by bus. However, his head got ever more bent so that he really could not see where he was going. I had him in my mind over December time, so was not surprised to learn that he'd left us.

He will most certainly be missed by many.

Janet Alty

### Dr Richard Morris

**1943 - January 7 2015**

Richard has been heavily involved in charitable work promoting cycling in Kenilworth and Warwickshire for many years, alongside his involvement in many other local charities.

Richard was one of the original campaigners for the

Kenilworth to Leamington Spa (K2L) cycle route, and despite the lack of progress over the years never tired of the fight.

He wrote on historical sites of interest for publications across the country and was research associate and reader in History of Art at the University of Warwick from 1974 until his retirement in 2001.

Richard was instrumental in the setting up of the Kenilworth Cycleways branch of the Cycleways group in 2013 and his leadership was of the group will be sorely missed. He was present on most of the community cycle rides we led in 2013 and 2014, and was an enthusiastic delight and inspiration to everyone who joined us.

Richard was a true gentleman and a truly community minded individual, devoting so much of his life to helping to improve the lives.

Donations to the Harry Sunley Memorial Project or Myton Hospice can be made via John Taylor Funeral Service, 178 Warwick Road.



## Editorial

It's good to be back, or at least I hope it is!

For any new members I should explain I did edit the newsletter for some time in the past.

The really pleasing thing is that I have been over subscribed with material for this edition, so if you don't see your article don't worry I'll use it next time.

I am experimenting with layouts so any feedback would be very welcome, especially on font sizes.

I will arrange for the newsletter to be posted on the Cycleways website and for anyone who wants to have just an electronic version sent as a PDF to their email please let me know. This would save postage and make for much easier distribution; but worry not if you want paper it will still be sent out to you in that form unless requested otherwise.

[Bobmacqueen@me.com](mailto:Bobmacqueen@me.com)

## CANAL TOWPATH IMPROVEMENTS

The Canal and River Trust has been active in upgrading the towpath through Leamington. Steve the lengthsman responsible from Sydenham Drive through to Lapworth is a keen cyclist and has been instrumental in organising the work and providing materials and tools. The aim is to do the section between Sydenham Drive and Tachbrook Road. Volunteers welcome, a number of cycleways and Sustrans volunteers along with Canal and river trust volunteers and local residents all helped at the first two work sessions.

## Internet links and Cycling Apps

Inspirational Dutch cycling infrastructure:

[www.aviewfromthecyclepath.com/](http://www.aviewfromthecyclepath.com/)

David Hembrow and Englishman in Assen blogs about Dutch infrastructure.

American couple touring, photograph :

<http://pathlesspedaled.com>

## APPS

Cyclestreets - Journey planner and tracker.

[www.cyclestreets.org](http://www.cyclestreets.org) ios

Android Blackberry and Windows.

Fillthathole IOS Android pothole reporter

[www.fillthathole.org](http://www.fillthathole.org)

Bike Hub Cycle Journey

## Cycleways contacts - Email

- [membership@cycleways.org.uk](mailto:membership@cycleways.org.uk)

### Committee

Rodney King Chairman e-mail: [rodandmaggie@gmail.com](mailto:rodandmaggie@gmail.com)

Tony Lewenz Secretary [cycleways.editor@googlemail.com](mailto:cycleways.editor@googlemail.com)

Peter Clear Treasurer [peter.clear@business-insight.net](mailto:peter.clear@business-insight.net)

David Heathfield Membership Secretary [heathfield.david@gmail.com](mailto:heathfield.david@gmail.com)

Website - [www.cycleways.org.uk](http://www.cycleways.org.uk) and [www.kenilworthcycleways.org.uk](http://www.kenilworthcycleways.org.uk)