



working for cycling

CycleDigest

Issue no. 66 2011

New Road Safety Framework not perfect, says CTC

The Government's long-awaited *Strategic Framework for Road Safety* was finally published in great haste on 11th May, to coincide with the launch of the *UN Decade of Action on Road Safety*. Roger Geffen, CTC's Campaigns and Policy Director, looks at it from a cycling point of view...

No targets

The first thing to note is that the strategy doesn't contain any targets whatsoever, despite strong calls from everyone involved in road safety. Ministers clearly see targets as a New Labour aberration - even though the Coalition Government has supported climate change targets, and it was a Conservative Government that set the UK's first road safety targets back in the 1980s.

Welcome indicators

Instead, the strategy has 'indicators' to measure whether or not road safety is heading in the right direction. This is where we come to the good news. Firstly, the Government will now measure not only the numbers of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) for different

transport modes, but also the KSI rates per billion miles travelled. In other words, if cycle casualties go up slightly but cycle use has gone up steeply, the casualty rate will still show that the risk of cycling has gone down.

Even better news is that the strategy also includes an indicator for public perceptions of the safety of walking and cycling. This will encourage local authorities to tackle the fears that deter people from cycling - and dissuade them from pursuing the sort of scary 'road safety education' campaigns that put people, especially children and their parents, off cycling. CTC called for both of these indicators in our 'Safety in Numbers' campaign (www.ctc.org.uk/safetyinnumbers), as they will help to focus local and national government on promoting more as well as safer cycling, recognising that the two objectives go hand in hand.

Lukewarm on 20 mph

The strategy is disappointingly lukewarm on 20 mph speed limits. It promises a framework to help local authorities take account of all the

relevant factors - including health, environmental and severance issues as well as economic factors - when setting local speed limits. However, it falls a long way short of encouraging local authorities to regard 20 mph as the norm for most urban streets. Moreover, there is very little on encouraging local authorities to adopt safer, more pedestrian-and-cyclist friendly street designs. This too is clearly an issue where 'local authorities know best' and the Government feels no need to show leadership.

Better on lorries

Lorry safety too gets a brief mention, with commitments to reduce the risks of lorry drivers failing to see pedestrians and cyclists. This comes in the aftermath of the European Parliament's fantastic response to Kate Cairns's *See Me Save Me* campaign, following the death of her sister Eilidh, killed by a lorry whose driver was fined just £200 for driving with uncorrected defective eyesight.

Continued on page 2.



IN THIS ISSUE...

- **FEATURE - Bike sharing schemes uncovered:** Whilst 'Boris Bikes' are boosting opportunities to cycle in London, bike sharing schemes are growing in popularity in other cities all over Europe. OBIS, the Optimising Bike Sharing in European Cities project, has been gathering the secrets of their success. Page 5
- **Elections 2011:** Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - how will the new political complexion affect cycling? Page 3
- **English forests:** no cycling representatives on the Government's advisory panel! What are the next steps? Page 6

401 MEPs - well over half of the European Parliament - backed Written Declaration WD81, which therefore obliges the Commission to act on the declaration's call to reduce the problems of lorries' so-called 'blind-spots'. The Department for Transport (DfT) also has some forthcoming research on this subject. Yet at the same time the Government is also proposing to relax the eyesight requirements for drivers (and for lorry drivers in particular), and to increase the maximum length permitted for lorry cabs by 2.05m. This is hardly a fitting response to the Cairns family's admirable campaign.

FPNs for careless driving

The strategy's headline proposals are to allow police officers to hand out fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for 'careless' driving offences, whilst encouraging the courts to make stronger use of their powers to confiscate and crush vehicles owned by those who persist in driving recklessly. The stated aim is to 'nudge' the generally law-abiding but occasionally careless driver into improving their behaviour, while freeing up the courts and police to devote their scarce resources to tackling the really serious offenders.

The principle is in many ways a sound one, but the devil is in the detail. It very much rests on how you define a 'careless' driver, as opposed

to a 'dangerous' one. As I pointed out to Transport Secretary Philip Hammond at the UN launch event, 'carelessness' is commonly understood as a state of mind, while danger is the situation that results from someone's driving regardless of the state of mind which motivated it, whether carelessness or recklessness. Hence an act of 'merely' careless driving can cause real danger, and real death or injury.

Disappointingly, Mr Hammond still seemed to believe that the difference between careless and dangerous driving would be obvious to police officers and prosecutors. This suggests, disturbingly, that he is unaware of the 60-year history of legal confusion on this very point that has undermined attempts to introduce an effective legal framework for tackling bad driving in the UK. Meanwhile, if Road Safety Minister Mike Penning is persuaded to bring the sentencing framework for cycling offences more closely into line with those for driving offences (see page 7), he could end up exacerbating injustice, rather than reducing it.

Bad news on policing

But the strategy's most serious failing is the lack of any increased resource for road traffic policing. Mr Hammond says he wants decisions on funding priorities to be taken

locally, in response to local priorities and with accountability to local communities. However, it is hard to see how local communities can take those decisions sensibly when the funds simply aren't there in the first place. If anything, traffic police numbers are likely to face sharp cuts in the coming years, and road safety is bound to suffer.

Conclusion

A new EU-wide comparison (from ETSC) suggests that the UK is one of the least improved countries on pedestrian and cycle safety. Sadly, the new strategy gives very few grounds for optimism that this will change significantly in the near future.

- The Strategic Framework (which covers the whole of Great Britain) www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/strategicframework
- Longer lorries consultation: www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/2011-06/ (deadline 21st June 2011)
- ETSC comparison: www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_PINFlash19_unprotected_road_users.pdf
- CTC's response to the consultation on eyesight (now closed): www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/1104_CTC_DVLA-licence-standards-for-vision_rpt.doc

Councils bid for cycling

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) invited local authorities in England (outside London) to bid for a share of a Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF - see *Digest* 65). The money - £560m over four years - is for promoting economic growth and cutting carbon emissions, with sub-objectives to promote physical activity, air quality improvements and safer streets. £350m of it is 'revenue funding', which can support 'smarter choices', while £210m is capital for transport infrastructure.

The deadline for the first round of bids up to £5m (Tranche 1) was 18th April and there are two further application rounds: 'large bids' up to £50m (deadline, June 2011); and a Tranche 2 for bids up to £5m (expression of interest by June, deadline February, 2012).

Cycling is a prime 'smarter choice' and meets the LSTF criteria perfectly: it is excellent value for money, low carbon and helps keep people fit. CTC has therefore been working over the last few months to encourage as many authorities as possible to introduce it into their bids.

Encouragingly, it looks as though cycling will do quite well from LSTF. Some credit for this must go to DfT, who have consistently said throughout their briefing process that they want pragmatic, proven solutions and not big schemes that have been on the shelf looking for funding. The limit on the size of funding has also frozen out big capital projects.

Keeping cycling at the forefront of some councils' minds, however, has not always been easy in the face of local pressure to shore up bus services or to dilute £5million across huge areas to limited effect. This has been compounded in some of the former Cycling Towns by the belief that cycling has had enough attention already and other modes must now be rewarded. Despite this, however, the track record of the Cycling Towns and the expertise of cycling organisations have made it much easier than expected to get cycling written into many bids.

In addition to pressing broadly for the inclusion of cycling in LSTF bids, CTC has been working specifically on making sure that the voluntary sector is properly involved, as the DfT's guidance advises. Happily, voluntary organisations have secured roles as active partners, been cited as supporters or potential suppliers, or are behind a variety of bids as part of consortia. CTC itself has become a partner in nearly 20 bids and is already talking to a number of local authorities and metropolitan boroughs about the next bidding rounds.

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportfund/

For more on how CTC can help with LSTF bids contact 0844 736 8450 / cycling@ctc.org.uk



From the Editor...

Victory, as cycling advocates may conclude, is sometimes rather hard to identify. It also has a frustrating habit of being partial, making it even harder to know when to celebrate. Influencing the Government's new road safety framework has been tough, the result took ages, wasn't especially exciting and, in some areas, seriously disappointing (pages 1 & 2). However, officials will now track

public perceptions of how safe walking and cycling is - one fair indication of the success of road safety strategies and something that CTC asked for - so that's a victory. And so appeared to be the outcry against English forest sell-offs earlier this year, but not including cyclists on the Independent Forestry Panel afterwards was outrageous. In the

event, though, cyclists did not have to hand in a statement all alone on the lawns outside Parliament explaining the importance of public access - others, equally worried, were there too to meet the Panel's Chair, the Bishop of Liverpool. If banding together with outdoor enthusiasts, from mountaineers to dog walkers, isn't an achievement, then I don't know what is (page 6). Equally, it's reassuring when projects take off to such an extent that it's possible to work out their ingredients for success - public bike sharing schemes are now in that happy state (pages 4 & 5). And if you still don't believe that the light of victory isn't always a figment at the end of a tunnel, read the story of Witherslack underpass (page 6) and you might be persuaded otherwise.

Cherry Allan - cherry.allan@ctc.org.uk

News in brief

Bikeability launched in Scotland

Cycling proficiency in Scotland was re-launched in March as Bikeability Scotland. Designed to give children the skills they need to ride on the road and travel independently to school, the new scheme offers much more comprehensive training than the old test which was traditionally delivered in the playground. Bikeability was launched in England and Wales in 2007, and Bikeability Scotland represents a continuation of that brand north of the border. Both schemes follow the UK National Standard for Cycle Training. www.cyclingscotland.org
www.ctc.org.uk/training

Ramping it up

Plans to present cyclists, horse riders and people in wheelchairs with a major obstacle on the motor traffic-free Trans-Pennine Trail have been re-thought. Steps, not ramps, were specified in the proposal for a bridge over the Metrolink tram extension at Didsbury, Manchester, but as a result of concerted local campaigning led by Manchester Friends of the Earth, the plans now feature ramps, not steps. www.manchesterfoe.org.uk/lyb/

Last crumbs?

One disappointing move in the Chancellor's budget in March was a proposal to abolish tax relief on 'qualifying meals' for cyclists. Since 2002, employers have been able to reward employees who have cycled to work on a designated day with food and drink (better known, perhaps, as 'breakfast'). The benefit has been widely used by private sector companies, local authorities and Government departments, particularly during Bike Week (see Diary Dates, back page). CTC believes this is a retrograde step and urges the Government to think again.

13,000 milestones for NCN

Now that Sustrans's National Cycle Network is 13,000 miles long, the organisation has calculated that from end to end, it would stretch from the North to the South Pole and beyond; and that it is also nearly six times longer than the UK's motorways network. www.sustrans.org.uk

2011 May Elections: Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Chris Peck, CTC's Campaigns and Policy Coordinator considers the impact on cycling

Although some important transport policy remains under control of the Westminster Parliament, the May elections in the three devolved administration have led to political changes that may have significant effects on cycling budgets and policy.

The extraordinary seizure of the Holyrood Parliament by the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) gives us a clear picture of what might emerge in Scotland. While leading a minority government over the previous parliament, the SNP established the *Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS)*. This set the highly ambitious target of a 10% share of all for cycling by 2020. CAPS has already borne fruit through the alignment of cycle training standards with the three stage Bikeability scheme already operating in England, though unlike England, most of the frontline training is conducted by trained volunteers rather than professional instructors.

Although some funding has been budgeted in support of the CAPS objectives, campaigners fear it will be insufficient. Promises to increase the proportion of funding disbursed to sustainable travel measures appear mainly to have been diverted into low-carbon motoring rather than cycling and walking. With the SNP now in firm control for the next 4 years, it remains to be seen whether the policies to achieve such a huge shift to cycling can be implemented before 2020. Their transport emphasis in the run up to the elections was very much on major road and rail projects, including the new Forth Road Bridge, more motorway building and widening in and around Glasgow and the reopened Borders rail line. Without a clear commitment to curbing traffic growth and de-motorising towns and cities, the growth in cycling may not reach expectations.

In Wales and Northern Ireland the elections

have wrung fewer changes. Labour has increased its dominance of the Welsh Assembly, while the balance in Northern Ireland has remained firmly in the hands of the Democratic Unionists and Sinn Fein, although ministerial posts are divided evenly between all the parties. CTC was deeply concerned by a private member's bill in the previous Northern Ireland Assembly to make helmets compulsory for all cyclists. Such a measure would undoubtedly be bad for public health and cycling since the health benefits of cycling greatly outweigh the risks. The member in charge of that bill - Pat Ramsey - has been re-elected.

The Welsh Assembly has secured additional powers through a referendum earlier in the year. This means it will now be able to pass primary legislation on many issues, including transport and planning, putting it almost on a par with the Parliament in Scotland. With Labour obtaining exactly half of the Senedd seats, they must now decide whether or not to work alone or with some assistance from another party. Plaid Cymru, Labour's previous coalition party, lost seats to the Conservatives in the election. Labour promised in its manifesto to pass legislation placing a duty on local authorities to "provide cycle routes in key areas" following a campaign by Sustrans. In addition, Labour has committed to creating a path, in part accessible to cyclists, around the whole of the coast of Wales by 2012. However, as with the situation in Scotland, Labour has apparently little appetite for traffic restraint, suggesting that most emissions savings in transport will be made from "lowering the carbon content of fuel, while accepting that modal transport switching can make a small additional contribution and deliver other benefits."



More holes in the budget

The results of the 16th Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM). Survey reports that councils in England and Wales filled 2,202,000 potholes in total, an increase of 59% over the previous year. Three years of severe winter weather took their toll, with winter damage from 2010 alone costing £362 million. Despite additional finance from central government, authorities continue to report a funding shortfall and say that they would need a one-off investment of £10.65 billion (aggregated across England and Wales) to return their roads to reasonable condition www.alarm-survey.co.uk (Asphalt Industry Alliance).

Go to CTC's www.fillthathole.org.uk to report road defects and get them filled.



Bike Sharing Schemes uncovered

Bike sharing schemes have been taking off over the last few years, not least in London. Since 2008, the 'Optimising Bike Sharing in European Cities' (OBIS) project has been gathering the secrets of their success. Now that it's publishing a handbook, CTC's Senior Professional Services Officer Sara Basterfield, who has been involved with OBIS since June 2010, picks out some of its key findings.

Background

In 2001, only a few bike sharing schemes were running in Europe, but by 2011 about 400 were in existence in the nine OBIS countries alone.

The main trigger was the launch of two big schemes: Bicing in Barcelona 2007 and Vélib' in Paris in the same year.

In the UK, London's Barclays Cycle Hire (aka 'Boris Bikes') was launched in July 2010 and since then, media coverage has greatly raised public awareness of the public bike sharing concept in the UK.

The OBIS project began in 2008 and is due to finish in August 2011. Its consortium has carried out the broadest analysis of public bike sharing schemes so far: 51 in 48 cities located in 10 European countries were included in the qualitative and quantitative analysis.

OBIS is funded by the *Intelligent Energy - Europe* programme, the EU's tool for funding action to move us towards a more energy intelligent Europe. The 16 OBIS partners include not-for-profit, public sector, academic, transport, commercial and membership organisations from nine countries – Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

The OBIS project partners have now compiled a handbook that aims to be a helpful guide for those considering setting up a public bike sharing scheme in their town or city. The publication will be presented at the final conference in June in Prague and issued later in the year.



Key findings

Not surprisingly, political will and stakeholder buy-in are very important. Whatever obstacles various cities and towns faced, these factors enabled them to set up their schemes with success.

The scheme's context is also key – whether the city has a cycling culture or not, climate, topography, layout, distances, public transport and so on vary from place to place and need to be taken into account. The purpose underpinning the scheme is also very important and needs to be clearly explored and determined. Crucial questions to consider include:

- Why are you introducing the scheme?
- What problems will it address?
- Who will use it?
- When, where, why, how and how often will they use it?

What are the benefits of public bike sharing schemes?

Public bike sharing schemes are not the panacea for urban and regional transport problems - to unlock their full potential, they must be embedded in a comprehensive cycling and transport strategy. However, a scheme can be an initial boost to cycling as a daily transport option (as has been the case in Paris, Lyon, Barcelona and London) and can create a demand for improvements in cycle infrastructure as it undoubtedly raises the profile of cycling, helps to move it into the mainstream and gets 'ordinary' people cycling. The higher volume of cyclists generated can, moreover, improve cycling safety (for more on the 'Safety in Numbers' effect, see www.ctc.org.uk/safetyinnumbers).

A scheme can also enhance a city's reputation and make it more attractive to visitors. Even if people do not use the facility themselves, they often appreciate the feel of a city with less motorised traffic and a people rather than car centric outlook.

Are there any disadvantages?

If a scheme is not properly scoped out and fully supported by key stakeholders, it is likely to be unsuccessful and could provide 'evidence' for those sceptical about cycling to block other, future investments in the mode. If funding and long term sustainability are not thought through, even after a positive start the scheme could run into trouble and, again, this could be used as 'proof' against its viability as a transport, tourist or leisure option in the city in question.



Bike sharing in Stockholm

Photos: Tim Birkholz, choice

Redistribution car in Stockholm



Another disadvantage is the negative effect that redistributing bikes round the city after use could have, unless the vehicles moving them are zero-emission.

The scheme can also be seen as discriminatory - not accessible to all, in other words, if access depends on a user having a credit or debit card. It could take money away from other investments in cycling promotion and infrastructure, too.

The OBIS handbook provides advice on overcoming disadvantages and maximising chances of success.

The future?

Public bike sharing is rapidly taking off in all sorts of unexpected places such as Mexico City and Doha, Qatar. Alongside the development of the schemes themselves, technology is also developing rapidly with mobile phone apps and new payment systems helping to make it easier to access and use the bikes. It seems possible that as more and more global cities such as London and Paris set up schemes, public bike sharing will become a 'must have' on the modern Mayor's shopping list.

The handbook

To register your interest in hearing about how to obtain a copy of the handbook later in the year, please e-mail sara.basterfield@ctc.org.uk.

- www.obisproject.com
- <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/>
- <http://bike-sharing.blogspot.com/>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle_sharing_system

Reflections on Velo-City, 2011

In 2010, CTC's delegates to the first Velo-City Global were wowed by the 30% of the Copenhagen population who cycle to work – and the aim to increase this to 50%. The question on their minds this year was whether Seville would provide similar inspiration...



Seville – campaigning breakthrough

What struck CTC's contingent to the conference first was that the city has its own story to tell. Seville has a population of over 700,000 and though modern, it has a historic, congested centre. In four years, cycling share has increased from 0.2% to 6.7%, following restrictions on cars, flexible bike hire scheme and investment in cycle lanes. Probably the nearest UK comparison is York, where the Council realised that its own historic city centre was unsustainable back in the 1970s.

The encouraging story for campaigners was hearing about the breakthrough for Conbici, the federation of local campaigning groups in Spain, who had been struggling to make an impact. Recently, their profile turned a corner with their strategic, eye-catching '1 million more' campaign to get a million more people cycling by 2015.

Conference highlights

The programme for Velo-City conferences maintains a solid core of themes to make sure that new audiences don't miss out on the basics, but also draws on the latest evidence to show that cycling is consistently proving itself as a tool in sustainable development, health and tourism as well as transport.

Emerging from the event's traditional focus on city transport planning were some important new themes, particularly around the economic case for cycling. Joaquín Nieto, President of Honour of Sustainlabour, International Labour Foundation for Sustainable Development, calculated the job creation potential of a city bike sharing scheme in each major Spanish city. He showed that the potential increase was bigger than any other green transport initiative in Spain and way ahead of programmes such as nuclear power.

CTC's own presentation at the event came from Development Officer Ginny Leonard who demonstrated how CTC's community programmes were contributing to local economies and social wellbeing.

Finally, Velo-City 2011 was a boost for the followers of cycle campaigning at EU level: it was clear that the profile of both the event and its organiser, the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) has been raised significantly, boding well not only for next year's conference in Vancouver, but also for the global future of cycling.

- o <http://velo-city2011.com/eng/inicio.php>
- o <http://www.ecf.com/> (CTC is a member of ECF)



The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Communities. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Forest cycling: making up for the missing voice

The Government's decision to suspend the sales of Forestry Commission England (FCE) woodlands was accompanied by the announcement that an Independent Forestry Panel would be set up to advise on any future disposals (see *Digest 65*). It was with considerable concern, therefore, that CTC learned that Environment Minister Caroline Spellman decided to exclude cycling representation. Indeed the only member of the Panel primarily concerned with public access to forests is Tom Franklin of the Ramblers.

It cannot be stressed too highly how important the Forestry Commission is as a provider of motor traffic-free cycling - either the Minister is unaware or considers the issue unimportant.

Here is a reminder of current use of these woodlands for cycling:

- FCE provides 1400km of waymarked cycle trails and 8700km stoned roads for use by cyclists, around 20% of all English traffic free cycle provision
- It is estimated that approximately 30% of all traffic-free cycle journeys are made on FCE tracks and trails
- For many families, this is the only extensive usable motor traffic-free network - as bridleways are generally unsuitable and railtrails, while excellent, are few in number and length. As a result, we estimate that over 90% of all traffic-free family cycling takes place on public forest trails
- 32% of visits to key FCE woodlands and visitor centres include cycling activity
- Forests attract 9.5 million visits for cycling per year
- Only 4 significant English non FCE forests currently welcome informal cycling.

CTC believes that it is essential that we get to know the Panel members and their organisations in order to inform and persuade them of the importance of maintaining and increasing this crucial cycling provision.

We therefore conducted a study to assess the track record of these organisations, with the following conclusions (appointed Panel member's name in brackets):

Likely to be supportive of cycling interests...

- Forestry Commission: excellent provision. (Sir Harry Studholme)
- Clinton Devon Estates: have been tolerant of informal cycling on the estate. (John Varley)
- National Trust: latest plans will encourage cycling on their land. (Dame Fiona Reynolds)
- Ramblers: will be supporting equestrian and cycling activities on the Panel. (Tom Franklin)

Likely to be broadly neutral with no particular track record of promoting cycling - but no evidence of strong negativity...

- Church Commissioners (Right Reverend James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool - Chair)
- Institute of Chartered Foresters: a number of members promote mountain biking. (Shireen Chambers)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds: some reserves permit cycling. (Dr Mike Clarke)
- Confor - Confederation of Forest Industries: Stuart Goodall, their representative, is a regular mountain biker.

- Woodland Trust: rarely encourage mountain biking, but have shown tolerance. (Sue Holden)
- Single Planet Living: no references found. (Dr Alan Knight OBE)

Previous evidence suggests that the following are less likely to support cycle provision...

- Country Landowner & Business Association: generally oppose cycle provision. (William Worsley)
- Wildlife Trusts: generally unsympathetic to cycle access. (Stephanie Hilborne OBE)

CTC has three broad objectives in the public forest debate:

1. To ensure that current levels of cycle provision are maintained and protected from potential threats
2. To ensure that policies support continuous improvement of current cycle provision
3. To protect future cycle use by s16 dedication

CTC recently joined other outdoor enthusiasts from the Forest Access User Group to hand in a statement to the Panel's Chair, the Bishop of Liverpool, calling on the Panel to put protecting and enhancing public access at the heart of its work. Sign up to support the Group's statement at www.ctc.org.uk/forests.

The Group also includes the Ramblers, IMBA, the British Mountaineering Council, the British Horse Society, British Orienteering, Open Spaces Society, the Kennel Club, and the Sport and Recreation Alliance. It is looking forward to giving further evidence to the Independent Panel on the value of our woodland and forests for public access.



ACTION! Another early action point is to identify where cycle access has been lost as a result of forest sales. Please send any information you have to colin.palmer@ctc.org.uk.

"I have rarely met such anger as that expressed by the mountain biking community over the Government's implied indifference to our recreation. This lack of understanding not only potentially affects our current access, but also the enjoyment of thousands of families and their children, and must not be left unchallenged."
Colin Palmer, CTC's Access Adviser.

- www.defra.gov.uk/rural/forestry/panel/
- www.ctc.org.uk/forests

Cyclists reclaim Witherslack underpass

CTC volunteer campaigner Matt Hodges has fought and won a three year campaign to protect cyclists' safety in a narrow bridleway underpass in Cumbria. Despite their remarkably simple campaign requests, CTC and the Cyclists' Defence Fund (CDF) had to threaten legal action before Cumbria Council's Development Control and Regulation (DCR) Committee finally accepted the advice of its own officers to prevent motor vehicles from using the tunnel, which is no bigger than a pedestrian subway.

Pressurised by Witherslack Parish Council to allow residents to drive through the underpass, councillors resisted CTC's calls for three years, arguing that motorists turning right onto the 70 mph dual carriageway overhead were threatened by the speed of other motorists. As a result, there had been a steady flow of cars using the tunnel to cross the A590 before rejoining it on the far side, as an illegal alternative to turning right

onto it from the central reservation. The parish council also tried to claim that the underpass, which was designed for pedestrians, animals and small farm vehicles, had become a 'public vehicular highway' because drivers had illegally used it for more than twenty years. However, the underpass is also well used by cyclists, and forms part of a coast-to-coast National Cycle Network route from Walney to Wear (www.cyclingw2w.info/route.htm).

After a long battle, culminating in a legal challenge prepared by Chartered Surveyor Robert Halstead commissioned by CTC and CDF, the DCR Committee agreed to block car access. Officers are now expected to install a lockable bollard that can be opened by local farmers, who will be the only people allowed to drive through the tunnel, in line with its design. Full story at: www.ctc.org.uk/Witherslack

MP proposes 'Dangerous Cycling Bill'

Comment from Roger Geffen, CTC's Campaigns Director

On 22nd March, Andrea Leadsom MP presented a Bill in the Commons proposing a new offence of causing death or injury by careless or reckless cycling. Ms Leadsom was motivated by the case of 17 year-old Rhiannon Bennett, a girl killed in a collision involving a cyclist. The cyclist, Jason Howard, was prosecuted for 'dangerous cycling', which carries a maximum penalty of £2,500. He was convicted and fined £2,200. Ms Leadsom, a keen cyclist, was concerned that motorists guilty of a similar offence would be prosecuted for 'causing death by careless driving' and felt that the law does not treat drivers and cyclists equally.

Legal anomalies

It is true that the maximum penalties for dangerous cycling offences are lower than for dangerous driving offences: the maximum sentence available for drivers convicted of 'causing death by dangerous driving' is 14 years' custody. However, short of bringing an assault, manslaughter or murder charge, the toughest sentence available for a cycling offence is a 2 year maximum for 'wanton and furious cycling'.

Nonetheless, there are other, more serious anomalies in the framework of bad driving offences. For instance, the maximum sentence for 'causing death by careless' (rather than 'dangerous') driving is 5 years. However, 'dangerous' (i.e. worse) driving has a maximum sentence of just 2 years, regardless of how seriously maimed the victim might be, provided they don't actually die. This is clearly irrational. So too is the fact that, for equally bad driving, the maximum sentence is so much higher (i.e. 14 years if the driving is 'dangerous') if the victim does happen to die instead of 'merely' being maimed.

So it is hardly surprising that the courts rarely go anywhere near the 14 year maximum for 'causing death by dangerous driving'. Even where there are several aggravating factors involved – e.g. the driver was drunk, speeding, unlicensed, fled the scene of the crime, and had previous driving convictions – the likely sentence is still only 9-10 years. Judges find it very hard to sentence rationally, given that a similar case (i.e. involving all the same aggravating factors) would attract a maximum of just 2 years if the victim happened not to die.

Cyclists and pedestrians: the risks

Another important fact to remember is that cyclists very rarely cause pedestrians harm: just one pedestrian has been killed in collision with a pedal cycle in the past 2 years. In that time, there have been 1,070 pedestrians killed in collisions with motor vehicles. As for cases where the cyclist was found to have been acting illegally, there have been 3

other instances in the whole of the past decade, besides Jason Howard, where cyclists have been convicted following the deaths of pedestrians, two on the pavement, one on a grass verge.

By contrast, in 2005 - 09 there was an average of 45 pedestrians killed in collisions with motor vehicles on pavements or verges each year – that's almost one a week.



Levels of prosecution

In total (i.e. including on-road as well as pavement collisions), there were 500 pedestrians and 104 cyclists killed on Britain's road network in 2009 – that's about 11 non-motorised users killed on average per week. Moreover, less than a quarter of all road fatalities ever lead to a prosecution, let alone a prison sentence – so that's probably about 8-9 cyclists and pedestrians a week whose bereaved families then find the driver concerned faces no prosecution at all. And even when prosecuted and convicted, it is common for drivers who have killed pedestrians or cyclists to face fines of just a couple of hundred pounds. CTC's bad driving reporting site, Stop SMIDSY, lists numerous examples. www.stop-smidsy.org.uk/case-studies.

Conclusion

If we merely reform the law on irresponsible cyclists, there might be one or two families spared the injustice suffered by the Bennett family in a decade. However, Parliament should make it a priority to address the injustices suffered by the bereaved families of pedestrians and cyclists killed by motor vehicles, given that there are several of these every week.

o Andrea Leadsom's Bill: www.publications.parliament.uk > Hansard > Commons Debates 22/3/2011

o CTC's webpage: www.ctc.org.uk/dangerous-cycling-bill

CTC trains LGV drivers

Thanks to CTC's Senior Training Instructor, Greg Woodford, light goods vehicle drivers from the building materials supplier Cemex UK benefited from a day's instruction in cycling skills. Since 2004, the company has worked to promote cyclists' safety round goods vehicles and the training was designed to help drivers understand what sharing the road is like from a cyclist's perspective. www.ctc.org.uk/cycletraining

Physical activity for children - in school, or out?

By Peter Hawkins, Chair CTC-Scotland

CTC-Scotland has responded, along with many health and sports organisations, to a consultation about the need for more physical activity, and its role schools.

The current version of the *Scottish Charter for Physical Activity* advocates two hours of compulsory 'gym' a week, but this might squeeze out other subjects, like history, because of the overcrowded curriculum. CTC-Scotland argues that, while physical activity is essential not just for fitness, but also for alertness and mental activity, it can be gained outside of school hours and need not be compulsory. Active travel to school, i.e. walking and cycling, or even skating or roller-blading, is the solution. Two hours a week equates to a 12 minute walk or cycle to school, there and back, five days a week. While not every child is able to do this, even those who come in by bus or car could do some walking, e.g. if buses dropped the children at some distance from the school, or if parking restrictions made car access to school gates more difficult.

More out-of-school activities, such as Bike Club, would also help. Bike Club is relatively new to Scotland and only operates in certain areas, but its role is to work with schools and youth clubs to get cycling activities started. It is now seeking 'hard to reach' children who might otherwise get no active recreation. <http://bikeclub.org.uk/>

Children themselves might be given a choice in the matter too. Those who can show, for instance, that they are already getting their minimum two hours a week of activity outside school hours, might be 'excused' gym.

There are other reasons for not making gym compulsory in the curriculum: it puts pressure on school budgets because it requires specialist teachers, dedicated room and equipment; and, arguably, anything that *can* be taught or acquired outside hours, *should* be, freeing up school time for more 'academic' subjects that can only be taught in school.

AA freebies annoy campaigners

When the AA gave out free corporate cycle helmets and hi-viz tabards in central London in the middle of April, cycle campaigners responded by staging a Highway Code give away for drivers at the same time. CTC's Campaigns Director Roger Geffen explained: "*The AA's gimmick makes out that cyclists who don't wear helmets are to blame if they get hurt. Cycle helmets aren't designed for fast or heavy traffic, and increased helmet use has never been linked with improvements in cyclists' safety. The one thing we know about helmet promotion is that it puts people off cycling, which in turn worsens not only congestion and pollution, but road safety as well.*

"If the AA wants to improve safety for cyclists, it should work with groups like CTC to encourage all road users to follow the Highway Code."

CTC appoints new officer for local campaigners



CTC's voluntary campaigners are a source of local knowledge and expertise on cycling. UK-wide, the Right to Ride Network has been operational for well over a decade and now has a new officer, Laura Brooks, to support and develop its activities.

Based at National Office in Guildford, Laura says, "Previously I worked for Natural England as a

Walking for Health Adviser for the South East region, based in Reading. I am very committed to active travel and have worked alongside volunteers, local authorities, charities and organisations such as Sustrans, supporting local groups to set up free walks for sedentary people.

"I regularly delivered training to potential walk leaders and cascade trainers, as well as assisting the development of training packs. I aided the expansion of a volunteer support system developing regular network meetings for regional and local groups, enabling them to assemble and share good practice. I am very excited to be working for CTC as part of the Campaigns team, assisting volunteer campaigners by delivering support and training."

E-mail: righttoride@ctc.org.uk / Direct line: 01483 238323
www.ctc.org.uk/righttoride

Attitudes to transport

The 2010 *British Social Attitudes* survey on transport, published earlier this year, found that 43% of people could easily make 2 mile trips by cycle that they currently drive. Other key findings were:

Environment:

- 15% think drivers should pay higher taxes 'for the sake of the environment' (62% disagree)
- 58% think everyone should reduce their car use (15% disagree)

Transport policies

- 71% in favour of 20 mph limits (15% opposed)
- 48% in favour of speed bumps (38% opposed)
- 35% in favour of closing residential streets to through traffic (36% opposed)

Speed cameras/limits

- 14% in favour of more speed cameras (52% against)
- 56% think speed cameras are just there to make money (23% disagree) ...
- ... but 49% think they also save lives (27% disagree)
- 90% believe people should obey speed limits

Mobile phones

- 87% disagree that it is perfectly safe to talk on hand-held mobile phones whilst driving
- 69% agree that the law on mobile phones is not properly enforced

Drink driving

- 85% think anyone who has drunk any alcohol shouldn't drive
- 75% think anyone who has been caught drink driving should be banned for at least 5 years

www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221513/714374/bsareport.pdf

In locations as far apart as Brighton and Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast, Bike Club is giving children and young people access to cycling in a range of ways to help them learn important skills and enjoy rewarding experiences. For all the latest, sign up to Bike Club's newsletter:

www.bikeclub.org.uk Bike Club is a joint initiative from ContinYou, UK Youth and CTC

Please give us your feedback on CycleDigest! www.ctc.org.uk/cycledigest

CycleDigest is also available at www.ctc.org.uk/cycledigest. Save Paper! If you would prefer to receive notice that the latest issue has been uploaded onto our website, email the address below. Please also let us know if you no longer wish to receive this publication. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the policies of CTC. Material from the CycleDigest may be reproduced in any form for the purposes of campaigning and in the promotion of cycle use, provided the source is acknowledged.

Published by CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 9JX

Editor: Cherry Allan Tel: 0844 736 8450 Fax: 0844 736 8454 e-mail: cherry.allan@ctc.org.uk

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Cycling England's online legacy

Since 2005, Cycling England - sadly wound up at the end of March - gathered a wealth of expertise on cycling, from hard engineering to 'smarter' encouragement measures. Amongst its legacy are 14 short, themed videos sharing best practice from its Cycling City and Towns, highlighting the most successful initiatives and supplying examples for practitioners just getting started with their own projects. They also cover issues critical in the design and delivery of successful cycling programmes, such as collaboration with stakeholders and building political support.

www.youtube.com/user/CyclingEngland#g/u

Other resources that Cycling England compiled in its life-time, including guidance notes, case studies and reports, are being transferred to a new online home at www.ciltuk.org.uk/pages/cycling hosted by The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport.

Health on the Move 2 (THSG) Mindell JS, Watkins SJ, Cohen JM (eds)

The full version of the new *Health on the Move* has now been published (the cycling section was released in advance - see *Digest* 64). The report is a comprehensive account of what would constitute a healthy transport system, blending evidence and authoritative opinion from experts. Designed to be an educational tool, a set of recommendations for policy-makers and a powerful basis for advocacy. Argues the case for 20 mph in residential streets.

www.transportandhealth.org.uk/

Cycling Vision 2016 (Cambridge Cycling Campaign)

Cambridge Cycling Campaign, one of the most proactive groups in the country, has set out what it believes to be the key projects that could be delivered in the next five years that would make a significant difference to cycling in the region. The report concludes: "People love Cambridgeshire because of what it represents: its open space, its shopping, the employment and educational opportunities. In essence, it is the environment that matters. Cycling is the only transport option that can enhance the environment of Cambridge and the surrounding area."

www.camcycle.org.uk/vision2016/

DIARY DATES

Bike Week 2011 18 - 26th June

Team Green Britain Bike Week, the UK's biggest mass participation cycling event, is this year hosting 'Britain's Biggest Bike Fix' - an ambitious attempt to fix as many bikes as possible in a week. The Week is funded this year by the cycling industry's Bike Hub and by EDF Energy, Britain's largest producer of low carbon electricity. The event's aim is to get more people cycling, more often, offering something for everyone - from families, schools and companies, to seasoned cyclists and those who have never cycled before. www.bikeweek.org.uk.

