



Harrow Cyclists

Newsletter

February/March 2011

www.brentcyclists.org.uk
www.harrowcyclists.org.uk

Cycle Superhighways rethink?

Transport for London has informed LCC that it is willing to reconsider the options for the routes of the two future Cycle Superhighways to north-west London. This comes after much criticism from activists of TfL's original route choices, which were, for CS10, the A40 and other roads, from Park Royal to Hyde Park Corner, and for CS11, the A5 from West Hendon to Marble Arch. LCC members locally felt that these roads had little potential for improvement within the constraints TfL was laying down generally for the Superhighways, and that they would never be made attractive enough to encourage a significant number of new commuters. The A5 is a congested bus route with a very dangerous junction at Staples Corner West that TfL never had any serious proposals for sorting out, and that will be made even worse by the future Brent Cross Cricklewood development. The A40 is an elevated urban motorway.

Now, CS 10 is proposed to be relocated to the A404 Harrow Road. This was a Brent Cyclists proposal, supported by Westminster Cyclists. The A404 has the best crossing of the North Circular Road for cycling in Brent. There is potential for genuine road-space reallocation in Wembley and Kensal Green. However, TfL have now deferred implementing this route to 2015, beyond the date of the next mayoral election.

For CS11, TfL now propose it should follow the A41 from Marylebone Road to the junction of Finchley Road and Hendon Way. This would make it much shorter than the other Cycle Superhighways, at little more than 5 miles long, and mean also that it fails to offer any improved crossing of the North Circular Road, the biggest physical barrier to cycling in NW London. The two facts that it avoids completely the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration area, and stops precisely at the border of Camden and Barnet (Barnet being the London borough that has long been the most hostile to the idea of changing the roads to benefit cyclists), both smack rather of political expediency. TfL propose to implement this route by 2012, but have told us they are seeking our opinions and have not definitely fixed the route yet.

A meeting was held in December between members of Brent Cyclists and Barnet Cyclists to decide a joint outer-London groups approach to this issue. We also had the benefit of written opinions from Camden and Westminster LCC groups. Despite the new alignment moving the route away from Brent, we considered the A41 alignment would

offer more benefit to most commuting cyclists from NW London than the A5 alignment, provided that TfL were prepared to offer significant engineering changes at Swiss Cottage giratory, which forms than major barrier on this route. The A41 is not so congested as the A5 and offers more space, potentially, for the route, with greater road width and less parking and loading activity. We would want to see the dangerous corner where Hendon Way branches left off Finchley Road dealt with, along with other "left hook" hazard points further south. We are demanding the route continues further north, either towards Hendon, crossing the North Circular at Brent Street, or towards Finchley, crossing the North Circular at Henleys Corner.

If, however, all TfL are willing to offer is a blue strip painted within the existing bus lanes, on the pattern of the routes they have implemented already, we do not think this Superhighway will prove of much benefit to cyclists.

Harrow Cyclists has a new Co-ordinator

At the Harrow Cyclists Annual Meeting in January the group elected a new committee. Colin Waters, who has led the group so enthusiastically since its inception two years ago, announced that as he may have to leave the area during the course of 2011, he felt it would be inappropriate for him to stand as co-ordinator this time, though he was willing to act as secretary.

Tony Levene was elected as co-ordinator and chairman and Colin Waters as secretary. David Turner, Dan Hanley, Simon Hill, and David Arditti were re-elected as treasurer, campaigns co-ordinator, rides co-ordinator, and newsletter editor respectively. After the elections, Tom Bogdanowicz, LCC campaigns manager, gave an interesting talk about how he came to write his book *The London Cycling Guide*, also touching on various aspects of cycle campaigning.

Ride in France

If there is sufficient interest, Harrow Cyclists are considering organising a cycling holiday of 4 days over the extended Bank Holiday weekend coinciding with the royal wedding, 29 April–2 May. Member Alan Blann owns a house on the France/Belgium border about 40 miles from Calais, and is offering it as a base. It could sleep two couples and three others. If you are interested in coming, contact Alan on alanandsue.blann@sky.com.

Harrow Cyclists manifesto attracts councillors' attention

A new council, including many new councillors, having been elected in May, Harrow Cyclists committee felt it would be a good idea to follow up on the lobbying conducted during the election by pushing at all councillors, early in their new term, a clear and well-presented digest of what the group is about and what actions we would like the council to take.

The result was an illustrated booklet of four A4 pages, professionally printed in colour, compiled by Colin Waters and David Arditti, delivered to all Harrow councillors in November. This outlined in some detail a series of policies that the group would like the council to implement to encourage cycling, covering the areas of lorry safety, road surfaces, cycle parking, effective cycle lanes and routes, problem junctions, access to parks, cycle training, transport budget allocation, and speed limits.



The first page of Harrow Cyclists brochure for councillors

The “manifesto” has already produced results, with meetings with councillors from two parties prompted by its distribution. In separate meetings, members of Harrow Cyclists committee met Conservative opposition councillor Tony Ferrari, who is also a cyclist, and Phil O’Dell, the Labour transport portfolio holder, with transport officers, in January.

Bike maintenance courses in Ealing and recycle-a-bike in Uxbridge

Ealing Bike Hub is a community organisation providing maintenance lessons, second-hand bikes and cycle training. The maintenance sessions are held at Greenford Park Residents Association Hall, 18 Queens Avenue, Greenford. Forthcoming dates are 5 February (introduction to bike maintenance), 5 March (ditto) and 9 April (cleaning, lubrication, brakes and gears), all Saturdays, at 10:00am. The cost for the “introduction” sessions is £10, the cost for the “cleaning etc.” session is £20. Booking is necessary. contact Ealing Bike Hub through their website www.ealingbikehub.co.uk.

Recycle-a-bike is a workshop project based in Uxbridge that recycles and refurbishes donated or discarded bikes to provide affordably cycles to the community. They also do repairs and servicing. They are at 61 High Street, Uxbridge and are open Tuesday to Friday 12:30–4:30pm. Further info on www.recycleabike.co.uk.

Forthcoming events

Tuesday 1 February: Brent Cyclists social 7.00pm
Lounge Bar of The Crown, 142–152 Cricklewood
Broadway NW2 3ED

Wednesday 9 February: Harrow Cyclists meeting 7.30 pm
Beacon Centre, Scott Crescent, Rayners Lane HA2 0TY, followed by a social at 9:00 at the Village Inn, Rayners Lane

Saturday 12 February: Short winter mystery ride Meet 11:00am Gladstone Park railway bridge (foot of Parkside) for an easy 15 mile ride in town. Bring lights.

Sunday 27 February: Colin’s Hampstead Ride Meet 10:30am Rayners Lane Station for a ride to Parliament Hill and back. About 20 miles round, suitable for all cyclists who can cope with some moderate hills.

Wednesday 2 March: Brent Cyclists meeting 7.00pm
Samaritans Centre, 1 Leopold Road NW10 9LN

Wednesday 9 March: Harrow Cyclists meeting Details as 9 February

Sunday 13 March: Ride to Windsor Meet 10:00am Kingsbury Station or 10:25am Kenton Station or 10:50am North Harrow Station for a ride to Windsor and back, up to 55 miles, on minor roads and paths.

Sunday 20 March: Chiltern Ride Meet 10:00am North Harrow Station for a gentle 25 mile ride in countryside around Amersham. Mostly on-road but some off.

Brent and Harrow Cyclists Contacts

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