



Highland Cycle Campaign (HCC) is a voluntary organisation of like-minded people working to provide everyone with a safe and attractive cycling environment.

Membership is open to individuals and organisations who support our objectives. Membership is currently **free** but HCC receives no grants towards running costs and therefore relies on donations from members. If you wish to donate please pay into Bank of Scotland sort code 80-91-26, account number 00439699. Alternatively see the 'Join' section of the website for standing order forms.

<http://www.highlandcyclecampaign.com>

keep up to date with Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/HighlandCyclist>

or Twitter: <https://twitter.com/highlandcyclist>

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 48 MAY 2014

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of the articles, not those of the HCC office bearers.

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Contact details for problems on cycle paths

Defects* on joint user (cycle & pedestrian) paths alongside **Trunk** roads (or the roadway) should be reported to **Bear Scotland** via their website: <http://www.bearscot.com/> or **Freephone 0800 587 1107**

Litter, broken glass etc. on paths contact The Highland Council TEC Services:

e-mail: tecs@highland.gov.uk or phone: 01349 886601

Defects on all other roads and paths in Highland Council should also be reported to **01349 886601**.

***Defects** = drainage, potholes, encroaching vegetation etc.

NEXT ISSUE

Copy deadline 20th October 2014 . Send any articles, letters, opinions, forth-coming cycling related events to Diana Gilbert (see above) before 20th October for inclusion in the next issue. Documents should be e-mailed in a WORD-compatible document (if not word then rich text format, .rtf). Any pictures should be sent as a low resolution .jpg files. Hard copy images can be sent to Diana who will scan them for use (and return IF an SAE is provided), please e-mail to confirm arrangements.

EDITORIAL

Diana Gilbert

Welcome to this early summer newsletter and to a new HCC committee. The Kessock Bridge is nearly finished and with several cycling events successfully completed already it promises to be another great cycling summer. The Tour de France is getting closer— Yorkshire this year— Scotland next year? And the Giro d'Italia pedalled off in Belfast this morning

At its next meeting the new HCC committee will be discussing priorities and which campaigns to focus on and I expect to report on those in the next edition with a list of campaign leaders and how to get involved. Meanwhile if you have any questions, ideas or pressing concerns do contact members of the committee, e-mail addresses on page 1.

In this issue there are articles from members of HCC, and information about new initiatives, such as Black Isle Bikes, an initiative of TBI's Million Miles project. Also some news about what other cycle groups in Scotland are focussing on. And since we live in a particularly hilly part of the UK some advice on cycling up hill from cycle.



WATCH OUT FOR HYPERLINKS TO KEY WEBSITES!

BBC News Northern Ireland reported on the race start as one Giro d'Italia spectator was in the pink at Stormont.

AGM Report

Following the election of the new HCC committee Highland Council Development Plans Manager, Scott Dalgarno, gave an interesting presentation at HCC AGM, on 29th April 2014, in the Spectrum Centre. He was keen to talk to HCC about future plans for the Inverness City Centre and provisions for cyclists. He was also able to show members a revised cycle map for Inverness which is being developed by Fiona McNally, Active Travel Project Officer at [Hi-Trans](#). This map is not available yet but as soon as it is we'll let you know. Scott Dalgarno has no direct responsibility for cycling, however in the new THC Development and Infrastructure Service, under David McKechnie, Integrated Transport Manager, there are a number of officers with responsibility for cycle liaison, including Finlay Beaton.

~ **STOP PRESS** ~

NEXT Highland Cycle Campaign meeting

15th May 2014, 18:30

1st floor at **two:8 collective**, 28 Church Street, Inverness.
(Entrance to the left of the Auctioneers pub, between Queensgate and Union St.)

Key topics at the meeting will be the current priorities of the group and which campaigns to focus on—so come along and have your say!



VELOCITY 1 YEAR ON

Laura Nicolson

Velocity Cafe and Bicycle Workshop started with an ambition inspired by Highland Cycle Campaign's past Chair, Hamish Wood; Inverness as a Cycling City! Recently when telling someone on Skye about our venture he told me, 'Ocht Inverness was full of bicycles in the 50s and 60s'. And even though I never knew it, I felt it, it makes sense. We have not got the ideal infrastructure but lots of new and exciting projects are helping us to change that. What we do have is the spirit and the beautiful surroundings connecting us with nature and each other. Since opening the cafe and bicycle workshop I've become aware of something bubbling up to the surface in Inverness, a positive energy that can be easily recognised by anyone who has been on a bicycle!

Our cafe is very popular and provides nourishment for both body and soul to many each day. It's easily understood, the need for good food in a warm, inviting space. The bicycle workshop is a little more daunting. What me? Fix a bike? Ocht no. I can't. Let Velocity teach you. We're getting busier and busier as the idea spreads, gently, slowly, at a pace we can keep up with. Susan, our cafe manager, recently described cycling as 'one big family' and that includes folk on bikes with baskets (and poodles!!) all the way to



lycra clad carbon frame racers. And everyone in between. And everyone, from young to old. The bicycle has a place in all our lives, we want to build your confidence in finding yours, whether it's getting technical wheel building or having a wee chat about routes and what to take with you.

The bicycle workshop and it's talented team of mechanics can provide tuition on bike maintenance through our assisted workshop sessions (open every day from 2pm and 10am at weekends), and also through evening classes (a series of 10 options run every week on Monday and Wednesday 6-8pm). We also work with young people, at schools and in the workshop and with employers at the workplace. We are piloting a project with an NHS doctors' practice to 'prescribe' a cycling lesson on one of our popular loan bikes. The late *Gabriel Garcia Márquez* said 'No medicine cures what happiness cannot' and going on a bicycle can certainly bring happiness!

Inverness is a Cycling City. We should be proud. And we should continue to become even friendlier for people on bikes. There is a lot to be excited about!

You can see more in our new film {for the love of bikes} <http://vimeo.com/92136674>

CHARITY FIREWALK

Susan MacLennan

On the 1st March I took part in a charity firewalk to raise money for the Inverness MS Therapy Centre and Alzheimer Scotland. In total 60 people took part.

Before the firewalk took place we had a 2 hour training session, involving lots of positive motivational techniques, during which we were taken out to watch the fire being lit. The heat and size of the flames coming off the 20ft long wood stack was impressive and slightly scary! After posing for a few photos we all went back in to finish the training session.



When we came back out later to do the firewalk the flames had burned down and all that were left were glowing embers that we were told were burning at 1200°F. I'm sure I can speak for everybody when I say that I well and truly had butterflies in my stomach at this point but the adrenaline created by the situation was beginning to take over and we all knew that we would be able to overcome the scariness of the fire and walk over it unharmed.

One by one we all walked over the coals and felt a huge rush at the end of it, as if now we'd conquered the fire we would be able to do anything!

It was such a great experience and I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in it. The truly great thing about it as that along with everyone taking part we helped to raise nearly £15,000 for the MS Therapy Centre.

The next challenge I am taking part in is **RIDE the NORTH** a 2 day 170mile cycle from Inverness to Aberdeen to raise money for Maggie's Centres in the Scotland. **If you would like to sponsor me, please visit my JustGiving page:**

<http://www.justgiving.com/susan-maclennan1>

Black Isle Bicycles



Hires • Routes • Guides

Black Isle Bicycles: Riding Hire!

Lizbeth Collie

Cycling is on the up in the Highlands. Inspired by the Olympics, the Commonwealth Games, the Wiggins effect, improvements in infrastructure, the wonderful Velocity Cafe in Inverness, BikeAbility sessions in schools, the excellent weather last summer, the roadworks on the Kessock Bridge. There are more and more reasons for people to get out there more often, for more miles.

Black Isle Bicycles is a new business offering bike hire, route advice, guided tours, skills sessions and support for local businesses who want to attract cyclists. We have new hybrid bikes which are suitable for both on and off-road trips, a couple of electric bikes and tagalongs for small children. And when you hire a bike, we'll bring it to wherever you want it on the Black Isle - your accommodation, or to link with public transport, or to a local beauty spot.

The Black Isle is great for cycling. It's easy to avoid the traffic as there's a network of minor roads connecting communities and places to visit. There are also miles of forest tracks to

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Cycling in Rural Scotland

A Conference held on 22nd March 2014

Peter Elbourne

Million Miles Project Officer

Enthusiasts and professionals met in Conon Bridge to discuss how to boost cycling rates in rural communities. On 22nd March 2014, Transition Black Isle hosted the Cycling in Rural Scotland conference at the Leanaig Centre. The event was organised as part of the group's Million Miles campaign: a sustainable transport project that aims to encourage households on the Black Isle to reduce their annual car mileage by and encouraging active travel, promoting lift sharing and improving access to public transport.

The aim of the conference was held to communicate best practice and consider strategies to encourage more cycling in rural areas. The keynote speakers were Councillor Drew Hendry of the Highland Council, Kate Campbell of Sustrans Scotland and Pammy Johal of Backbone. Workshops on a range of interesting topics were led by experts from diverse backgrounds. The workshops included organising cycle tourism, electric bikes, cycle events, safety on rural roads, cycle-friendly communities, cycle trail construction, community links, inspiring behaviour change and community mapping with OpenStreetMap.



Cllr Drew Hendry, Pammy Johal of Backbone and Kate Campbell, OBE, of Sustrans

Overall, feedback from attendees was very positive. It was especially useful to share ideas with both local campaigners and people working on cycling projects across Scotland.

Transition Black Isle hope that other communities will organise similar events in the future to build on the momentum. With a bit of luck, this was the inaugural Cycling in Rural Scotland conference!

More information about the conference is available on Transition Black Isle's website, including a comprehensive report and a selection of workshop presentations: <http://www.transitionblackisle.org/cycling-in-rural-scotland-conference.asp>



a million miles better

Black Isle Bicycles: Riding Hire CONTINUED

explore, and all the fun of the Red Rock trails at Learnie. A hundred square miles to discover by cycling, getting fitter and healthier as you go (and lots of great places to eat, to keep your energy levels up).

You may have a bike already but have summer visitors who would love to cycle with you. You may fancy trying off-road biking but don't want to commit to buying a mountain bike just yet. You may want to get your confidence up for cycling on the road or going a bit further so would like someone to accompany you. Or you may like to try an electric bike - it's not cheating! - because you can go further and faster, and it's lots of fun. Hire a bike from us for a day or two, or for your whole holiday week, and feel your horizons opening up.

If you're a local business that wants to attract cyclists, get in touch. Part of our remit is to help build the Black Isle as a must-visit destination for cycle tourism, so if you're interested in joining Visit Scotland's Cyclists Welcome Scheme, or would like to offer route advice or sell cycling maps to your customers then we can help.

Visit us on www.blackislebicycles.co.uk,

follow us on Facebook /blackislebicycles and Twitter @BIBicycles,

call us on 07964 779663,, email us on info@blackislebicycles.co.uk



Black Isle Bicycles is part of Transition Black Isle (see www.transitionblackisle.org) and has funding from the Coastal Community Fund to get the business established.

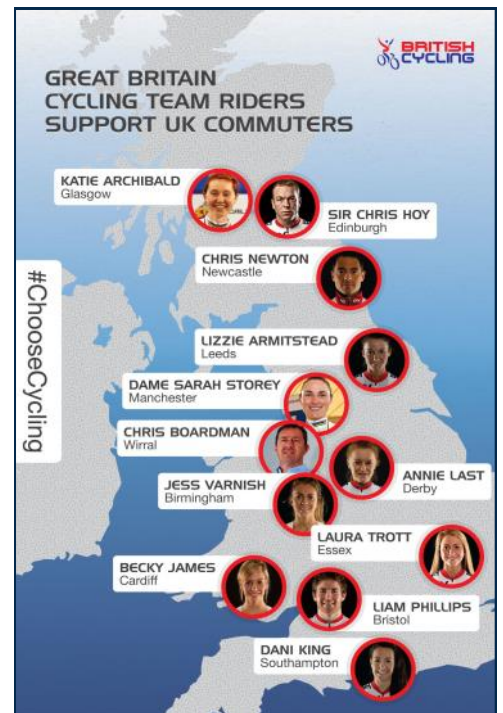


British Cycling Safety Campaign

#Choose Cycling

On 6th May 2014 a campaign was launched with Fourteen Olympic and Paralympic cycling stars calling on major towns and cities across Britain to make a public commitment to improve conditions on the road for people on bikes.

Katie Archibald from Glasgow and Sir Chris Hoy, Edinburgh were two of those voices bringing the campaign to Scotland



There are two ways to climb hills easily by bike...

Cyclescheme.co.uk offer the following advice:

One is to be a racing whippet. The other is to make sure your bike has low gears – really low gears

Cycling up hills is obviously easier if you're fitter and carrying less weight – bodyweight, bike weight, and luggage weight. But with low gears and practice using them, hills aren't a huge problem for any cyclist. Be advised: the gears on many bikes do not go low enough for normal people to ride up steep gradients without struggling. If you live in a lumpy area, choose your commuter bike with care!

Know your gears

The range of gears varies widely between bikes. Gear size is determined by the size of the chainring, the size of the sprocket on the rear wheel, and the diameter of the rear wheel. It can be expressed in terms of gear inches or gear development.

First, some history. In the early days, cranks were attached directly to a bicycle's front wheel. One revolution of the cranks equalled one revolution of the wheel. This is why penny farthings evolved: a bigger wheel enabled riders to travel faster. Gear size and wheel diameter were one and the same. A 52-inch wheel penny farthing had a 52-inch gear.

Nowadays most bikes use a chain drive to the rear wheel. If you have a 48-tooth chainring driving a 24-tooth sprocket, the rear wheel will turn twice for each crank revolution. A 26-inch wheel turning twice is the same as a 52-inch wheel turning once. It's the same gear. That's what gear inches are: the effective wheel diameter.

Gear development, on the other hand, tells you how far the bicycle will travel in a given gear for one revolution of the cranks. It's the effective wheel circumference.

To calculate gear inches: divide the number of teeth on the chainring by the number of teeth on the sprocket, then multiply this by the diameter of the wheel in inches. (A 700C wheel is approximately 27 inches.) To calculate gear development, multiply this figure by pi and convert from imperial to metric. We'll stick with gear inches here.

How low to go

There's some machismo involved in straining up hills in a too-large gear. You may hear racing cyclists declaim that 'no one needs a sprocket bigger than 25 teeth' or 'no one needs a triple chainset'. What they mean is: they don't want them. You probably do. Here are some rules of thumb.

- Unless you live somewhere flat, like London, or are fit and determined, any commuter bike will benefit from a bottom gear lower than 40 inches. This will rule out some road bikes

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and many bikes with three or fewer gears.

- For sportier commuter bikes and/or sportier riders, a bottom gear of around 30 inches is probably sufficient in hillier areas. A road bike with a 34-tooth inner chainring and 30-tooth bottom sprocket will provide this.
- For heavier or less fit riders, load hauling, steeper hills, or all four, look for a bottom gear of around 20 inches. Mountain bikes and touring bikes offer this and so do some hybrids. Don't want to do any gear-inch maths? Look for a small chainring (28 teeth or fewer) and a big sprocket (32 teeth or more).

Shifting gears

Novice cyclists change gear too late, pedalling slower and slower in the same gear and then desperately trying to downshift. Gears don't work well under these conditions. Derailleurs shift best if you ease off the pedalling pressure, something you can only do if you're not already straining on the pedals. Some hub gears require a brief pause in your pedalling to shift. When a last-resort downshift doesn't work, you will be stranded in a too-high gear and may come to a dead stop.

Instead of trying to stay in the same gear, try to keep your cadence high and anticipate any gear shifts. Keep pedalling smoothly and easily. Downshift as soon as your speed starts to dip, which will be almost immediately you start the climb. If it's a long or steep climb, use your front derailleur to downshift sooner rather than later. You get a bigger 'step down' from a front shift, and the front derailleur doesn't shift as well as the rear under pressure.

Sit or stand?

Sitting is more efficient, but standing on the pedals enables you to turn a higher gear as you can use your bodyweight to press down on each pedal alternately, shifting your weight from one leg to the other. When you run out of gears, standing is the final option before walking. Single-speed riders will have to get used to it!

Standing isn't only a last resort. If the hill is short, you can rush it. This takes a little more effort than twiddling up the hill but is faster. It's different from fading in an over-large gear like a novice as you're attacking the hill from the outset. Accelerate as you approach so that your momentum will carry you further up the hill. Keep your cadence high, standing on the pedals as the gradient begins to bite to keep the slightly-too-high gear turning. Push, push, push, and then relax as you crest the hill.

Ride or walk?

Getting off and walking isn't an admission of defeat. It might, however, be an admission that the gears on your bike are too high. You can comfortably ride up very steep hills at 3 or 4mph if your gears go low enough.

You might think it would be just as quick to walk. It rarely is. Most of us walk at about 3mph on the flat, but if it's a steep hill and you're pushing a bike, that can easily drop to 2mph. Plus you have to factor in the time taken to stop, dismount, stop, and remount.

Some news from around other Scottish Cycle Fora.

The Aberdeen Cycle Forum recently (25th March 2014) met with Police Scotland (the new Police Authority covering the whole of Scotland) to ask them questions about policing in relation to road users, particularly, of course, cycling.

The questions mainly related to city cycling: the abuse of 'advanced stop lines/boxes' (ASLs) by 4 wheeled motorised vehicles, parking in cycle lanes, or on the pavement, cycling on pavements. In particular the lack of effective enforcement of the rules / laws.

Other questions related to the abuse of cyclists by other road users, buses knocking cyclists over, verbal abuse and intimidatory (dangerous or careless) behaviour by some drivers.

To most issues related to 'offences', the response was make a complaint using the non-emergency police number 101 and provide as much information as can be gathered at the time, particularly useful are the contact details of anyone prepared to act as a witness. This latter is most valuable in the event of an accident with another vehicle.

The Office present emphasised that, due to the volume of work, the traffic police priorities were reducing deaths and serious injuries on the roads. As a result they could not possibly

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watch ASLs, all bicycle lanes and other low risk issues. The also stressed that they do not reflect Transport Scotland’s prioritisation of pedestrians, then cyclists, and finally motorised transport.

Regarding cycling on pavements, although still an offence, the police recognise that in some circumstances of high volume and/or high speed of traffic it may be safer for a cyclist to use the pavement than be on the road. As long as a cyclist is very careful, and gives way to pedestrians they are unlikely to attract police attention.

Lothian Cycle Campaign - Spokes at their last meeting set out their aims to Make Cycling Easy by providing the best possible cycling environment on different routes:

- Fully separated cycle and pedestrian routes on all arterial roads.
- Restrictions on traffic speeds, parking, access etc on all residential roads
- Adopt ‘strict liability’ on roads to protect the most vulnerable road users
- Changes to structure of cities to make accessing services by bike easy, and storing and parking bikes easy
- Societal and economic changes to give people flexibility to travel more sustainably (flexi hours, school provision etc)
- Change the image of cycling so that it becomes ‘normal’

Key speaker at the meeting, Prof Colin Pooley from Lancaster University Environment Centre, lectured on recent research into walking and cycling - the outcome of which is the above list of priorities. Andrew Burns, Leader of Edinburgh City Council attended and reported that: ECC is the only council in Scotland to allocate a **fixed proportion of its transport budget to cycling**, 5% at the last election, rising by 1% a year, reaching 7% this year, 14/15, and Cllr Burns envisaged it reaching 10%.

The cycle forum in Stirling ‘Cycle Stirling’ recently produced :

The Benefits of a Bicycle



Time to #ChooseCycling

sets out [British Cycling](#)'s 10 proposals to turn Britain into a true cycling nation. Led by Chris Boardman, BC have identified a list of specific and practical measures that are needed to make cycling an attractive and viable option for millions more people. Their aim is to foster a culture of mutual respect, between all road users, and create a better environment for people who cycle now and for all those would like to travel by bike but currently have concerns about safety.

1 Cycle-proofing: accommodate cycling in everything we do. Cycle-proofing means that all relevant policy-making specifically addresses the impact a new infrastructure plan will have on the convenience, desirability and safety of cycling. The outcome is roads and junctions that accommodate cycling through better road design and traffic management.

2 Meaningful and consistent levels of investment. For cycle-proofing to become a reality it has to be backed with meaningful and consistent levels of funding.

3 Consistent political leadership for cycling. National and local government must set out long-term cycling action plans with measurable targets, including designating responsibility for growing cycling to senior officials.

4 Improving the justice system to protect and support vulnerable road users. Review how incidents where people on bikes are killed or seriously injured are investigated and prosecuted to give all road users the confidence that the justice system will protect them.

5 Adding cycling safety to the driving test. Cycle awareness must be a core part of driving tests with the emphasis on testing how to drive safely when sharing the road with people on bikes.

6 Strengthening cycling safety provisions in the Highway Code. Where the Highway Code deals with people on bikes, the focus must shift to measures that improve safety most effectively such as the need for new overtaking standards and removing advice to wear certain clothing when cycling.

7 Road and cycle safety awareness. National government and council-led road safety campaigns must focus on reducing risk at source with clear and consistent messaging.

8 Reducing the risk to people on bikes from HGVs. Make HGVs fit for use on our roads by improving the design of new vehicles, ensuring all existing vehicles are as safe as possible and by helping drivers through improved training and planning.

9 Cycle training made available for all children. Make cycle training part of the curriculum to give all children the opportunity to learn how to ride safely on the road.

10 Reducing speed limits saves lives of all road users. Make it easier and cheaper for councils to reduce speed limits in urban and residential areas.

RIDE **NORTH**
29th & **FULL** August 2014

[Bike Week 2014 June 14th—24th](#)

Get out on your bike during the week and be visible! Or get involved in an event near you—check out the hyperlink above

CYCLE TO WORK DAY
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH 2014

Does your employer support your desire to own a commuter bike? If not check out the tax breaks on purchasing your ideal set of wheels



Transition Black Isle

Million Miles Project

[Calendar of events](#)

check out the TBI website for the next event

WWW.HighlandCycleCampaign.com