



PROMOTING AND CREATING BUILT OR NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This report, published by The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in January 2008, was brought to our attention by HCC member David Shepherd. NICE was asked by the Department of Health to produce public health guidance on the promotion and creation of physical environments that support increased levels of physical activity. All the recommendations are relevant when developing joint NHS and local authority strategies (for example, joint community strategies, access plans and local area agreements) and includes the development, modification and maintenance of towns, urban extensions, major regeneration projects and the transport infrastructure.

Plans should:

- * Involve all local communities and experts at all stages of the development to ensure the potential for physical activity is maximised.
- * Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life. Ensure local facilities and services are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and by other modes of transport involving physical activity. Ensure children can participate in physically active play.
- * Assess in advance what impact (both intended and unintended) the proposals are likely to have on physical activity levels. (For example, will local services be accessible on foot, by bicycle or by

people whose mobility is impaired?) Make the results publicly available and accessible. Existing impact assessment tools could be used.

These routes should offer everyone (including people whose mobility is impaired) convenient, safe and attractive access to work places, homes, schools and other public facilities. (The latter includes shops, play and green areas and social destinations.) They should be built and maintained to a high standard.

Transport should:

Ensure pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing or maintaining streets and roads (this includes people whose mobility is impaired), by using one or more of the following methods

- * re-allocate road space to support physically active modes of transport (as an example, this could be achieved by widening pavements and introducing cycle lanes)
- * restrict motor vehicle access (for example, by closing or narrowing roads to reduce capacity)
- * introduce road-user charging schemes
- * introduce traffic-calming schemes to restrict vehicle speeds (using signage and changes to highway design)
- * create safe routes to schools (for example, by using traffic-calming measures near schools and by creating or improving walking and cycle routes to schools).

Other categories describe provision in hospitals, other buildings and school playgrounds.

As David said: “Here is the good news from NICE. They must have been present at a Cycle Forum meeting a decade ago and been the only ones to listen.”

The full report can be read on:
www.nice.org.uk/PH008

ML

HIGHLAND CTC

The Highland CTC conducted its AGM in November 2008 at Daviot Hall. We decided to adopt the New CTC Constitution and become a “Member Group” of the CTC. This is a technical change which means business pretty much as before but we are bound more tightly to observe the rules laid down in the new CTC Policy Documents for Member Groups issued in late 2007.

We decided to organise both longer rides and shorter rides in our Programme of Cycle Rides for 2008, meeting at a common rendezvous point for lunch. At the time of writing, we have already held two events in January. The first was a cycle ride in Strathglass after which we were treated to superb hospitality at Kilmorack Hall courtesy of Carrie Masheter and friends. The second ride was from Skiach Services to the café at the Co-op in Tain in pleasant winter weather.

The 2008 programme still has a few Events that require to be assigned to Leaders but I am sure that we shall muddle through somehow.

All details of our events are to be found on our website

<http://www.ctchighland.org.uk>

which is fairly up to date at present.

I note that the HCC Bulletin Board has been threatened with closure a few times due to lack of use. Mick Heath is the Moderator of a similar Bulletin Board for CTC Members called

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/HighlandsCTC>

This Bulletin Board seems to be well used at present with details of routes, photos of rides, maps, chat and invitations for ad hoc rides.

There was a conference hosted by CTC Scotland in Stirling at the end of 2007. The purpose was to discuss the way forward for the CTC and cycling in Scotland. Nobby Clark and Ron Stewart went from the Highlands. From what I have heard, the outcome of the conference will have very little impact on cycling for the CTC in the Highlands, although there may be some developments of interest to HCC and I look forward to hearing Ron Stewart’s report. (see p.4)

For my part, I continue to look at planning applications in Caithness and Sutherland that may affect cyclists. However, my days of commuting to Sutherland are likely to end this year and consequently my interest in Caithness and Sutherland will be restricted to occasional touring visits.

Steve Carroll
Secretary, CTC Highland

THE CTC VISION IN SCOTLAND

In November CTC Scotland held a gathering of members in Stirling. Around 40 members turned up in addition to the CTC Scotland committee and CTC staff members from the National Office. It appeared the majority of the members present were campaigning activists, part of the Right to Ride organisation within CTC. This was probably to be expected with polls showing an increasing interest in campaigning among members.

The CTC at national level has become much more aware in recent years of the differences between Scotland and the rest of the UK. There is felt to be a need for a person based in Scotland to focus effort and put the organisation on a more professional footing when dealing with the various organisations within Scotland.

Premises in Glasgow are being sought as an office and meeting place and to provide a permanent address for CTC Scotland.

It was interesting to hear from two transport planners who spoke of the difficulty of working with Local Authorities, many of whom merely paid lip service to the needs of cyclists. Ideas were sought from the floor as to what CTC in Scotland should start doing and what we should stop doing; some of these suggestions have already been acted upon.

This was an encouraging meeting with new ideas coming to the fore, and I think a general air of optimism for the future.

RS

LETTERS - OPINIONS - ACTION - PARTICIPATION

Chairman: **Dick Langridge** 6, Rowan Park, Carrbridge, PH23 3BE 01479 841633
langridge@cali.co.uk

Secretary: **Peter Reynolds** 15, Mackay Square, Dingwall, IV15 9PN
peter@peterreynoldsbooks.co.uk

Membership: **Ron Stewart**, The Anchorage, Barbaraville, Invergordon, IV18 0NA
01862 842753 ra.stewart01@btinternet.com

Newsletter: **Mary Langridge** 6, Rowan Park, Carrbridge PH23 3BE
01479 841633 langridge@cali.co.uk

Website organiser: **Jon Shepherd** jon@barneybus.org.uk

EXTOLLING THE VIRTUES OF MY “FOLDER”

In the halcyon days of cycling, my son and I were able to complete the John O’Groats-Lands End trip in only 6 years, using one week of the Easter Holiday each year. We did this by flinging the bikes on and off trains at the start and finish of each leg. Not so easy now, despite bike spaces being unused, because it is so difficult to book, particularly if several trains are needed per journey.

The first folder I saw in use was Dr. Annie Griffith’s. She used it to complete her journey to a Medical Course in Inverurie. A few years later and closer to home, I saw a passenger on the morning commuter train at Alness having to leave her bike behind. Her solution was to buy a ‘shopper’ from Blytheswood for a fiver. Not much of a bike, but it folded. My response has been a “Trek Navigator 200”, with 3 speed hub gear, lights, pannier rack, mudguards and chain guard; a Dahon in disguise, but great fun to ride in everyday clothes. 20" wheels are a good compromise. I do have a posh bag for it, but a black bin bag is easier to stow on board. I chose it because I liked the name and it was blue!

Now with this 11kg machine I have the sense of freedom again. It will fit easily in any train, bus or car boot. I can ride the 25 miles to Inverness in comfort. I am 5'4" tall, but the same bike can just as easily be ridden by our 6'4" friend. It was also ridden with great delight by a visiting 8 year old. Kids seem to like these bikes. Some think they are magic bikes with electric motors! Mine was very popular when I was teaching cycling proficiency.

My first forays further afield were to New Craigs (for training) and Stoneyfield Business Park, making the bike/train/bike trip from Alness easy in just about any weather. There was always the option of a taxi in a downpour or with a puncture and no more expensive with the bike.

My course then took me regularly to Edinburgh and Glasgow, where I discovered that folders have formed a network of their own, and get their owners involved too. The first guy who stopped for a chat used his folder in cities all over the world on business trips. I enjoyed the bike/train/train/bike trips and freewheeling down Leith Walk in the evening to my friends’ flat was easy. The journey up Leith Walk on a wet morning

was no bother since I have a bus pass! The most distinguished folder rider (Ged Church apart) I have met recently on a train was Dave Holladay, well known to CTC journal readers; pragmatic, rather than stylish, with two milk crates roped on to his Brompton. Similarly, Glasgow trips were fun, with no problem reaching my accommodation off Byres Road. Aberdeen for a Sustrans meeting was equally trouble free, including an excursion North on NCN1.

Wishing to prove that sceptics who say ‘no one ever uses the Drummochter route’ are wrong; Sandra and I took the train from Inverness to that elevated spot. We stayed in the excellent B&B, then headed downhill, following NCN7 as far as Aviemore, where I entrained without booking to fetch the car from Inverness.

My next plan is to start at Dover to do the quite popular ‘Dover to Cape Wrath’ route, using plenty of trains and hopefully able to stretch it to a few years.

In my opinion, if, in the future, we are to be limited to one bike each, that should be a folder. The same one should do from 8 to 80 helped by an occasional drop of oil.

SC

Abbreviations Used in Newsletter

CO	Cycling Officer	SE	Scottish Executive
CTC	Cyclists’ Touring Club	TEC	Transport, Environment Services
HCF	Highlands Cycle Forum	THC	The Highland Council
HIE	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
NCN	National Cycle Network	AT	Active Travel
SCF	Scottish Cycle Forum	ATAG	Active Travel Advisory Group
LA	Local Authority		

MEETINGS OF HCC.

The next meeting of the HCC will take place on Thursday 28th February at 6.00-8.00pm at The Spectrum Centre, Farraline Park Inverness.

COMMUNITY PLANNING IN MORAY

What is it?

Community planning is about individuals, organisations and communities working together to influence the way in which services are planned and delivered in their area.

Who is involved?

Ordinary people get involved by attending their local Area Forum meetings. A number of organisations have ‘signed up’ to community planning. These include the police, the fire service, the NHS as well as local authorities. They form Local Workers’ Groups (in each area) and also Theme Groups (across Moray).

What do the forums do?

Each Area Forum helps to identify the key issues to be addressed in their area, and works with the Workers’ Group and the Youth Forum to develop area action plans and to address any issues raised. Forums are supposed to work on strategic issues. If specific concerns are raised, the forum needs to look at the bigger picture – is this part of a wider problem in our area?

What has this got to do with cycling?

My local forum has already worked on several transport issues. Because we deal with strategic issues, promoting active travel can be part of the solution to a number of problems. A parking dispute in a particular street can combine with other nearby parking issues, to lead to a plan to reduce car use and encourage active travel more widely.

Will it work?

That remains to be seen, but early signs are encouraging. Local authorities have a statutory duty to ‘engage effectively’ in community planning. This seems to be a genuine effort by the Scottish Government to move towards empowering local communities.

RK

STOP ALL FURTHER RESEARCH AND ACT

(This letter, published in the January 2008 edition of the British Medical Journal, makes interesting reading. It was passed by Jim Towers.)

How many studies into obesity does it take to build one cycle path for children to get to school on? I believe we have now reached saturation point as to how many studies and articles it takes to convince us that we are too fat as a nation. What good does it do to advise people that they need to walk/cycle/ swim when the infrastructure is doing its best to prevent exactly this?

Given all the suggested health assessments, dietitians' advice, government guidelines, and supermarket labels there is something missing: action to force planners, developers, councils and local authorities to end totally unsustainable, fat-making practices. These practices including building roads without cycle lanes (or trying to get away with painting a thin white line on a 70 mph road and declaring it a cycle path) and putting up a nice little "Walk to Health" road sign beside a traffic jammed road heavy with exhaust fumes.

Councils have "cycle to work days" - knowing that the best that cyclists can hope for on most roads is that they have a decent, soft ditch to fall into. The worst is to run out of cycle path and find yourself between a bus lane and two lanes of heavy traffic.

I suggest that all research stops now, all advice stops now and all infuriatingly patronising labelling stops now. The money must now be spent on buying land from private owners and building cycle paths. The only way we will be able to tie our laces in the future and not need cardio-pulmonary resuscitation at the age of 35 is to demand and build a functioning cyclist and pedestrian centred, integrated, reliable public transport network. Having witnessed the government's transport policies in the last decades, I would say: fat chance.

DAYTIME RUNNING LIGHTS DROPPED

The European Commission has dropped plans to make the use of daytime running lights (DRL) by motor vehicles compulsory. The proposals were contested fiercely by the European Cyclists Federation and by many other organisations including some motoring organisations. A principal argument against DRL is that they can make road safety worse for people outside motor vehicles as they become harder to see. New evidence from Austria, Poland and Bulgaria has confirmed this prediction.

From Cycle Campaign Network News Nov. 2007

~ ~ ~ ~ *For sale* ~ ~ ~ ~

British Eagle
childback tandem.

Takes child from about 4 years upwards.
Front easily adjustable from about 5'2" to 5'10".
Running order but could do with
loving care and new paint.
Great Family Transport

£75 without crank shorteners / £100 with crank shorteners

Phone James or Rebecca: 01343 542245 (Elgin)

Area HCC representatives:

Easter Ross: Ron Stewart (See p.4)

Badenoch and Strathspey: Dick Langridge (See p.4)

Isle of Skye: Jim Towers 3, Carbost Mor, Carbost, Isle of Skye IV47 8ST
fjtit@fish.co.uk

Lochaber: Neil Parrish Nevis Cycles, Spean Bridge PH34 4EP

Sutherland: Steve Carroll Creag Charrach, Rockfield Village Portmahomack, IV20 1RF
biker_carroll@hotmail.com

LONG DISTANCE TRAINS MUST CARRY BIKES.

The European Parliament has approved a new law that will require international train operators to carry cycles. Moreover, the rules will also apply to long-distance domestic train services in order to satisfy lobbying of the Council of Ministers by train companies. The law will come into force in 2009, but national governments may agree exceptions for up to 15 years (5 years at a time to give rail operators time to comply).

The new law are part of a package of measures to liberalise the rail market and to give basic rights to passengers. They do not affect local or regional rail services.

From Cycle Campaign Network News Nov. 2007

RICHER PEOPLE CYCLE MORE

Data from the National Travel Survey shows that far from being a poor man's activity, cycle use increases markedly with income. People in the lowest income quintile cycle, on average, just 26 miles a year. This increased to 37 miles for the middle quintile and 63 for the top quintile. The average distance cycled across all income groups is 39 miles a year, a decrease of 4 miles over the decade to 2006.

According to the Times, a lack of education and negative stereotyping of cyclists are the main reasons why poorer people appear unwilling to cycle. It also suggests a lack of role models for disadvantaged groups: "There are dozens of well-known white middle-class men who are regular cyclists, including the Conservative politician David Cameron and Boris Johnson and the broadcasters Jeremy Paxton and Jon Snow. But footballers and pop stars are rarely photographed on bikes".

From Cycle Campaign Network News Nov. 2007

TWO TEENAGERS & TWO TANTES A PARIS!

Last October holiday my sister and I took the Eurostar to Paris, courtesy of Tesco airmiles. As we both had teenage sons with us the idea of cycling around the sights seemed a *bonne idée*!

The new system of Velib bikes was introduced in June 2007 by the Mayor Bernard Delanoë. This is a self-service bike hire system available 24/7. Although the French capital is only 7½ miles from one end to the other it has bike hire available at 1000 stations around Paris and 371 km of cycle routes. You will find a line of approx. 20 Velibs slotted neatly into electronic stands, supposedly every 300m (not true!), most of them located near to a Metro. Integrated transport, *peut-être*?

There is a sliding scale of charges, starting with a free 30mins escalating to 4 Euros per 30 mins after 2 hours. So the main idea is to pick up a bike and cycle to your destination as quickly as possible. Or change it every 30 mins if you don't want to pay!

To hire a bike you need a degree in semantics and a credit card with a chip and pin. First you have to register and you can get instructions in English. Once registered you will now have a four-digit code and a white card valid for 24 hours. Insert your white card in the machine. Key in the code, select a bike number. Press the release button and lift the bike from the stand. Before selecting your number check for flat tyres and good chain! Otherwise you will have to start all over again.

As we had arrived late Saturday night we were able to take advantage of Sunday traffic-free zones along the Canal St. Martin as far as Parc Vilette and the Science museum. In the morning a visit to the Musée D'Orsay meant we didn't really need a bike before noon. Despite arriving at a full 'station' our first attempt failed as the machine was 'out of order' so on to the next station only to find one solitary bike. Third time lucky and we were finally on our way.

Another traffic-free zone on Sunday is along the banks of the Seine where people walk, jog, blade and bike in their droves.

The next day we decided to head along the Seine, part on pavement and part on cycle lanes, on the way to the Eiffel Tower. After some searching we located a station but to our dismay it was FULL so we then had to

go back across the river to find the next nearest station, up an escalator (scary!) and . . .pew . . . some free spaces so another 15 mins back to ET meant we hadn't exactly saved time.

So, although the system doesn't always work it is a lot of fun and quite a challenge, especially for the younger generation!

Useful websites:

www.en.velib.paris.fr

www.eurostar.com

MB

*Reminder - Date and Place of
next HCC meeting on page 6*

"BLACKBRIDGE BIKES"

Good Prices ~ ~ ~ Good Bicycles

The First Sale of Refurbished Bikes from Blackbridge Bikes
will take place on

Falcon Square

on Saturday 5th April 2008

(morning onwards)

The bicycles range from adult's to children's
They have been refurbished by a qualified mechanic
and will be sold with a warranty.

This is an early stage of a scheme to provide
training and work
opportunities for unskilled youngsters.