

FROM THE CHAIR OF CTC COUNCIL **DAVID ROBINSON**



This really feels like a summer of cycling, which I hope will be a whole year of cycling.

Meeting residents of Copenhagen last month was a revelation. 'Why are you always talking about cycling?' they asked. 'Do you also get passionate about vacuum cleaners?' The point they were making, as 39% of them cycle to work, was that the bike was no big deal but rather the obvious way to get from A to B.

Cycling is my everyday mode of transport and I do also tour. I get a buzz when I see new or returning riders, frequently families but often older people too. Perhaps the quiet revolution has started. Certainly CTC has had one of its best years for membership with up to a thousand people joining each month.

All of our regions and devolved countries now have CTC staff in place. In my own patch, the North West, the Bike Club and Cycle Champions teams are out there getting people on their bikes. We have our first young persons' cycle forum, are a part of the healthy living agenda, and are teaching adults to ride for the first time.

Member groups, affiliated groups and Right to Ride reps are at the heart of our volunteer network. We are passionate because we not only love to cycle but we can see how cycling is a key part of the wider agenda.

I hope the new Government can see what is happening and what great value it is. 'More people cycling, more safely and more often' is the Cycling England slogan – and we at CTC are very much at the heart of this ethos.



Young children can be capable cyclists – and not just on fun rides

Too young to ride?

CTC has defended the right to ride to school after a primary headmaster slammed parents of cycling pupils aged 5 & 8



CTC has defended the 'right to ride to school', following media coverage that alleged a couple had been warned they could be reported to social services unless they stopped their children cycling to school on their own.

Oliver and Gillian Schonrock, from Dulwich, south east London, let their children, aged five and eight, cycle the mile from their house to school by themselves. But national press reported that the couple were told by the headmaster of Alleyn's junior school that it was irresponsible of them to let their children cycle to school unaccompanied. The coverage caused widespread debate about the right to ride to school.

Cherry Allan, from CTC's campaigns team, said: 'CTC is very disappointed to hear that Oliver and Gillian Schonrock's decision to let their children to cycle to school on their own has been described as "irresponsible". All children should have the right to cycle to school: it allows them to travel quickly and independently through their local areas, providing not just autonomy, but a daily sense of achievement.

'CTC is not arguing all five year olds should be free to cycle unaccompanied. However, when parents want to allow their children to ride on their own, acting in their children's

best interests and with good awareness of their children's abilities (as is clearly the case with the Schonrock family), we believe they should be able to decide this. This can only be good for their children's healthy development.'

CTC believes that children are too often discouraged from cycling to school because of fears that they will not cycle safely; that surrounding motorists will drive dangerously; or that children alone in public are at risk. But these fears simply do not reflect real experience. Children can learn safe cycling through cycle training, which helps them protect themselves by teaching them good techniques for looking and anticipating the movements of motorists and other road users.

The health benefits of cycling far outweigh the risks, and the risk involved in cycling is similar or lower than the risk involved in many other everyday activities. In addition, more children cycling to school means fewer cars on the road, making the school run safer for everyone.

Additionally, the risk of 'stranger danger' is greatly exaggerated by the media. Obesity is a far greater threat to children than abduction.

CTC fully supports parents who would like their children to cycle to school with a Right to Ride to School campaigning kit, downloadable from www.ctc.org.uk/righttoridetoschool.

MORE CAMPAIGNS NEWS?
 Sign up to Cycle Digest. Email cherry.allan@ctc.org.uk

Bridleways saved

Local CTC campaigners David Core and Matt Hodges have thwarted plans by Cumbria Council to legalise the unlawful motorised use of a narrow bridleway carrying a busy section of National Cycle Network route 20 under the A590 Witherslack bypass.

Council officers were due to recommend 'upgrading' it to a byway, until David alerted the Council's legal department that their report to councillors failed to mention the serious risks to pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian users that was identified in a safety audit.

This prompted a complete U-turn in the report's recommendations. Councillors who had been desperate to approve motorised use responded by insisting the decision should be deferred, but David and Matt are now confident that good sense will prevail in the end.

Meanwhile, campaigners for the Byways and Bridleways Trust have won a 20-year fight to stop the Applegarth Bridleway in the Yorkshire Dales National Park from being downgraded to a footpath. The four-mile section between Clappgate Bank, near Marske, and Richmond, forms part of the off-road coast to coast route from St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay.

The bridleway has long been obstructed by stone stiles (pictured), but these will be replaced by bridle gates so that cyclists and horse-riders can get through more easily. There had been a complaint that the bridleway was wrongly recorded, but North Yorkshire County Council's plans to downgrade the route to a footpath as a result of this were overturned.

For more details about CTC's Right to Ride network, see www.ctc.org.uk/righttoride. For more details about the Byways and Bridleways Trust, see www.bbtrust.org.uk.



Photograph by Byways & Bridleways Trust

NEWS IN BRIEF

CTC SUBS INCREASE

From 1st October 2010, the price of CTC membership for an adult will rise by £1 to £37 per year. Other rates have been increased on a pro rata basis. For more information on CTC membership, see www.ctc.org.uk/join.

MTB CONFERENCE

IMBA UK is hosting a conference for mountain biking promotion and provision on 10th September. Entitled 'From the Roots to the Shoots', the conference will take place at the Macdonald Cardrona Hotel near Peebles, a short distance from the trail centres at Glentress and Innerleithin. To view the programme or get a booking form, see www.imba.org.uk.


CTC SPRING DRAW

Well done to the winners of CTC's Grand Spring Draw: Mr V Walsh, £2,000; Mr RG Hudson, £1,000; Mr C Rock, £500. Mr G Blackmon, Mr JE Parrott, Mr P Milsom, M & Mrs L Mackintosh and Mr A Woods each won £100.

CYCLING TOWNS

A report on lessons learned from the Cycling Demonstration Towns project between 2005-08 is available free to local authorities and partners delivering cycling programmes. 'Making a Cycling Town' includes a CD with a short film and details best practice, giving recommendations for the development of a town-wide programme to promote cycling. To get a copy, email your name, job title and postal address to nigel.williams@ctc.org.uk. Put 'Making a Cycling Town' as the subject.

Bike Club crosses borders

 Bike Club, the England-wide project to get young people involved in cycling, has expanded into Wales and Scotland. Launch events in Cardiff and Glasgow were held in June, bringing together key decision-makers from areas such as youth work, education, transport, health and justice.

In Cardiff, an address was given by Jane Davidson AM, the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing. She told attendees how supportive she was of efforts to encourage cycling, and warmly welcomed Bike Club to Wales. In the Cardiff area, Bike Club (Clwb Beicio in Welsh) is coordinated by development officer Melanie Davies.

At Bike Club's Scottish launch, a presentation was given by Dr Harry Burns. Dr Burns is not only Scotland's Chief Medical Officer but also an enthusiastic CTC member. With a strong emphasis on the health benefits of cycling, he explained how an active lifestyle offers huge benefits for the children and young people of Scotland. Bike Club has two development officers in Scotland: Victoria Leiper deals with applications in the Glasgow area,



while Amy Hickman works with youth clubs, groups and schools in the areas of Edinburgh, Fife, Falkirk, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian.

The expansion of Bike Club into Wales and Scotland was made possible by funding from the Asda Foundation. Youth Cymru and Youth Scotland are working as local partners alongside Bike Club's core consortium partners of CTC, UK Youth and ContinYou. More details at bikeclub.org.uk.

New CTC groups

 New CTC member groups to represent particular user-groups continue to spring up across the country. The Inclusive Cycling Forum is a CTC group that now exists to support and encourage people with disabilities who wish to cycle. Established last September with a £200 donation from the Ripley Section of the Veteran-Cycle Club, the Inclusive Cycling Forum arranges meets around the country to ride together; the next is in Norwich on 4th September.

Many disabled cyclists can regain their mobility with an adapted or bespoke cycle – often a trike. Such special cycles can be expensive, however, and the ICF is currently trying to raise £8,000 to purchase a cycle for member Martin Symons, who has Klippel-Feil Syndrome.

To find out more about Martin's cycle or to join the group, visit www.inclusivecyclingforum.org.uk and telephone CTC Membership Services on 0844 736 8451 with your membership number requesting to be a member of the Inclusive Cycling Forum.

Meanwhile, the Biking Belles in Chichester are to hold an inaugural meeting to start a member group for women cyclists in their area. The aim is to run regular Saturday morning rides. The meeting will take place at 7pm on 7th September in The Goodwood Room at The Partridge



Inn, Singleton. If you wish to attend, email bikingbelleschichester@yahoo.co.uk.

Geographic member groups are still growing too. CTC members in the Walsall area are holding an inaugural meeting to form Walsall and District group. It will place on 8th September. For details of the venue and time, please contact Dave Woodcock on 01543 671 313 or email dc.woodcock@talktalk.net.

CTC South Kent are hoping to start a new informal group based around Tenterden and St Michaels, offering Saturday and Sunday rides, plus midweek ones if there's enough interest. Experienced local cyclists and potential new ride leaders in the area are encouraged to come forward to help out, so that rides can take place weekly.

If you are interested please call Ian McCormick on 01589 761661 or email him on ian-mccormick@sky.com.

FROM THE TOURING DEPT MARK WATERS



How much do you need to spend on a bike that you might use for taking a cycling holiday on? Off-the-peg

touring bikes cost hundreds or even thousands of pounds. However, it's possible to buy a suitable one for the price of a top-of-the-range waterproof jacket. Think secondhand!


Inexperienced cyclists may be justifiably apprehensive about choosing what they need. The CTC forum has numerous topics on the subject: search for 'secondhand bikes' on the CTC home page. The CTC Helpdesk can also offer advice.

Once you've got a clearer idea of what you need, head for the 'For Sale' section of the CTC Forum. Unlike auction sites, a good proportion of the bikes will be suitable for touring; that is, able to take a pannier rack, tyres of at least 28mm width, and ideally a triple chainset. CTC members are also unlikely to be selling stolen bikes!

Once you've got your bike, don't forget that CTC's Touring Department has a range of over 40 touring information sheets.

Cycle friendly awards



 Does the organisation you work for encourage cycling? CTC's Cycle Friendly Organisation award will be presented later this year to organisations that demonstrate that they help people to cycle.

Organisations will be assessed on a range of 'cycle friendly' criteria. These range from having provisions such

as secure cycle parking, clothing lockers and washing facilities in place, all the way up to putting on group rides and cycle training sessions for staff members.

'Many organisations are now actively encouraging staff to cycle to work, and there needs to be recognition of this,' said CTC Commercial Director Nick Fish. 'We have

seen from the success of our Workplace Challenges that employers and staff are happier to cycle to work if some basic provisions are in place and they feel supported by the company.'

If the organisation you work for is actively encouraging cycling, email cycling@ctc.org.uk for more information.

STOP PRESS: The Scottish Government has launched the Cycle Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), along with £3.9m of funding to deliver it. They have also at last published 'Cycling by design', Scotland's design guidelines for cycle-friendly infrastructure, 11 years after the draft was first issued for consultation! CTC Councillor for Scotland Peter Hayman, who sat on the CAPS Board, has welcomed its target to increase cycle use in Scotland from about 1% to 10% of trips by 2020.

Time to deliver

Chris Peck assesses the cycling credentials of the new Government and reports back on CTC's campaign to keep posties cycling

 A new Government and new Parliament – but will things change for the better or for the worse? The new Ministerial team at the Department for Transport (DfT) is headed by Conservative Philip Hammond MP, who has overall responsibility for transport strategy, and has repeatedly stated his overall priority: cutting the Department's spending.

CTC has also written to Hammond summarising our views on the need to maintain funding for cycling, just as he has been outlining massive cuts to the Department over the next few years. This need not affect cycling unduly: the Campaign for Better Transport, to which CTC is affiliated, has presented the Treasury with an excellent proposal describing how funding cuts can be made in the bloated roads programme while preserving or even expanding funding for sustainable transport.

At least two of his junior ministers may be sympathetic to cycling. Minister of State for Transport Theresa Villiers MP was very sensible as the shadow Transport Secretary in opposition but her current role has little relevance directly to cycling.

The other potential ally is Norman Baker MP, the one Lib Dem in the DfT ministerial team – who, along with his party leader Nick Clegg MP, signed up to CTC's Vote Bike Manifesto. CTC met with him shortly before the election and has since written to him seeking a dialogue on the funding of cycling and on improving local authority delivery. His ministerial responsibilities include walking, cycling and local transport, subjects upon which he is extremely knowledgeable and keen. However, he may have to work hard to persuade his ministerial boss to provide him with a budget to fulfil his aspirations on sustainable local transport.

The last member of the DfT team is Mike Penning MP, whose responsibilities include road safety. It remains to be seen what he will do about the draft Road Safety Strategy about which CTC campaigned successfully last summer. One of the key planks of that strategy was lower speeds, particularly in urban



The latest All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, riding in June

areas. CTC responded to a consultation, launched prior to the election, on the guidance for setting local speed limits. If adopted, the proposals would make it significantly easier for local authorities to introduce 20mph schemes – but so far CTC is only getting mixed messages about the coalition's views on this matter.

Early announcements about the end of central Government funding for fixed speed cameras and ministerial rhetoric

DfT funding cuts need not affect cycling unduly

about the 'end of the war on the motorist' are not promising.

Last post by bike?

Thank you to the hundreds of cyclists who have sent in letters to the new chief executive of Royal Mail, Moya Greene, asking her to rescind the decision of her predecessor to scrap the postal bike fleet in favour of electric trolleys and vans. You can use a form letter on CTC's website at

www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns – we can even print it for you if you wish.

CTC will deliver your letters to her, by cycle, when she takes up her job shortly. Various other organisations and individuals have come out in support, including Rt Hon David Willetts MP, a Government Minister, who has written to Royal Mail asking them to rethink.

One of the reasons given for the move from the world's most efficient vehicle to the polluting and dangerous van is that falling letter post and rising parcels traffic mean that bikes are unable to cope with the load. Into this gap would logically step the cargo cycle, the use of which has been growing in Europe and parts of the UK.

Some years ago Royal Mail trialled electrically assisted cargo trikes. The trial never reached full implementation because the weight of the trikes meant that they could not be classified as Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (EAPC) and Royal Mail were not satisfied with the resulting legal ambiguity. In a recent consultation on electric cycles, CTC demanded that this weight restriction be lifted, which could allow these vehicles to become a key part of the urban freight network, reducing the need for vans and solving Royal Mail's quandary.