

CYCLE NEWS

CTC'S ROUND UP OF CYCLING NEWS, VIEWS AND EVENTS



Left: Ben Searle. Opposite: Jason@Cycling-Images.co.uk

Bike fund bonanza

Bristol named first cycling city and 11 new cycling towns announced across England

Plans for much of the £140 million extra funding for cycling (Cycle, February-March 2008) were announced during this year's Bike Week in June. Eleven new Cycling Towns and the first Cycling City, Bristol, will share in the Government money going to Cycling England, while London will continue to invest heavily in cycling in the capital.

Transport secretary Secretary Ruth Kelly unveiled the winning bids to become Cycling England's 11 new

Cycling Towns and first Cycling City. They will share £47.5m of Cycling England's £140m budget over the next three years. Together with match-funding from local sources, the total three-year outlay on 'Cycling Towns and Cities' will be around £100 million.

London Mayor Boris Johnson also chose Bike Week to announce £55m of investment in cycling for this year, topping the average of £500m for walking and cycling over 10 years that Ken Livingstone had promised. He also revealed new figures showing that

cycle use in London has now increased by 91% since 2000, with over half a million cycle trips being made in the capital each day.

Encouraging Londoners to take up cycling in Bike Week, Boris Johnson said: 'Riding and maintaining a bike won't break the bank, and no one can deny its green credentials or value to health.'

A week later, Gordon Brown himself made a commitment to support cycling. Speaking at the launch of a six-day cycle racing event to take place in East London next year, he said:

'The place of cycling in our society is set to grow, and I am committed to doing everything possible to encourage that.'

Meanwhile, The Welsh Assembly Government has offered CTC a grant of £250,000 over the next three years to help develop cycle training in Wales. The funding, which will enable 100 people to be trained as National Standard cycle instructors, was announced by Wales's Environment Minister Jane Davidson at a conference on walking and cycling. See www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Press_Archive/WelshAssembly.

Cycling towns winners

The winning bids for Cycling England's 'Cycling Towns and Cities' funding are: Bristol (cycling city), plus Blackpool, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Leighton/Linslade, Shrewsbury, Southend on Sea, Southport with Ainsdale, Stoke, Woking, and York. These are in addition to the existing Cycling Towns of Aylesbury, Brighton, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and Lancaster.



Fuelling the bike boom



CTC has launched a dedicated Bike to Work package to support people leaving their cars for bicycles, in anticipation of a boom in commuter cycling caused by higher fuel prices. After the last oil crisis in 1979 when fuel prices rocketed, cycling increased by almost 40%. With fuel prices higher than ever recorded CTC expects many motorists to leave their cars at home and go to work by bike instead.

CTC Director Kevin Mayne said: 'CTC members know that the bike is a cheap, quick, healthy and environmentally friendly way to commute. We also know that as regular motorists try cycling as an alternative they are often nervous about the change. This product provides comfort in a familiar breakdown package just like the one they have for their cars. Existing members could recommend it to anyone they know who is worried about their ability to complete a ride after a breakdown.'

CTC Bike to Work has been launched at a special price of £52 for new members, our target was to make it only £1 per week for combined CTC membership and our established breakdown assistance. Breakdown cover ensures that if you are unable to complete your journey as a result of an accident, vandalism or irreparable breakdown (excluding punctures) then you and your bike will be taken to a station, bike shop, home or work.

For existing CTC members, breakdown cover is available separately for £30. For more information see www.ctc.org.uk/commuter or call 0800 212 810 and quote your membership number.

It's not just commuters who bike to work who save money. According to a study by Cycling England every new cyclist contributes an economic benefit of up to £382 to the nation.

For more on how CTC is encouraging cycle commuting, see opposite and Swindon story (p12).



CTC Council wants you



At the end of this year eight seats become vacant on CTC Council. You could fill one of them and help determine the future of CTC. The way that CTC works – from a day-to-day basis to the strategy for the next five years – is set by Council based on what they believe members want and what they think is in the best interests of CTC.

Members of Council are elected for a three-year period to represent the members in their region, and now is the time for councillors representing East of England, London, West Midlands, and Yorkshire and the Humber to be elected for the three years starting on 1st January 2009. Two members are to be elected for each region.

Have a look at the CTC website, or talk to an existing councillor or the Director at National Office, if you want to know what is involved. You could also come along to a Council meeting to see how Council works in practice (phone Sue Cherry at National Office if you are interested). Nomination forms (which need to be returned to National Office by 15th August) are also available on the website or from National Office and include the requirements for standing. Council wants to ensure that it is representative of all CTC members, and needs to have a balance of skills amongst its members; you could be the ideal candidate.

FROM CTC COUNCIL **SIMON LEGG**



The Brooks saddle. Its leather feels tough at first blush, a bit awkward, even uncomfortable.

Yet it's neither rigid nor unyielding, and the time you spend sitting on it pays dividends. It becomes shaped by you and for you.

As with the Brooks, so with the CTC Council. Having risked ridicule with your election address, having persuaded ten of your fellow members sign your nomination papers, having persuaded people you've never met to vote for you, you arrive, you're given a folder of papers to read by way of a catch-up exercise, and you sit in the meetings feeling like a cyclist sitting on a new Brooks.

And then the penny drops. You're in charge. You came here with a purpose. CTC history is yours for the making. The things you wanted to do – about local groups or the membership service or whatever else – are things you can do. And this is where it happens. The saddle belongs to you. You shape it.

CTC Council membership is pretty much what you make it. You have duties and liabilities that are straightforward, and not that onerous in terms of time. For the rest, you take on what you think you can do. My three years has been spent in correspondence with members.

Your chosen mission might be entirely different. That's for you to decide. All I know is this: if you're one of the many members who've looked at what CTC Council does and known you could do better... this is your chance. Nominations are open for several areas.

You don't need to be an expert, although enthusiasm – like neatsfoot oil – is essential.



Photo: Jason Patient

FROM THE CAMPAIGNS DEPT ROGER GEFFEN



I was pleased to be called to give evidence to the Commons Transport Select Committee's inquiry on road

safety. The MPs on this cross-party group seemed receptive to the message that road safety is important not just as an end in itself – preventing deaths and injuries – but also for wider health, environmental and quality of life objectives. The Government's new road safety vision needs to be one where people of any age feel safe and confident getting about on foot or by bike, and allowing their children to do likewise.

Road safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick MP gave evidence to the inquiry afterwards. Whilst still maintaining the current policy line, he seems open to ideas for getting more 20mph limits delivered more quickly, and I am keen to follow up this dialogue. I believe that one of the best things that could happen for walking and cycling would be to make 20mph the norm for 'community streets', i.e. those where people on the street are more important than the traffic passing through it. Plenty of continental towns and cities have 30kmh (i.e. 18mph) limits covering 65-85% of the length of their street networks, with higher limits applying only on the wider and busier through routes. Such cities not only have better road safety but thriving local economies, thanks to an environment which supports walking, cycling and public transport. And 20mph speed limits are popular too – public support stands at 76% according to new Government research.

But lower speed limits will also need good street design backed by stronger and more rigorously enforced traffic laws.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MEMBERSHIP MOVE

The postal address for CTC membership is now: CTC Membership Dept, PO Box 416, Twickenham, TW1 9GDS

CTC PRIZE DRAW

CTC Summer Draw tickets are included with this magazine and there are £4,000 worth of prizes. Tickets raise funds for CTC Charitable Trust, so please don't bin them. If you can't sell them please pass them on to someone who can. To receive extra tickets call 0844 736 8450. CTC regrets that bulk mailing makes it too expensive to withhold tickets from members who don't want them.

Winners of the Spring Draw are: 1st prize (£2,000), G E Lee; 2nd (£1,000), K Strickland; 3rd (£500), A Chamberlain. Runner up prizes (£100) go to: Simon Binning, R Lockwood, AJ Halls, and M Lines.

Cycling is the prescription



The NHS has set up a new Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) to reduce its carbon footprint. Given the pressures on the Department of Health and the NHS also to tackle obesity and promote physical activity, this opens up the opportunity to persuade the NHS to become Britain's ultimate cycle-friendly employer. With 5 million employees, the NHS is the largest employer in Europe, and NHS-related travel accounts for 5% of UK journeys.

Public health professionals are already receptive. As reported last issue, the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) has joined Sustrans in leading a growing coalition of over 80 organisations (including CTC) whose 'Take Action on Active Travel' manifesto calls for better conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, with more investment in and promotion of walking and cycling, and targets for increased use of these modes.

However a recent survey by NHS Spokes, a web-based network of cycling employees within the NHS, looked at whether NHS Trusts were practising what they preached on promoting cycling. It looked specifically at the mileage rates being offered to NHS staff for work-related cycling, and found that whilst the best authorities (e.g. South Gloucestershire PCT) were paying up to 50p a mile, 85% were paying less than the Treasury-approved rate of 20p/mile, 8% were paying less than the NHS national contract minimum rate of 6.2p and a further 14% were paying nothing at all.

The Take Action on Active Travel manifesto is at www.adsph.org.uk/news.php. For more on promoting cycling in the health sector see www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=5085.

Vote for Cycle-Rail



The National Cycle-Rail Awards 2008 need your feedback so that the people and places doing the most to improve cycle-rail integration get the recognition they deserve this autumn.

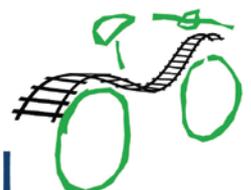
The deadline for nominations is 5th September. You can propose winners for: CTC Station of the Year; People Award; Pindar Graphics Customer Service Excellence; Most Innovative Approach to Cycle/Rail Integration; Train Operator of the Year; and the Cycling England Best Local Government Contribution. Nominating is easy – do it online at www.cyclerrail.co.uk or request a printout of the form from CTC National Office, tel: 0844 736 8451.

Last year's winners included PC Jerry Isterling, who introduced a series of cycle surgeries to educate bike owners on how to avoid falling victim to cycle theft, and Fife Council, which implemented a £500,000 cycleway from Markinch station to Glenrothes, giving a whole community to access to and from a railway station by bike.

The awards ceremony is on 24th October in Euston, London. Details will be in the Dec/Jan issue.



ATOC
ASSOCIATION OF TRAIN OPERATING COMPANIES



National Cycle-Rail Awards

FROM THE TOURING DEPT MARK WATERS



Whilst those of us in CTC who go cycle touring think nothing of heading off to Europe and other 'civilised' parts

of the world using our own wits and planning skills, it's a very different matter when we decide we want to tackle something a little outside the 'comfort zone'. Many opt for a CTC Cycling Holiday as a way of taking on a challenge such as the Karakorum Highway, Bhutan or Patagonia.

We owe a debt of gratitude to CTC Cycle Holiday tour leaders who willingly choose to lead groups to such places. One such is Peter Crofts, who is about to lead his 100th overseas tour. As such he is a man to be applauded for the amount of pleasure he must have given to so many members over the years.

CTC Cycling Holidays needs experienced tourists like Peter who are prepared to share their knowledge. If you think you could lead small groups into inhospitable and/or unusual places, then CTC Cycling Holidays would love to hear from you.

On the home front, the CTC Hospitality Directory is a member service that can be overlooked, but is well worth considering becoming part of. If you are prepared to put a fellow cyclist or two up at your house for the night, then you can join the group and receive the same treatment at everyone else's house. Administrator Neil Wheadon is hoping to get some more people on board because the greater the number of participants, the better the directory becomes. Full details can be found on CTC information sheet INF7, which you can download from the website or request from CTC National Office.

Photo: by Ian Warby

ITALY & SCOTLAND

Gold standard

 The tally of medals for British cyclists began even before the Olympic opening ceremony in Beijing. In August, UK track riders should get cycling onto the sports pages. In July, sprinter Mark Cavendish did the same in the Tour de France. But not all British cycling success stories make a splash in the national press. Back in June, British mountain bikers won three gold medals and two silvers in the Mountain Bike World Championships in Val di Sole, Italy.

Gee Atherton won the men's event, with fellow Brit Steve Peat coming second. Gee's sister, Rachel Atherton, dominated the women's race, winning with an 8-second margin, while Josh Bryceland and Same Dale came first and second in the juniors.

The cross-country racers had everything to

prove before the summer Olympics. Liam Killeen finished fourth with Oli Beckingsale tenth, which should guarantee them a place in the Olympic cross-country event.

A few weeks earlier, mountain biking's World Cup cavalcade arrived in Fort William in the Scottish Highlands. Conditions were unusually good, with trails dry and dusty.

Another Atherton, older brother Dan, carried British hopes in the 4X event. Sadly he was beaten into third by Australian Olympic BMXer Jarad Graves and Dutch rider Joost Wichman.

The cross-country competition was missing French favourite Julian Absalon, and Swiss riders took every podium spot, with Florian Vogel first. Britain's Oli Beckingsale was ninth. Canadian Marie-Helene Premont won the women's event.

Downhill racing came on the final day. Rachel Atherton was the rider to beat in the women's event but a big crash in the semi-final left her winded. She came third, with France's Sabrina Jonnier second and Britain's Tracy Mosely first.

In the men's race there were a number of riders with the form to take the win. South Africa's Greg Minnaar made light work of the top rocky section and root-strewn woods to get the fastest time. Second and third went to Britain – Gee Atherton and Steve Peat.

More at www.uci.ch.



“Racing conditions at Fort William were unusually good – dry and dusty”



LONDON

Against the flow

 CTC has strongly backed plans by Kensington & Chelsea Council to try out new ways of opening up one-way streets for two-way or 'contraflow' cycling. Kensington & Chelsea want the Department for Transport to change the rules that prevent councils from putting up 'no entry' signs with an 'except cycling' plate underneath.

The Department for Transport

insists this could undermine drivers' willingness to abide by 'no entry' signs, contrary to all the evidence from the widespread use of this sign in continental Europe. CTC was quoted extensively in the media, although the BBC also claimed incorrectly that CTC was calling for cyclists to be allowed to turn left on red lights.

For CTC's position, see www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=5101.



LONDON

Motorbikes in bus lanes

 CTC has supported the London Cycling Campaign's petition, which so far has 3,500 signatures, calling on the new London Mayor Boris Johnson not to allow motorcycles in bus lanes on major roads. CTC calculates that motorcycles are significantly more likely than cars to be involved in collisions causing injury to both cyclists and pedestrians, and that on average their emissions of various pollutants are 5-11 times worse than for cars.

CTC is in no way 'anti-motorbiker' and shares many of their safety concerns. However, we feel that policies which would encourage more motorcycling would increase pollution and danger whilst undermining efforts to promote walking cycling and public transport as safer, healthy and more sustainable alternatives.

CTC's position on motorcycling, and the evidence supporting it, are at www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4790.

NEWS IN BRIEF

CHANGES TO CTC GROUPS

CTC groups will be formalising their new structures at their AGMs in Oct-Nov. Please try to attend the group where you live and use your vote. If you're not sure which group you can vote with contact CTC Membership on 0844 736 8450.

Huddersfield CTC

The meeting to establish Huddersfield CTC as a Full Member Group will be held on 8th September at 7pm at The Galpharm Stadium, Huddersfield. All local CTC members are welcome.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT

HUGH ROACH has organised 35 separate audaxes over 100km, 150km and 200km distances. He has been the CTC link with Gravesend Rotary Club since 1987, and responsible for routes for 'On you Bike' Charity Rides. These have raised £250,000 over 25 years. He has also been Gravesend Section Chairman and, since 2001, Secretary. He has a seat on the Development and DA Committees and is an active club cyclist.

MARTIN GILL came to cycling after knee problems from running. For 20 years, since 1987, he has been West Kent CTC's Harridriders' Section Secretary, which entails regular weekly long rides and bank holiday weekends. Since 1996 he has been Secretary of the West Kent CTC. Big achievements include organising the Tour de France 'Halfway House' gathering last summer and helping with the Canterbury Birthday Rides.

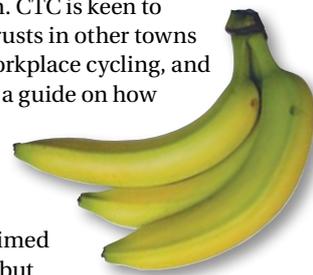
SWINDON

Top bananas sign up

 CTC is running a Workplace Cycle Challenge project in Swindon as part of the Cycling Champions programme, encouraging the town's cyclists to get their colleagues on bikes this summer. We have teamed up with Thomas Stokell from Challenge for Change Ltd, who has been handing out bananas to cyclists in Swindon explaining how they can get their employers signed up to the Swindon Workplace Cycle Challenge.

Five of the town's major employers, including Swindon Primary Care Trust, have already signed up, covering 3,372 employees between them. CTC is keen to work health trusts in other towns to promote workplace cycling, and has produced a guide on how to be a cycle-friendly employer.

The advice is particularly aimed at NHS trusts but much of the advice is useful for other employers too. For more information on the Swindon Workplace Cycle Challenge project, see www.swindoncyclechallenge.org.uk. For more about CTC's Cycle Champions project: www.ctc.org.uk/cyclechampions.



SCOTLAND

Scottish cycling audit

 Cycling Scotland has published an assessment of Scotland's local authorities' performance in promoting cycling (see www.cyclingscotland.org/2008nationalassessment.aspx). Scotland's Transport Minister Stewart Stevenson MSP launched the report at Denny Primary School, Falkirk, and also announced plans to consult on a Cycling Action Plan for Scotland.