



Photo: David Weight

● Transport Minister Robert Goodwill MP and Shadow Transport Minister Richard Burden MP at Birmingham's Space for Cycling ride

PEDALLING PROMISES

With a general election only months away, political support for cycling is still sporadic. CTC's **Sam Jones** summarises recent developments at Westminster

WITH A GENERAL election on the horizon, Parliament's return after the summer recess was always going to be a busy period. Battle lines are being drawn, and there is a broad cross-party consensus that cycling is important. Yet so far only the Lib Dems have committed to funding cycling by at least £10 per head annually, and setting a target of 10 per cent of all journeys by 2025.

CTC therefore visited the Labour and Conservative party conferences in Manchester and Birmingham, together with its allies in the cycling lobby, to seek similar commitments. Campaign activity at each conference involved a breakfast event hosted by News UK, with the lead transport portfolio-holder speaking, and a Space for Cycling evening ride organised jointly with the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign and Birmingham Push Bikes respectively. MPs and Councillors who have supported the national Space for Cycling campaign were invited to join the rides.

The Labour conference ride attracted stronger political support, but it was encouraging to see Cycling Minister Robert Goodwill MP (Conservative) reorganising his diary to send off the cyclists in Birmingham.

After the conferences, CTC ran its Funding4Cycling campaign from 10-17 October. The campaign sought to make

the cyclists' voice heard as HM Treasury consulted ahead of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 3 December. It called for a commitment to cycling of at least £10 per head annually. Support was high: in one week, over 3,000 people responded.

A Commons debate on the Government's Cycling Delivery Plan had meanwhile been scheduled for 16 October. However, with no draft plan ready ahead of time, MPs sought to postpone the debate. The draft plan was finally released by the Department of Transport minutes before the debate was due to begin.

Labelled as 'derisory' by CTC, the draft plan was savaged throughout the debate, where the twin issues of funding and ambition for growth were criticised for setting 'aspirations' rather than firm targets.

Prior to the debate, CTC unveiled research by Doctors Robin Lovelace and James Woodcock, of Leeds and Cambridge Universities respectively. Lovelace and Woodcock found that the health benefits from increased physical activity in England alone could be worth £6bn annually by 2025, rising to £25bn annually by 2050. The stats were cited during the debate and led to a Times article and editorial.

For CTC's response (and more news), see ctc.org.uk/campaigns

NEWS IN BRIEF

● CTC AGM: CALL FOR MOTIONS

Notice is given that the AGM of Cyclists' Touring Club is to take place at 2.00pm on Saturday 18 July 2015 at a venue in London to be confirmed. CTC members wishing to propose a motion for the 2015 AGM should send it in writing to CTC, Chief Executive Paul Tuohy at CTC National Office by 1 February 2015. The motion should be proposed and seconded by two members. CTC Council strongly recommends that members wishing to propose a motion contact their CTC Councillor or Paul Tuohy well before the deadline for a discussion about it. It is important, for proxy voters in particular, that the purpose of any motion on the agenda is clear.



● The CTC AGM will be in London on 18 July. Motions must be submitted by 1 Feb

● THE COST OF INACTIVITY

Public Health England has published **'Everybody Active, Every Day'**, new evidence-based advice to health professionals on how to promote physical activity, including walking and cycling for day-to-day journeys. It notes that one in six deaths are due to physical inactivity; that 33% of men and 45% of women are insufficiently active for good health, and that this costs the country £7.4bn annually. The same day, the head of the NHS called for a stronger focus on prevention rather than cure for ill-health, in order to help reduce a predicted NHS deficit of £8bn by 2020/21.

● WELSH ACT FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL

The Active Travel (Wales) Act came into effect on 25 October, following a five-year campaign led by Sustrans Cymru. It requires Welsh local authorities to: map their existing provision for day-to-day walking and cycling (this must be done within one year); draw up maps of their intended future provision (within three years); and to report on continuous annual progress from the one to the other. The Welsh design guidance has been drawn up in parallel to revised London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS2) from Transport for London. Both design guides feature a novel process for scoring the quality of existing cycling conditions and of new schemes.