

Comment & interviews

CYCLE SHORTS

THIS MONTH A CUSTOM STEP-THROUGH BIKE, THE CHARLIE ALLISTON CASE, & COMMUNITY CYCLE CLUBS



Becky leads a Cycling UK ride

Local Hero

BECKY REYNOLDS

Becky is the Campaigns Officer and News Editor for Bricycles, the Brighton and Hove Cycling Campaign.

Dan Joyce got in touch with her

BRICYCLES IS A great example of a vibrant local cycling campaign. As well as 300 paying members, it reaches 436 Facebook supporters and almost 1,000 Twitter followers. More importantly, the group gets stuff done.

'We ran a campaign about the barriers to cycling that one-way streets create called "One Way, No Way!";' said Becky, a Cycling UK member for 20 years. 'When one of our long-term Bricycles campaigners, Ian Davey, was elected onto the council and became lead member for transport, we saw a host of one-ways in the North Laine area opened up for cyclists through contraflow cycling.'

'Bricycles has also strongly campaigned for lower speed limits. Now much of Brighton and Hove has a 20mph speed limit. Another of our campaign aims can be ticked off with the arrival of the new Brighton Bike Share scheme this September: 430 hire bikes around town and out to the universities, making cycling more accessible for everyone.'

The group has come a long way since its inception in 1980, when it was set up by three guys in a pub. 'They gave out leaflets at traffic lights,' said Becky, 'and built up interest with a public meeting of people wanting action for cycling. At the time, there were no cycling facilities and there was no cycling officer.'

Stay in touch

CYCLECLIPS: free weekly email newsletter – email your membership number to membership@cyclinguk.org
CAMPAIGN NEWS: monthly campaigns bulletin. Sign up at cyclinguk.org/subscribe-to-cycle-campaign-news

Bricycles has lost none of its initial energy and continues to attract and engage local cyclists. The group doesn't wait for cyclists to come to them. 'We distribute free copies of our newsletter, Bricycles News, to many outlets across the city – bike shops, cafés, libraries, and so on,' said Becky. 'Each issue includes a membership form. We have a joining page on our website. We also spread the word via Facebook and Twitter. We run stalls at university freshers' fairs and similar events. We have a Membership Secretary overseeing this area, and an Outreach and Development Officer who is expanding our pool of Rangers – correspondents who update us about issues on the ground.'

Becky's roles are campaigns and communications. 'I'm the Campaigns Officer and I edit Bricycles News, which covers local cycling, transport and planning issues in Brighton and Hove, as well as accounts of leisure cycling trips. Like all Bricycles' committee members, I speak to the media. Most local media are hungry for news.'

Her advice on dealing with the local media is straightforward: 'Make clear, quotable statements. Provide a good photo. Make it easy for them to include your story.'

One of Bricycles' current campaigns is to get junctions changed to prioritise vulnerable road users. "'Fix the junctions!'" is one of our campaign slogans,' said Becky. 'People using cycling facilities such as the popular seafront NCN2 urgently need to be given priority over motor traffic at side turnings. And some of our big junctions need huge improvements.'

As well as campaigning, Bricycles puts on social rides. 'We also run events like Cycle to Work Day, for example. Two years ago, we had a great ride with delegates from the Labour Party conference held in Brighton. We're organising a repeat of that this autumn, in collaboration with Cycling UK.'

The Bricycles website is bricycles.org.uk. For advice on setting up your own group, see bit.ly/cycle-campaigngroup.