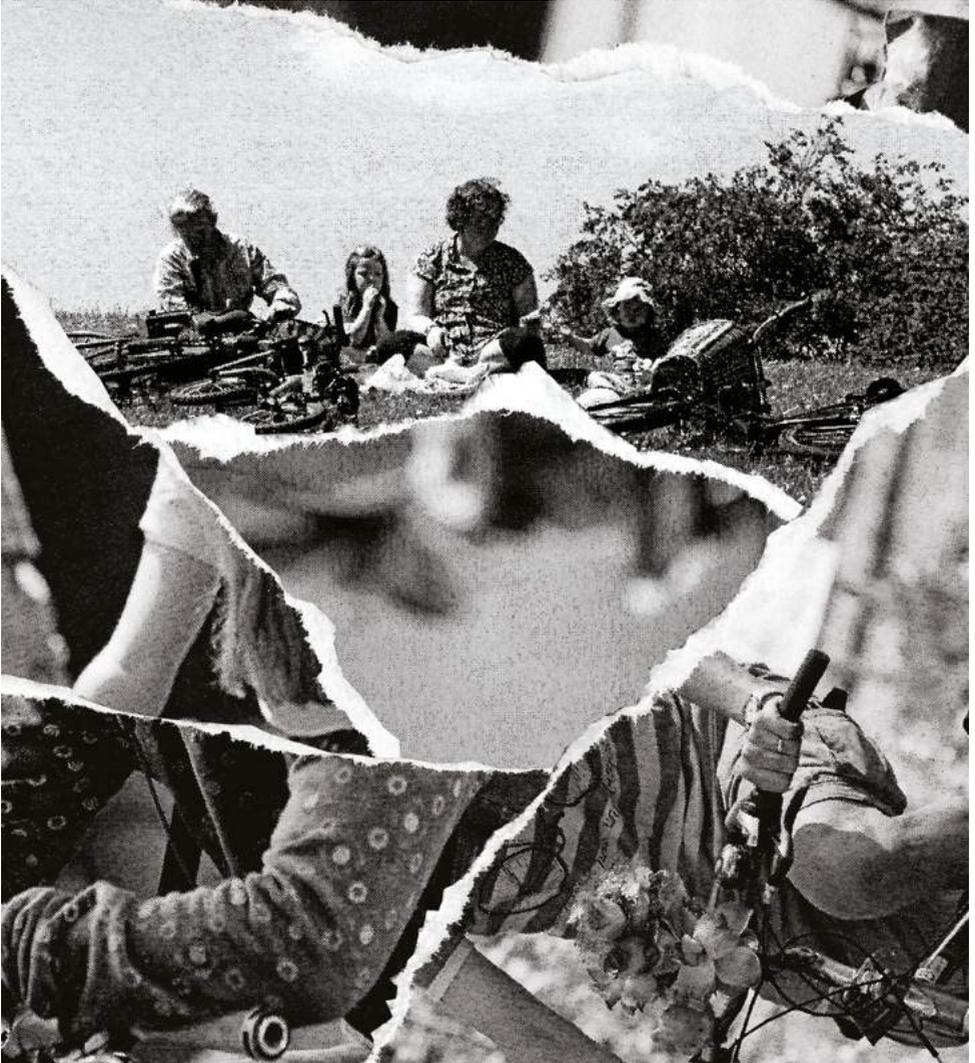

Ride

Included with membership, £1.00 where sold.



www.gmcc.org.uk

Spring 2015

Thanks

Thank you to all have contributed towards this issue. Without your time and effort it would not be possible.

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign.

Comments or opinions expressed herein are those of their respective contributors only and do not necessarily represent the views of Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign.

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The quarterly publication of Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign

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www.gmcc.org.uk
 /GMcycling
 @GMcycling

Calling all girls and women of Manchester!

To help mark International Women's Day 2015, a new project (#MCRwomebike) are collecting photographs of women across Manchester telling us about their achievements and why they ride their bikes.

Women across Manchester are riding their bikes. For many women a bicycle can provide a key to independence, freedom, fun, adventure, friendship, employment, health and wellbeing.

We want photographs of everyone - so whether you have just learnt to ride; you enjoy occasional riding with family or friends in parks and green places; your bike is your transport; you like to explore the world from the saddle; you enjoy speeding on steaming tarmac; or love bumping about on dirt tracks in the wild forest - we would like your photograph!

Just to spice up the submissions a bit, we're running this as a friendly competition - so once you've uploaded your photo you can share your link so friends and family can vote for you. Great prizes to be won!

MCRWOMENBIKE
AN INTERACTIVE SELF-PORTRAIT
PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION
Calling all female bike riders!

REGARDLESS OF YOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC OR CYCLING ABILITIES,
WE WANT YOUR PICTURES!

All you need is:

- 1 YOURSELF
- 2 YOUR BICYCLE
- 3 YOUR REASON
why you ride bikes
- 4 A BUDDY
to take your picture

LOTS MORE INFO
MCRWOMENBIKE.ORG.UK

Submission deadline:

Monday 23rd March

Final exhibition & prizegiving:

Friday 27th March

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

Officer Reports

At the annual general meeting of GMCC on Monday the 9th of February 2015 the constituted officer roles were appointed. Some new, some serving again here's what they have to say.

Chair: Jonathan Fingland

How time flies - and what a difference a year can make!

This year's AGM, held in February, was a much more convivial affair than the previous one. There were many new faces in the room and even people who were attending their first ever GMCC meeting have since commented that they felt it was a productive and positive event. This was especially heartening as the agenda - quite rightly - was comprised mostly of formal updates, elections and other rather staid business that needed to be done. It is a relief that the campaign feels much more cohesive and cooperative compared to a year ago; some of the campaign's more disruptive or negative elements have moved on, which has enabled existing and new people to become more active throughout the year, so we are now a better integrated group who are more clearly focussed on productive activities for the campaign.

Going into the 2014's AGM, GMCC only had two people carrying out our three constituted Officer roles. This became three people at that AGM and a few months later we voted to amend our constitution to create two new roles - a Chair and a Policy Officer. A month later we had five different people in these five Offices - a vast improvement on the now historic setup. Following the 2015 AGM we only have four people covering the five roles but I'm confident that Chris Allan will be very effective as our Treasurer and Membership Secretary. In time we will encourage these roles to be taken by two separate people but it is useful to have them combined while we try to modernise our membership, payment and donation systems.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our two outgoing Officers. Sincere thanks to Ted Lawson who has stepped down as Treasurer after over a decade of service to the campaign, previously acting as Membership Secretary too. Thanks also to Joanna Long who took over the Membership Secretary role last year but has had to step down as her first child is due imminently - best of luck Jo!

Shortly after GMCC's 2014 AGM, I was elected onto the Board of Cyclenation - the federation of UK cycling campaign groups, which aims to support local groups and coordinate national-level lobbying and actions. With the support of other Board members we held an EGM at the Autumn conference where several motions were adopted, including one that places the Space for Cycling campaign at the heart

of Cyclenation's activities. You can read more about the conference and motions at: <http://www.cyclenation.org.uk/content/2014-egm-and-conference-report>

Since being elected as chair of GMCC, in June 2014, there has been a lot of organisational activity within the campaign, much of which happens behind the scenes. We've taken steps to streamline and improve our internal communications between working groups, officers and other key roles within the campaign, making it easier for more people to get involved. Hopefully our new Press Officer will help us keep everyone updated on our future activities in a more timely manner.

Throughout the year GMCC have offered design input into many schemes, eg Rusholme's curry mile where proposals for segregated lanes throughout will be put to public consultation very soon, possibly by the time you read this. Organising our third #space4cycling campaign ride at Labour's annual conference in September again highlighted how the campaign has evolved. Our improved capacity, experience and contacts meant that it was more straightforward to deliver the event (phew!) and we were able to add an extra dimension by cooperating with CTC to invite senior labour politicians (including an MP) to address participants part way through the ride.

This event was promptly followed by a stream of formal public consultations on proposed infrastructure schemes, mostly from the first phase of Greater Manchester's VeloCity 2025 project. I'd like to thank all involved for the considerable time and effort that has been put into responding to these constructively; supporting innovative measures that we feel we would enable more people to cycle for transport, while objecting to many of the poor quality proposals where we thought this was the appropriate response. You can read more about these later in this newsletter; some of the schemes that will be delivered in the next 12 months have the potential to transform cycling environments and act as flagship examples of what could be done across Greater Manchester.

Looking ahead there will be more changes to the city-centre due to the expansion of Piccadilly and Oxford Road stations, both of which will affect nearby highways so we have already been invited to offer input at this early stage. We also expect to be offered a role on Manchester Council's City-Centre Cycling working group, which is very heartening and shows a mindset change within the council – they value our input and want us to be there rather than us having to request involvement. The second phase of the VeloCity 2025 project and all the other development schemes in the region, combined with the implications of devolution, will continue to offer opportunities to create an improved environment that will enable more people to cycle. So it is now time to move forward with our increased capacity and a renewed focus on a positive vision for cycling across Greater Manchester, working constructively with all members of the campaign and external stakeholders such as local councils and other campaign groups. Onwards! ♿

Membership Secretary & Treasurer: Chris Allan

It's really exciting to have been elected both Membership Secretary and Treasurer of GMCC. I've been hanging around the edges of the campaign for a while and so now being able to play a much more active role in shaping and growing it is an opportunity I intend to fully grasp.

Like many of us my introduction to the bicycle began at a young age. The first bike I rode around my local area in Edinburgh was an inherited, gearless and rusty BMX with those clacky things on the wheels you got from cereal boxes; I was, indeed, a veritable paragon of coolness. However, as life continued I wanted to travel beyond the next few streets and it quickly became apparent that the bicycle, outside of my lightly-trafficked residential area, was definitely not welcome.

So I stopped. I got the bus, and then spent the next decade and a half of my life getting around like everyone else: foot, bus, train, car and, latterly, tram. It was only on a trip to Holland one spring-time that I rediscovered the joy of the bicycle – a joy I brought back with me. I signed up to cycle-to-work but was dismayed by the constant marketing of speed, lycra, helmets, danger, lorries and hi-vis that went with it. It wasn't how I imagined it would be; I almost gave up.

However congestion and expense forced my hand and, after paying substantially more than I wanted for a bus journey that took significantly longer than expected, I returned to my original plan. I now have a Pashley which I ride whilst wearing my work clothes 6 miles to and from work on (somehow) mostly-segregated infrastructure. It isn't perfect, not by a long shot, but it's something. Every day I start and end it with a huge smile on my face thanks to the bike.

I'm here to help spread that joy as far as possible, by encouraging 8-80 designed Space for Cycling. Not only does cycling make sense as a mode of transport, but designing around it helps to improve the urban fabric as a whole; whereas designing around private motor vehicles does the exact opposite. I think that the long-mooted Strategic Cycle Map that the campaign is hoping to put together will be very important in enabling this step change. Cyclists, in particular those who are branded as 'utility' cyclists know best where they want to cycle – and whilst a map of key routes does not a comprehensive network make, it is at least a starting point.

I also have no doubt that Manchester will be a better place if it embraces it. A streetscape fit for the 21st century, which encourages sustainable and healthy mobility for all is frankly a great improvement over the current, somewhat oppressive car-dominated infrastructure of the city currently. For a start, like me, and many of us, we'd all get to have that huge smile on our face every day. 🚲

Secretary: Jonathan Keenan

I was in two minds about standing for Secretary again at the last AGM. It wasn't any lack of commitment on my part. Work, home life and leisure time is already difficult to reconcile but I was persuaded, not by promises of assistance (although that was a factor) but by the enthusiasm and energy permeating the organisation right now, with new members and new officers and a constant supply of interesting challenges this was something I just couldn't resist to continue to support.

A recent General Meeting had a section of brainstorming all the possible connections that a campaign like GMCC could make to further our aims. This covered everything from the Cycle Industry to Regional Health Authorities, from Transport for Greater Manchester to Schools and Universities. The idea is to inspire and direct campaign efforts over the coming year. What it revealed more than anything is how much potential there is out there to get our message across and to find new ways of promoting our aims to new audiences. What this means more than ever is the need for more people to get involved and for us to find ways of enabling this. Communication to members via email will improve over the year for better engagement, allowing everyone to see and get more involved in the efforts undertaken by the campaign.

Manchester has just had £22 million confirmed for cycling. The last bid is showing signs of bringing us some good infrastructure but a great deal of time and money was also wasted on some terrible plans, some being scrapped after objections. It has become incumbent on us to try to ensure that what follows will be of high quality. There are real chances to make a difference right now, which is the best motivation for campaigners there can be.

I have recently given more attention to our Facebook page as this can connect with a different audience to our successful twitter feed. This is going very well with 374 likes so far and a reach topping out at over 4600 people on one occasion. If you haven't already, then please take a look and like us:

<http://www.facebook.com/GMCycling>

I am delighted to welcome Nick Hubble to the role of Press Officer. He has already made a great impact with press and with helping out on content for the web site and Facebook pages. He will be core member of the Comms Sub-group. This is a vital function within GMCC but could easily be very time consuming so please pitch in with help if you are able to. Remember; we are all volunteers, people just doing the best we can.

I'm looking forward to a constructive year of cycle campaigning for Greater Manchester. 🚲

Dave Butler: Policy Officer

The Policy Officer role was established in June last year as one of two new posts to increase GMCC's capacity and reduce the burden on existing Officers, especially the Secretary. The stated aim of the Policy Officer role was "to coordinate policy discussions and statements, and help facilitate Members consultation responses and campaigning activities".

It coincided with a welter of consultations that have emerged from TfGM (Transport for Greater Manchester) and local councils, desperate to agree proposals to spend CCAG (Cycle City Ambition Grant) money within the very short timescales set by central government. GMCC has responded to around twenty consultations since then, many involving several meetings and analysis of lengthy reports and plans. This has felt like a step change - in terms of the number of proposals, and also the extent to which councils have actively sought to involve cyclists. This is not to say that our voice has always been listened to, but it has on some issues, and generally relations with council officers and politicians have improved.

The volume of schemes, and the fact that we are to some extent learning as we go, has meant that most of our efforts have gone into reacting to proposals. In this coming year I hope we can move onto the front foot, and influence policy and proposals at an earlier stage. Some useful work is underway to agree what sort of strategic cycle network GMCC should be pushing for. There is a growing national consensus about "what works" and constitutes good infrastructure, which we can draw upon. Encouragingly, there also appear to be more council officers and Members who "get it" in terms of cycling, and part of what we need to do is actually to support them in their internal arguments with the less enlightened. So there are reasons to be cheerful... ☺

Membership Fees

It was agreed at GMCC's AGM in February that the membership fees should be increased to £12.00 per year for individual members, with an extra £8.00 due to cover any additional members within the same household. The Membership Secretary will contact affected members as and when required.

We produce this quarterly publication on behalf of all members. Therefore, we are always open to ideas and suggestions of features, articles or news items.

If you have any, or would like to write and help produce the newsletter then do let us know by emailing: contact@gmcc.org.uk

Karen Clayton

The first six days of 2015 saw five people cyclists losing their lives while out on the road in the United Kingdom, with one in Greater Manchester. On the 2nd of January 2015, 49 year old Karen Clayton, from Wythenshawe, was cycling along Moss Lane in Altrincham where she collided with a pedestrian. Karen was taken to hospital with serious injuries but died two days later. One death on our roads is one too many, and this is not a way that any family should have to start a new year too. 🚲

Ghost bike and vigil in memoriam of Artur Piotr Ruszel

On Friday 13th February 2015 a group of around 50 people on bikes assembled to hold a vigil in memory of Artur Piotr Ruszel, who was killed whilst cycling on 13th January 2015. The vigil was held close to the spot on Upper Brook Street at which Mr. Ruszel was involved in a collision with a car. He died from his injuries later that day.

The focal point of the vigil was the installation of a ghost bike in Mr. Ruszel's memory. Ghost bikes are bikes that are painted white and placed at the spot where a cyclist was killed or fatally injured. Mr. Ruszel's ghost bike stands at the junction of Upper Brook Street and Brunswick Street, and serves both as a permanent symbol of remembrance that a man died at that spot as well as a reminder to all road users passing – especially motorists – to take care on the roads for the sake of their own safety as well as that of those around them.

The vigil started off with an impassioned speech by Nick Hubble of GMCC, who expressed thanks to all that attended, despite the fact that no one present had known Mr. Ruszel personally: the fact that the turn-out was so strong was a sign that as cyclists in Manchester we feel a sense of kinship with anyone who suffers serious injury or death as a result of the daily dangers of cycling on our city's roads. He continued that Manchester had only that week been generating positive publicity for itself around the commencement of work on the first of its Cycling City Ambition projects, yet Upper Brook Street, which was recently extensively upgraded with no provision whatsoever for cyclists, tells a different story about the city's commitment to becoming a cycling city. Nick then repeated the call for safe Space for Cycling and outlined the principles of the VisionZero approach to road safety, which places the onus on infrastructure that is designed to minimise both the likelihood of serious incidents and their impact should they occur, instead of the users of the infrastructure being responsible for their own safety and that of others.



Catholic priest Father Tim Byron from the Holy Name Church on Oxford Road then conducted a short ceremony to bless the ghost bike and held a moment's silence to pay tribute to Mr. Ruszel. Jonathan Fingland, GMCC's Chair, closed the formal part of the vigil with some defiant words – that although nothing will bring Artur back, we're not dead: politicians and police can still see us and hear our message: stop the killing and start working on VisionZero now.

Everyone with a bike was then invited to pay their respects to Mr. Ruszel with a final lap of honour past his ghost bike, and the pealing of bicycle bells symbolised the continued vitality of Manchester's cycling community in the face of such tragedy.

This was the first time a ghost bike vigil has been held by the wider cycling community in Manchester, and the strength of the attendance was a powerful demonstration of the solidarity among people who ride bikes in Manchester. One morning in January a man got on a bike and never reached his destination. His death resonated with people who ride to get from A to B, to transport cargo or simply for fun. No matter who was at fault in the collision that cost Artur his life, one simple mistake should not mean certain death. Enough is enough. We need Space for Cycling now. 🚲

Vision Zero is a new campaign that believes that Greater Manchester's road network should be designed around people, not vehicles.

<http://visionzeromcr.org/>

Road Peace is the national charity for road crash victims who have been bereaved or injured themselves or those who have concerns about road danger.

<http://www.roadpeace.org/>



Review:

Saddleback Cafe, Keswick

Spring is here! Bringing with it more daylight and even better weather sometimes, giving many an opportunity to cycle beyond Greater Manchester's boundary.

Nick Harris brings us a review of a Cumbrian pitstop.

Last year while in the Lake District, I discovered a little gem of a coffeehouse/ cafe that was very cycle friendly (to say the least). Saddleback cafe, named after one of the famous mountains near Keswick, opened in Easter last year and is situated right next door to Keswick Bikes on Main Street. The cafe has spaces for the customers to lock their bikes up (locks provided) to enjoy a brew and some food, while having a stop off on those long hilly rides in the lakes.

Inside there was a plethora of cycling memorabilia, and cycling magazines and books to browse through and a lovely road bike, which belongs to one of the owners, next to the café's dog kennel. I enjoyed an excellent black Americano most days while I was there – the beans are roasted locally by Carvetii, and it has a lovely dark crema, certainly the best coffee you'll find

in Keswick (the flat whites weren't half bad too, according to my wife). The food was also outstanding with great cakes (including some fantastic gluten free and vegetarian/vegan treats as well), full English, soup of the day and great rolls (again some vegetarian/vegan stuff). The lemon and ginger drizzle cake (vegan) was out this world and freshly iced when I had it.

The staff were really friendly and fast to wait and serve; very important if you want to get back on the road before the weather changes. I found that they couldn't do enough for you, even when you were in a hurry and only wanted a short fuelling stop.

Anyway, if you're doing the C2C going through the Lake District be sure to stop off at Saddleback, you won't be disappointed. 🚲



Saddleback Cafe

135 Main Street, Keswick, CA12 5NJ

Opening times vary seasonally.

<http://facebook.com/saddlebackcafe>

Nick Harris: Freelance National Standards Bike Instructor, MSc, trainee barista and bass guitarist.

 [@eyclewyse](https://twitter.com/eyclewyse)

Calendar

With hundreds of cycling events in Greater Manchester over the next three months so we've selected a few to feature here. Information about many more can be found online in various places:

GMCC Calendar

Our own calendar features campaign events and meetings as well as social rides around Greater Manchester.

<http://www.gmcc.org.uk/calendar>

Sky Ride

Listing led-rides as well as more informal social rides you can search by location and postcode.

<http://www.goskyride.com/manchester>

Love Your Bike

Pulling in a variety of events from across Greater Manchester; rides, training, maintenance, jumble sales and more.

<http://loveyourbike.org/events>

Audax UK

For the more adventurous riders (most audaxes are at least 100km), listing events around the UK.

<http://www.aukweb.net/events>

National Cycle Centre

Manchester's indoor velodrome and BMX track regularly holds events and championships to go and watch.

<http://nationalcyclingcentre.com/events>

TfGM Training Events

Transport for Greater Manchester run lots of free cycle training throughout the year.

<http://cycling.tfgm.com/Pages/training.aspx>

If you have an event that you'd like us to list or promote then please email contact@gmcc.org.uk with the details.

GMCC General Meetings

Meetings to organise campaigns are held at **7:00pm** on the second Monday of every month. Everyone is welcome to attend and contribute to the meeting, whether you are a member or not. The meeting finishes at 9:00pm where the group heads for refreshments at a nearby pub.

Friends Meeting House, Mount St, Manchester M2 5NS

There is bicycle parking at the left hand side of the building's entrance.

Upcoming meeting dates:

13th April

11th May

8th June

Bike Friday & Critical Mass

On the last Friday of the month two events take place in Manchester for all cyclists. Bike Friday offers socialable rides into work or college along eight routes.

Manchester's Critical Mass convenes at 6:00pm outside Central Library, the ride is gentle and everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the bicycle!

Upcoming Dates: 27th March,
24th April, 29th May

Google '**Bike Friday Manchester**' for more info on rides and keep up to date with Critical Mass details at <http://facebook.com/CriticalMassManchester/>

#MCRwomenbike exhibition

Exhibition of photographs of women and the reasons why they cycle.

Friday 27th March, timings TBC
<http://mcrwomenbike.org.uk/>

Manchester Tweed Ride

Part of a growing trend across the UK for cycling, while in Tweed.

Easter Sunday, 5th April,
<http://www.tweedride.co.uk/>

Cycle for Amy

Charity cycle to raise money for Cycleflight; 26, 50 or 100 mile routes.

Sunday 3rd May
<http://www.cycleforamy.com/>

Bike Week

13th - 21st June 2015

Bike Week promotes cycling, and shows how cycling can easily be part of everyday life by encouraging 'everyday cycling for everyone'. Event details to be confirmed. <http://bikeweek.org.uk/>

Gatley Bike Festival

In it's first year, for more information or to book for any events please visit: <http://gatleybikefest.weebly.com/>

Big Bike Quiz

You don't need to be a cyclist to know the answer to these teasers and win some great prizes teams of 2-4 people. £10 entry per team.
7:30pm, 24th April
Coffeefix, Church Road, Gatley

Gatley Bike Festival Fun-day 25th April, Scholes Park

A day full of events starts with a choice of three led rides in the morning (10, 20 or 50 miles). They are for all abilities but as the routes are on and off road skinny tyres are not recommended.

From 2:00pm to 4:00pm the focus is back to the park with a lap challenge, TFGM Maintenance Class (booking necessary), security marking, obstacle course and stalls.

Treasure Hunt

An easy cycle route to follow in your own time. Solve the clues to find the treasure.
20th - 26th April
Entry forms available by email or from Bike Haus, Stonepail Road, Gatley

Local Authority Cycle Forums

Manchester

Tuesday 10th March
5:30pm-7:30pm
Manchester Town Hall

Trafford

Tuesday 19th May
Time and location TBC, email roadsafety@trafford.gov.uk for details.

Salford

Thursday 16th April
5:00pm - 7:00pm
Salford Civic Centre

Stockport

General Meeting
Wednesday 11th March
Technical Subgroup
Thursday 16th April

Both 6:00pm-7:45pm at
Stockport Town Hall

Manchester Velocity Proposals

As noted earlier in this issue, there have been a plethora of proposals for new cycling infrastructure in the past months, Policy Officer *Dave Butler* talks us through GMCC's response to some them.

In August 2013 TfGM received £20 million of funding via the Cycle City Ambition Grant (CCAG) . Great news for Manchester, but it came with strings attached, the most significant being that the money was supposed to be spent by March 2015. This meant that schemes had to be virtually "shovel ready", and relatively easy to implement.

There was consultation with cycling groups about the principles of the Velocity bid, as it was called.

To quote from the 'vision':

"our primary objective.....is an integrated and strategically planned network of dedicated, high-quality, newly built or enhanced cycling routes that will be largely segregated from other traffic wherever possible and which will connect employment centres, schools and leisure opportunities with each other and with the regional centre"

This was to be done by developing seven "spokes" routes running into the "hub" of Manchester city centre. The aim was to increase the share of trips by bike to 10% (from less than 2%) by 2025. Which sounded great.

The detailed proposals have emerged over the last few months, and GMCC has been involved in a flurry of consultation meetings. So what do they add up to, and how do they relate to principles set out in the bid?

The 7 "spokes", now called Cycleways, are:

- The Airport City Cycleway
- The Ashton Canal Cycleway
- The Bridgewater Canal Cycleway
- The Prestwich Cycleway
- The Salford Cycleway
- The Stockport Cycleway
- The Wilmslow Road Cycleway

Three are essentially off road routes: the Stockport Cycleway, the Ashton Canal Cycleway, and the Bridgewater Canal Cycleway. Two are (predominantly) "quiet street" routes, with some off road sections, and some stretches along main roads: the Prestwich Cycleway, and Airport City Cycleway. Two are (predominately) main road routes: Wilmslow Road Cycleway, and Salford Cycleway.

Apart from the Wilmslow Road corridor, none of the routes would be our top priority, and we do not believe they will go very far towards

achieving the ambitious targets set out in the Velocity bid document.

This is because the quality of significant stretches of the routes does not match the 'vision'. Most are a contrived mixture of off-road paths, quiet streets and short sections of major roads. They contain elements such as shared-use footway cycling, restrictive barriers, crossing delays, sections that cannot be accessed 24/7 and sections where people are likely to feel unsafe due to a lack of lighting or other social safety concerns. In general they do not provide direct links between places that people want to travel, and as a consequence are likely to be unattractive to many existing cyclists and unlikely to attract people to start cycling for their everyday journeys. We would support improvements to recreational routes providing they are of sufficient quality, but these should not be a top priority, especially for CCAG.

With the notable exception of the Wilmslow Road Cycleway, which really does come close to the quality set out in the vision (albeit with some issues we are seeking to resolve), we are only prepared to support these routes if:

- They are delivered to a higher standard, by addressing the detailed points we have made
- TfGM works with us to define a strategic network of high quality routes which will be required in order to have a real chance of achieving the Velocity objectives db

The full responses from GMCC to the proposed Velocity schemes can be viewed online at:

<http://www.gmcc.org.uk/consultations-and-responses/>



Further to the consultations in 2014 Manchester City Council has now released detailed plans for the Wilmslow Road Cycleway between Moss Lane East and Dickensen Road. and have opened a consultation.

This can be viewed online via our website and the deadline for responses is the 27th March 2015.

<http://www.gmcc.org.uk/r/rusholme>

Dear Aldi,

We are regular customers at your store in Seymour Grove, Old Trafford now that we have moved close by. We usually come to the store on our bicycles, and we notice that a lot of other customers do too.

At the present, there is no proper bicycle parking, so that cyclists have to lock their bikes onto the stands for the shopping trolleys. This is inconvenient both for us and for anyone who wants to get a trolley out.

May I request that you convert one of the parking bays close to the door into a parking space for up to 10 bikes, using "Sheffield" bike parking stands? If you were very generous you could also put a cover over the top.

This would encourage more people to cycle to the shop, especially if you DON'T do what other supermarkets do and put the cycle parking in the far corner of the car park. This expresses the other stores' failure to understand that cyclists have already made more effort than most of the other customers to get to the store, and makes them feel unimportant and unwanted.

We like shopping at Aldi for good quality, very reasonable prices and friendly service, I enclose a link to the best manufacturer of Sheffield stands.

Best regards, Rob Raikes & Cordelia Kuster

Six months later... Dear cyclists,



Smile! You're on cycle camera.

Bury based teacher and technical writer *Alex Bailey* looks at the growing culture of cycle-mounted cameras.

What's the worst thing that's happened to you while cycling?
A dangerously close overtake? A crash?

How did you feel afterwards? Did you report the incident to an insurer, or to the police? Did they accept your story, or did they question it? Did you wonder if you'd done something wrong? Did you doubt your own recollection of the event?

Would it have helped to have had access to a video showing exactly what happened?

Two GMCC members, Ted from Stockport and Grahame from Bolton, have just that because they record every second of every journey they make using cycle cameras. I asked why they'd invested in the technology. Is their footage as a kind of insurance policy? And are there any downsides to cycle cameras, or should we welcome them as a the rich source of evidence for our campaigning?

Ted has been recording his journeys for eighteen months "in case of incident". The move came after a near miss with a lorry which he attempted to report with limited success. "I phoned the owner straightaway but got short shrift," says Ted. "So I phoned the police and got ditto. So I went to a police station, where I got ditto, until I insisted they took a statement. All I wanted was for the driver to be made fully aware of what he'd nearly caused. It would have been so much easier with cam footage."

The only downside to owning a camera is the initial expense, Ted says. It doesn't take up much time because he replays the footage only if he's involved in an incident – and, thankfully, there have been very few. His camera, the RoadHawk RIDE, is well suited to this kind of use, because it records in five minute segments, automatically overwriting the oldest files; most of Ted's footage is deleted in this way and never needs to be watched.

You could call Ted a private camera user; although he uses his camera every day, he would only share the footage if something serious happened. By contrast, Grahame shares his footage extensively, on YouTube, on his blog and on Twitter.

On the streets of Bolton, Grahame's cameras capture scenes of aggression and bad driving, which he is able to shrug off because he knows he can deal with them later using his footage. Crucially, that review process is not a solitary experience but a communal one, involving cyclists across the internet. It's clear that this connection with the community is what motivates him. "I look at other people's incidents and learn from them," Grahame writes on his blog. "I also get feedback on my own video clips from other experienced

cyclists. Actually, it turns out that this has been by far the most valuable aspect.”

But he is also motivated by “retribution” (his word) to publish videos of aggressive motorists along with their car registration plates. “Yes, it feels good to be able to ‘name and shame’ drivers who do bad things to me.”

“The main downside, if one posts on YouTube, is the time it takes up, which can be a lot.” Nonetheless, being part of the online helmet cam community has kept him cycling to work. “Without the cameras, I may well have given up.”

While the downside of cycle cameras for Ted was the cost, Grahame’s cameras have probably paid for themselves, through their evidence gathering capability. In 2013 Grahame was waiting at a roundabout for a gap in the traffic when a motorist drove into him. He was uninjured but needed a new bike. A rear-facing cycle camera captured the whole incident. “The driver’s insurance company didn’t argue after I showed them just some stills taken from the video,” he says.

Unsurprisingly then, Grahame too would welcome the wider use of cycle cameras. “I would like to see more, if only to demonstrate that the experiences seen on YouTube are not unique to those few who currently use cameras.” As Grahame puts it, some drivers seem to have forgotten they’re operating dangerous machinery in a public place.

Having more cycle camera footage online is not the endgame though. “I would much rather see more cyclists applying the Bikeability principles and not riding in the gutter – at least until we have decent infrastructure.” While Ted and Grahame have different purposes for their footage, they create it to convince others that they’re telling the truth when they report bad driving.

So does society not believe cyclists who report driver aggression? If not, why not, and what would it take to get our legal system – and our insurers – working for us? Cyclists are equal in status to drivers. It follows that our reports are equally credible, and need to be taken seriously – whether or not they are supported by video evidence. 🚲



Ted’s helmet mounted Roadhawk RIDE

Review: Roadhawk RIDE

I'd like to see more helmet cams on cyclists' heads, so here's a little review of the RoadHawk RIDE I've been using on my daily commute for about 18 months now.

Good points first. The RoadHawk RIDE is:

- **Very lightweight.** You don't know you're wearing it. If you wanted both front and rear recording you could fit two cameras on your helmet and still not know.
- **Compact and robust.** I leave mine permanently attached to the helmet and the camera takes whatever treatment the helmet gets.
- **Small and unobtrusive.** It's tinier than a lot of LED lamps, which is what most people think it is.
- **Secure.** Its lightness and the strong velcro straps provided mean it could never unintentionally come off your helmet.
- **Simple.** There's only one external control, a button which you press to start and stop recording.
- **Convenient.** All you need to do is remember to start the camera recording at the beginning of your commute, and to charge the battery at the end, which you do by unscrewing the end cap and plugging it in to a USB socket.



by *Ted Lawson*

When it's recording, it begins a new video file every five minutes, overwriting the oldest file on the card if there's no free space left. It can store several hours of video, which is more than its battery life, so if you had the misfortune to be incapacitated in a road incident, and couldn't switch the camera off, the battery would run out well before the video of the event was overwritten, and your evidence would be preserved.

It has a few down sides:

- It's hopeless in the dark, even with streetlights, when number plates can be difficult to make out even though lit.
- The picture quality is OK but it could be better.
- There's no beep or anything when you press the on/off button, just a blue light that comes on, so you can't be sure the camera is recording without taking your helmet off and looking at it.
- The battery charge lasts about an hour, which is OK for a 10 mile daily commute, but not much more.
- It records almost no sound if you have the waterproof cap on.
- The battery is inaccessible and so may not be replaceable when it eventually wears out.
- To date it's captured one or two nearish misses and several scenes of unprovoked driver rudeness, though nothing life threatening (touch wood).

When I bought the RoadHawk RIDE in May 2013, it seemed the best value for money helmet cam at the time, but it could be that there are now better ones out there. YouTube is a good source of reviews and examples of footage. 🚲

No Boris... but plenty of bikes for hire in Greater Manchester

There has been a huge growth in public cycle hire schemes in the past few years, *Vincent Walsh* casts an eye around the UK and then to Greater Manchester's rental enterprises.

Traditionally hiring a bike was something we did on holiday or on days out in the Peak District exploring the Tissington or High Peak Trails. Until Sky Rides came along for non-cyclists this would often be their first cycling experience in a traffic-free environment.

In recent years bike hire has moved from the country to the city. Inspired by the Paris Velib scheme. London led the way with Boris Bikes. It was the idea of his Mayoral predecessor, Ken Livingstone, like the Congestion Charge but Ken lost office before London Cycle Hire was launched in July 2010. Barclays sponsorship of £25m will end this year with Santander Bank and Coca Cola rumoured as replacements. There are now almost 11,000 bikes at 750 docking stations which generate about 10 million trips annually. It costs £2 to access the bikes by credit/debit card for 24 hours (or pay £90 annual membership) and the first 30 minutes of each journey is free. Return the bike to any station - as long as there is a free space. Longer journeys cost £2 for each extra 30 minutes thus the scheme encourages short trips. Last Easter I tried a Boris Bike cycling around South Kensington, Hyde Park, and The Mall. I went further afield rising early for a dawn ride along the Embankment....bliss.

Despite sponsorship Boris Bikes do not pay their way, each trip is subsidised by £2, totaling £133m from TfL (Transport for London) over the past four years. For the Mayor it justifies his Vision, "the normalization of cycling, making it something everyone feels comfortable doing.....an iconic feature of the London streetscape." Boris Bikers are not predominately born-again motorists - only 3% have swapped their cars, 57% have forsaken public transport. Its supporters claim this frees up vital space for motorists reluctant to use crowded buses and tubes. Other benefits are shorter journey times, reduced carbon emissions, improved health and lower mortality (we all know cyclists live longer). Alex Bailey lived in London for ten years and saw the introduction of the city's hire scheme. "At first, I scoffed at the concept, assuming the bikes would quickly become shabby but I came to be impressed with the whole system including the docking stations and the electric trucks that deliver fresh bikes and collect broken ones." Neil Fergusson agrees, "I've found this the most fun and quickest way to get round London but unless you know a good safe route the traffic can be hair raising. The bikes are clunky but that means they are robust. I lived in Glasgow for seven years and I would not describe it as a cycling

city. So I was delighted and surprised when they introduced nextbike's public hire scheme in June 2014 to coincide with the Commonwealth Games. It's quite a low tech system, docking stations are simply Sheffield stands and the locks are loop combination locks."

Boris Bikes will not be coming to Greater Manchester any time soon - perhaps wary of the TfL-size subsidies. At a meeting in June 2014, TfGM's transport strategy director, Dave Newton, said it had studied cycle hire schemes but they were not a priority for their cycling strategy. He said: "We know the operational costs of introducing and maintaining this could be very high, and therefore could take funding away from other initiatives that help to develop cycling across a wider area and benefit a larger number of people. However, we are very open to working with partner organisations to consider how a more self-financing scheme might work in Greater Manchester." TfGM's reluctance to back cycle hire may be reinforced by the initial low membership of their Cycle Hubs at Ashton-under-Lyne, Bury, Rochdale and City Tower, Manchester.

Liverpool has been bolder, investing £1.5m of its £2.8m LSTF grant in its own hire scheme. Launched in May 2014 City Bike will soon have 1000 bikes at 100 stations - the biggest bike hire scheme outside London. On-line registration is daily (£1), weekly (£5) or yearly (£55) which allows you to take out a bike from any station and return it

to any station. Annual members get the first half hour free (similar to London) otherwise pay £1 per hour up to £10 per day. City Bike is operated by Hour Bike who also run similar schemes in six other cities including Reading and Oxford. City Bikes seem to be popular and are regularly seen in the parks and on the promenade according to Alan Johnson of Merseyside Cycling Campaign, " The City Council claim uptake has exceeded expectations. Anecdotally, they have been popular and bikes can be seen in use each day even in winter and on rainy days. " Although we do not have on-street bike hire docking stations there are several private and social enterprises offering off-street services in Greater Manchester.

Pavol Gajdos, a business studies graduate of Salford University provides various bikes for hire including tandems, trailers, cargoes and even an Ad bike. Manchester Bike Hire also has a bike repair service that lends customers a complimentary bicycle for the duration of each repair. His USP is delivering the hire bike to the customer for free in Manchester central zone on a bicycle trailer. The bicycle collection point can be different from the delivery point allowing for one way travel. Manchester Bike Hire opened for business in July 2013 and Pavol has not used a motor vehicle to deliver or collect a hired bike, an inspiring example of zero carbon travel. <http://manchesterbikehire.co.uk/>



Richard Armitage cycles the Wagl cargo bicycle at Manchester Day parade.

In Spring 2014, Pavol teamed up with Hyde-based transport consultant Richard Armitage to create Wagl Last Mile Deliveries offering cargo bicycle deliveries of up to 250 kg within Central and Greater Manchester. “We have been operating a DHL contract for three months, delivering 120 parcels daily with our cargo bikes replacing two DHL vans,” said Richard. Why wagl...? Waggle dance is a figure-eight dance of the honey bee which was incorporated in the city arms in 1842 to symbolize the hive of industry that is Manchester. <http://wagl.co.uk>

The Bike Barn adjacent to Jackson's Boat on the south bank of the Mersey was established by Arek Bartniczak in April 2010. He focuses on family bike hire at weekends, attracted by the proximity of the TransPennine Trail and adjacent water parks. School groups hire the bikes during the week. “Until now most customers would arrive by car or walk across the meadow from Chorlton. The arrival of Metrolink in November 2014 expanded my customer base,” says Arek. Like Manchester Bike Hire he offers a courtesy bike while he repairs yours. It



Above: Delivered to your door, a fully kitted out Manchester Bike Hire bicycle.

is not clear if he delivers it by bike trailer but he does incentivize his employees to cycle to work with a £2 daily bonus, “my employees have more energy and a better attitude throughout the day.” Take note, other bosses. The Barn hosts an annual Bike Village usually in May. <http://www.the-bike-barn.co.uk>

Bike & Go is operated by Northern Rail in our region and sister ToCs (Train Operating Companies) elsewhere. It is big on Merseyside, less so in Greater Manchester with bikes at Altrincham, Rochdale, Wigan Wallgate and Wilmslow - also in the North East, Yorkshire, East Anglia and Essex. Annual membership is £10 with a daily

charge of £3.80 for a maximum of three days. Availability at any station can be checked on the website. Bikes keys are collected in exchange for your Bike & Go card from the ticket office. The bike must be returned to the same station within ticket office hours. Two locks are provided. The rental fee is automatically charged at the end of every month. The popularity of Bike & Go is unclear which may account for Northern Rail's reluctance to open new hire facilities in our conurbation. Ian Hall, Marketing Manager commented, “We are still considering Oxford Road and have made recommendations in the next round of bids for Deansgate and Manchester Piccadilly.” He added,



Above left: Then Transport Minister Norman Baker launching the Brompton dock at Manchester Piccadilly station in 2012. Above right: Northern Rail's Bike & Go dock at Rochdale railway station.



“At Victoria (currently in the throes of the Second City Metrolink crossing developments) it continues to prove to be difficult finding a suitable location for any cycling facilities.” They may be located underground on the site of the former Rail Social Club. Similarly Oxford Road station is due major redevelopment as part of the Northern Hub proposals. Manchester cyclists may be confused by the new large empty shed at the back of the Cornerhouse. This will not contain hire bikes (re-located to Blackburn) but provide secure cycle parking. The Northern Rail website explains, “The new secure swipe card access system for cyclists is expected to be

opened during this summer. It will be linked to cycle storage facilities at other Northern stations and can only be launched when all have been completed at Eccles, Salford Crescent, Hazel Grove, Ashton under Lyne and Manchester Oxford Road.” Manchester Piccadilly is owned and managed by Network Rail not Northern Rail. Nonetheless Northern Rail through its Cycle Forum has led the process - with TfGM - to try and resolve the current chaotic state of cycle parking at Piccadilly. <http://www.northernrail.org/travel/cycling/bike-and-go>

Brompton Dock was launched at Piccadilly Rail station in April 2012

and offers 40 bikes for hire. On my weekday winter visit 18 were in use but no more could be accessed until engineer Liam from Nottingham had sorted out the software. Unlike the Northern Rail scheme there is 24 hour access to the bikes which can be returned to any of the 22 docks across the country. Warrington is the only other dock in our region. Annual registration costs £20 and then £2.50 per day. Julian Fox took one on holiday, "I liked the automatic reservation system using your phone once you're a member." <http://www.bromptonbikehire.com>

In central Manchester bikes can be hired from the Bicycle Boutique handily located behind the cyclist-friendly Sandbar on Grosvenor Street. Open seven days a week the BB can offer hybrids and tandems. Customers include students and American tourists. In late January it was quiet, "This week the students are reading rather than cycling," said Jamie. <http://www.bicycleboutiquemcr.co.uk>

Manchester students can cycle for just £1 per week. Biko Bikes is a student-led project, which promotes cycling, offering affordable bicycle rental and teaching maintenance to students. Their workshop is located in the basement of the UM Students' Union on Oxford Road and is (usually) open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 6 - 8pm. Bikes are rented at £1 a week each with a £40 deposit to be returned at the end of the term. <http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/getonyourbike>

At the University of Salford Students' Union, a similar scheme started in September 2013 offering hybrid or mountain bikes starting from £8 for a weekly hire and £26 for four weeks. They are located at the Students' Union building on the Peel Park Campus and is open Tuesday to Thursday. <http://www.salfordstudents.com/mycycle/>

Although the public authorities in Greater Manchester may have shunned bike hire and not followed the route of the mayors of London and Liverpool there are plenty of other outlets offering bikes by the hour/day/week/month/term. Options mirror car hire with courtesy bikes while you await repairs and cargo bikes delivering goods to your commercial customers. There is clearly a market, and what could be next; removals and funeral services? In the meantime can we have more and better located, correctly installed Sheffield Stands for our bikes - owned or hired - please? ♿

Do you believe that cycling in Greater Manchester should be quicker, safer, easier and more enjoyable than it is currently?

Yes? Then join us and help our campaign.

There are many ways you can help the campaign:

▪ **Become a member**

Cycling is stronger when we campaign together, joining our growing membership gives more leverage with policy makers. For new members the first year is free. Please sign up online at <http://www.gmcc.org.uk/join>

▪ **Spread our message**

Don't only tell your cycling family, friend and colleagues about GMCC, but those who'd love to cycle but currently don't feel safe to. We campaign for them too. Safer streets where all can cycle and feel safe is our goal.

▪ **Get involved**

This is a voluntary organisation. We have no staff, nobody gets paid. The vitality of the organisation depends on the dedication of active members, and all are welcome to take part. So whether you have 5 minutes to distribute some handlebar flyers before work, want to write for our website or get involved with the campaign's administration let us know.

▪ **Stay up to date**

Following us on Twitter or Facebook is a good way to find out what's going on around Greater Manchester and what we are doing too.

f/GMCycling

t @GMcycling

www.gmcc.org.uk

