

Police Support officer killed on bike

for your next slogan as you cycle past:
i'm one less car in your next traffic jam

cycle to work - and you'll never commute again

The Great Manchester Cycling Campaign meets on the second Monday of each month, 7.30pm at the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester. Followed by appropriate beverages at the City Arms, Kennedy Street (parallel to Princess Street opposite Town Hall/Tourist Information Centre.)

"The bicycle has been responsible for more movement in manners and morals than anything since Charles the Second. Under it's influence, wholly or in part, have wilted chaperons, long and narrow skirts, tight corsets, hair that would come down, black stockings, thick ankles large hats, prudery and fear of the dark; under its influence, wholly or in part, have bloomed weekends, strong nerves, strong legs, strong language, knickers, knowledge of make and shape, knowledge of woods and pastures, equality of sex, good digestion and professional occupation- in four words, the emancipation of women."
(Galsworthy, 1890)

10am September 11th, a Police Community Support Officer was killed after a lorry 'collided' with his bike.

The officer, who was 21, is the first PCSO to die on duty in Greater Manchester. He was on patrol on a mountain bike when the accident happened at traffic lights at the junction of Atherton Road and Leigh Road in Hindley Green, Wigan. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The driver of the wagon was treated for shock.

It is understood that the PCSO, who was based at Bamfurlong Police Station and lived in Ashton-in-Makerfield, only joined the force in February and was engaged to be married. Assistant Chief Constable Dave Thompson spoke of Greater Manchester Police's 'deep shock and sadness' at the death. He said: "Our thoughts are with his family at this time. We are deeply saddened to lose a member of staff in this way. We want to make sure that his family are looked after and supported in every way."

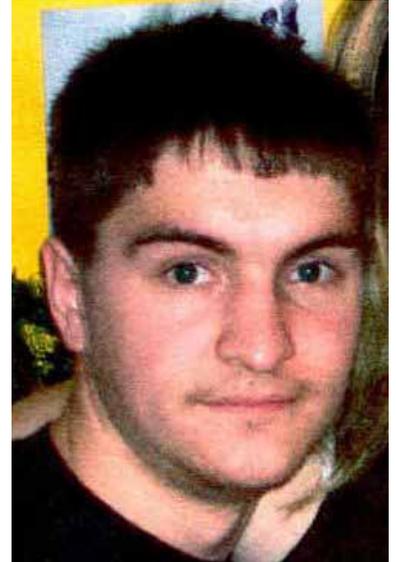
The Health and Safety Executive is investigating the accident, as it is classed as a death at work.

Police are also running their own investigation, with a team at the scene all day.

ACC Thompson added: "The investigation is on-going. PCSOs are a very new, a very important and a very welcome part of policing. We encourage patrolling our officers on pedal cycles."

It is understood that the lorry - carrying waste - was turning left onto Leigh Road at the time of the accident. Witnesses reported that the officer was dragged under the lorry. It is understood that he suffered head injuries.

Florist Angie Mercer said many lorries use the road each day. She said: "Somebody was pipping their horn a lot. You could tell something bad had happened. "I heard the aftermath of it and people were frantic. The policeman was at the rear of the lorry about 5ft away from it. He was not moving. He was in uniform and wearing a helmet. It is a very busy junction and this was an accident waiting to happen." Subsequent to the accident GM Police withdrew all (about 300) of their police officers and support



officers with less than a years experience on the bikes pending a safety review. Those with more than a years experience are being given additional safety advice. The outcome of the safety review and the HSE's report could be crucial to the future of not only our cycling policemen and women but anyone else who cycles as part of their work



Congestion Charging? Yes please - but more for cycling

Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign formally has lent its support to the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority bid to the government's Transport

Innovation Fund. If congestion charging succeeds in reducing traffic levels it should make cycling safer and less stressful. The scheme will encourage some

people who usually drive to work to choose cycling instead. GMCC welcomes the proposal to invest in new cycling facilities for pupils living close to their schools.

(cont. from front page)

In our submission we made three recommendations:

1 Greater Manchester has failed to increase cycling as intended in its first Local Transport Plan (2001/06) because funding has been piecemeal and spread too thinly. We propose that a significant proportion - at least 10 per cent of the revenue generated from congestion charging be allocated to cycling in the following ways:

- Long term advertising campaigns promoting cycling (on the back of buses)

- A programme to improve and maintain secure cycle parking throughout the area

- Consistent enforcement of planning regulations to ensure that secure cycle parking is included in all new building developments

- Integration with public transport including cycle carriage on Metrolink trams and improved cycle carriage on local trains

- Improving and maintaining off-road cycle trails to create proper commuter routes

- Building and maintaining new cycle tracks beside off-road stretches of Metrolink

- Special training for bus drivers to reduce conflict with cyclists in shared road space

- Free cycle training for school pupils

2 Extensions to Metrolink must not result in the loss of existing cycle routes, such as parts of the Trans-Pennine Trail.

3 Transport planners should be mindful that more buses and higher traffic speeds may have a negative impact on cycling.

The GMPTA announced its plans in late May and presented its bid for the £3billion package to the government on 31 July. The intervening consultation began with a leaflet, Our Future Transport – a great move distributed to every household. Lively public discussion ensued. The topic dominated the MEN Postbag, Channel M hosted a debate and Radio Manchester interviewed Critical (cycling) Commuters in Albert Square.

The business community was divided. One faction led by Peel Holdings, owners of the Trafford Centre suggested GM Councils sell Manchester Airport to avoid the need for road pricing. Other leaders led by Urban Splash Tom Bloxham told the MEN, “Brave bid to tackle roads crisis needs our support.”

The anti-congestion charge campaign MART (Manchester Against Road Tax) is unsurprisingly closely linked to the Association of British Drivers. Although 1.8 million signed the national anti CC online petition less

than 14,000 have signed its Greater Manchester equivalent. MART has some strange bedfellows listed on its website. You may expect Tameside and Failsworth Conservatives but Bury Sport and Prestwich Antiques? Another, Safe Speed, are not proponents of a 20 mph default residential limit but sworn enemies of speed cameras. The strangest partner is Manchester Civic Society, committed to “promote Manchester as a world class city in the new millennium” – but with a 19th century transport system?

Senior health officials in the conurbation are united in their backing for the scheme. Sadly their voice has been muted. Steven Watkins, Stockport’s Director of Public Health and Chair of the BMA Health and Transport Group told Pothole, “The DPHs of Greater Manchester are collectively supportive of congestion charging. We believe the TIF bid needs to be modified so as to include a greater element of support for walking and cycling and for orbital public transport.” Arguments raged about polling results. GMPTE claimed “a clear consensus from those polled when asked about the principle of submitting a TIF bid for Greater Manchester subject to

further consultation on the detailed strategy in time: 68% of residents and 60% of businesses supported this course of action.” Even a sceptical MEN concluded, “The congestion charge is a bitter pill to swallow but preceded by a huge programme of public transport improvements is something the public is now ready to accept.” In the final GMPTA vote on 27 July two councils, Liberal Democratic Stockport and Tory Trafford opposed the other eight. So what next? The bid will now be the subject of discussions between the Department for Transport and Greater Manchester officials. It is anticipated the DfT will make an official announcement in December/January.

Even its supporters concede the TIF bid continues to be shrouded in secrecy. Our mole inside GMPTA tells us that of the £3bn package £50 million is earmarked for behaviour change of which £20 million will be for cycling. How to achieve a shift to more active transport modes of walking and cycling? Sustrans could help. Their TravelSmart projects invest in behaviour change/personalised journey planning and cycle networks. Research shows it is cost effective in terms of modal shift and wider health outcomes.

Vincent Walsh

In Search of the National Cycle Museum

Is there – was there ever – a National Cycle Museum? Do I recall pedalling from Sheffield to visit one in Lincoln during the 1980s? John and Sue Middleton showed no sign of recognition when we met in July in Cornwall. The couple moved from North Hykeham in Lincolnshire in 1988. Four years later they opened the British Cycling Museum in the former Camelford Station. Without any official support they struggled to survive in the early days helped by donations from eminent cyclists including Chris Boardman. Some End-to-Enders call in but John is disappointed by the meanness of cyclists. “They are happy to pay thousands for a new frame but begrudge my £3.35 admission charge.” Some don’t make it to the museum. On the wall a news cutting mourns one Stockport charity cyclist killed less than two hours from Lands End.

The place is an anorak’s delight: 900 cycling medals, fobs and club badges from 1881. Displays of puncture repairing, carbide, candle and battery cycle lighting. Showcases of oil tins, inflators, pop bottles and Ye Olde Cycle Workshop with tools and jigs. The Middleton’s pride and joy is in the main exhibition hall, a grassy dais housing a display of picnicking manikins surrounded by Victorian tricycles and quadracycle. There is a good range of cards for sale including “Solid-tyred, Cross-Framed Safety Bicycle c.1887.” This card caused one customer some consternation. Sue had to call a local constable to encourage the gentleman



coax retired engineer John away from the classified ads to pose beside his furniture, including a love chair, created from hundreds of chainrings.

The **British Cycling Museum** (one mile north of Camelford on the B3266 Boscastle Road) is open Sundays to Thursdays 10 am – 5 pm (tel 01840 212811)

to leave. It is not clear if the cause of his excitement was the innovatory frame or the female rider - clad only in suspenders and whip.

On the morning of my visit business was quiet. I managed to

A rival for the title of “the nation’s foremost museum of cycling history” is the **National Cycle Collection** at Llandrindod Wells, Powys Mid-Wales

Open March – October (free admission to CTC members) www.cyclemuseum.org.uk

Vincent Walsh goes back to (Cycling) School

BikeRight is booming. The social enterprise that started in a Chorlton garage in 2000 now has a centre in Openshaw and a pool of 35 instructors. Best known for its work with children delivering the new National Cycling Standard (aka Bikeability) to schools across the northwest, it trained over 3700 people – including adults – last year.

Tutor Helen has been training for eight years, “turning a hobby into a job.” Instructor Pat is a “resting actor,” a recent recruit to BikeRight. Most of their time is spent in schools, starting in the playground but not stopping there. The children soon demanding, “When can we go on a bike ride?”

BikeRight trains adults in various guises: St Johns Ambulance staff, Street Wardens in Newton Heath and Manchester Park Wardens. Individuals can also sign up for lessons: I joined a group on a summer evening in the Velodrome car park. Students had come from all over, some with their own bikes – or BikeRight provides one. Nell, 58 from Sale had found BikeRight on the Internet, 12-year-old Declan had heard via school, Suzy saw a poster at the College of Music where she works. Dionne from Whalley Range was forbidden a bike as a child because her parents considered the roads too dangerous – in the 1950s. Fallowfield-based Rosemary studies accountancy during the day, at weekends she serves tea at Manchester Royal Infirmary. Rosemary was taking advantage of a subsidy granted to MRI staff who want to learn to cycle. Our Bikeability session began at Level 1 off-road basic handling skills progressing to Level 2 riding on simple junctions nearby. In the old days of cycling proficiency you rarely ventured outside the school gate. Level 3 classes involves complex junctions. Helmets are optional for adult pupils but mandatory for schoolchildren. After 90 warm minutes it was water bottles all round and promises of certificates in the post. I was envious – 40 years earlier I gained my green Cycling Proficiency pennant at the *second* attempt when a kind Traffic Cop moved the cones further apart. Bike sheds have moved on



since my youth. Transparent locked shelters equipped with Sheffield Stands are available to schools that submit Travel Plans to the local authority. A fine example is at Whalley Range High School in Manchester.

Bikeability is the Cycling Proficiency Test for the 21st century, designed to give the next generation the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads. The vision, “more children, cycling more safely, more often.” Instruction must meet new National Standards for Cycle Training developed by 20 organisations led by CTC. By 2009 half of all Y6 children will have access to Bikeability, by 2012 it will be all. Government funding focuses on Level 2, enabling children to cycle to school on quieter roads. Instructors are accredited by approved centres including BikeRight. Their four-day course costs £500 but CTC bursaries are available www.bikeright.co.uk

Cycling England co-ordinates the development of cycling since the demise of the National Cycling Strategy Board in 2005. On the new board sit the great and good including CTC director Kevin Mayne and Sustrans John Grimshaw. Cycling England is planning the national roll-out of Bikeability. Manchester, pioneers in their adoption of National Standard Cycle Training has been



invited to be the one of the first councils to host a regional launch on 8 June. The presence of Chair Philip Darnton is testimony to the work of Liz Clarke and BikeRight here in the northwest.

P.S. The focus on training by Cycling England has been vindicated by recent research. Consultants SQW found that cycle training was three times more effective than road schemes in encouraging cycling.

Vincent Walsh

Considerate Cyclist joins Critical Commute

The Critical Commute in May was enlivened by a cycling celebrity. Telford-based Daniel Cadden was convicted in August 2006 for “inconsiderate cycling” while riding on the highway instead of using an adjacent unsuitable bike lane. His appeal at Shrewsbury Crown Court in January supported by CTC and the Cyclists Defence Fund was successful. On 25 May Daniel joined the Manchester Critical Commute at Chorlton Green, maintaining a gentle 10 mph on his Kalkhoff



folder into Albert Square. He was the very model of politeness. Daniel modestly agreed to be photographed beside the Prince Consort, “I am soon moving to the northwest and intend to become a regular Critical Commuter.”

Join Daniel and others on the last Friday each month at 8 am at Chorlton Green, Withington Library, Prestwich Pizza Express or Levenshulme Station to ride into Albert Square, followed by coffee and cake.

The Spokes Bicycle Dance Troupe

It started in the US with The Sprockettes and the BC:Clettes, but now the UK has its very own bicycle dance troupe. And with its amazing choreography, amazing tricks- not to mention its racy outfits - it's the perfect pastime for feminists with attitude.

Blurs of green and black whiz by accompanied by the sounds of whirring bike chains and cheers from a large crowd. The Spokes' first performance after Manchester Critical Mass, a monthly bike ride in Manchester, was amazing. There is little prancing about and no one could say they were sissy's, instead they did fantastic stunts standing on their bikes and synchronised moves that made the audience gasp and cheer. Nes one of The Spokes says, "We aren't your regular dance troupe that is all about sex appeal and looking good. We love riding bikes and riding together and were inspired by the US bike dancers that are able to have fun on bikes whilst entertaining people."

They may claim not to be about sex appeal and looking good but



they definitely do: they are sweaty, talented, passionate women with a definite feminist edge. Not only do they want to entertain they

also have a mini manifesto that states their aims to:

- *Promote bicycle riding,
- *Promote riding bikes as a mode of transport that is safer, more sociable, more rewarding, more fun, less damaging to ourselves and the people and environment around us than car culture,
- *Promote positive self image for people no matter what their body shape or appearance, and to celebrate the empowerment of women,
- *Encourage health and fun exercise that isn't in boring expensive gyms,
- *Encourage more women to ride bikes and enjoy doing so

The Spokes formed in August this year, and they have already done their first performances and getting booking requests for events in Manchester and all around the UK. "I had heard about The Sprockettes, a bike dance troupe in Portland Oregon, and I loved the celebration of bicycles and it looked so much fun. I'd never done any tricks on a bike before. What I love is that it's a do-it-yourself thing, with women at the helm," says Nes. They choreographed their own routines and many of them had never attempted any tricks on bikes before joining, but you wouldn't know!

They practise in Longford Park in Chorlton on a tarmac basketball court where, they told me, they learnt fast that it hurts to get the

moves wrong. They ride children's bikes "Kids bikes are best because it means that we need a smaller space to perform in, it also means we can turn tighter and they're generally better for our routines" says Jane who rides a lilac mini shopper.

"I love being in The Spokes, it's so much fun to ride bikes in this way that's totally fun and entertaining and new in Britain. But it's also great that it's all women. We have a great support group of amazing women around us," says Kelda. "We are always on the lookout for new ladies to join us, you don't have to be a dancer or have to have loads of tricks up your sleeves because we all support each other and teach each other stuff and come up with ideas of stuff to do together", says Jane, "it would be great for The Spokes to get bigger and bigger!". If you want to join The Spokes then email them at info@ibikemcr.org.uk.

Up and coming performances: Friday 19th October 1pm-5pm Whitworth Park, Manchester (opp MRI) Saturday 20th October London Bicycle Film Festival Saturday 27th October Manchester Temporary Arts exhibition cabaret see www.forbiddenartsmanchester.org.uk for info

More info: Email: info@ibikemcr.org.uk Web: www.ibikemcr.org.uk www.myspace.com/thespokesmcr



The great and the good of Greater Manchester's cycling fraternity were summoned to Abbey Hey Primary School, Gorton in June for the north west regional launch of Bikeability. In the playground BikeRight instructors put Y6 – and Mayor David Sandiford – through their paces before we were summoned into the school hall. The key note address was by Philip Darnton, Chair of Cycling England which co-ordinates the development of cycling across England. Its mission, "to create the conditions which will result in more people cycling, more safely, more often." A key component of this strategy is Bikeability, "the Cycling Proficiency Test for the 21st century, designed to give the next generation the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads." Philip focuses on winning over Mums to ride with their children to school rather than drive them."

They are encouraged to achieve all three Bikeability levels 1 red, 2 amber and 3 green. At primary school the aim is for pupils to gain Level 2 giving them the skills and confidence to ride from home to school on minor roads." The government is providing £5m per annum funding.

Of the five Manchester MPs invited, one attended – by car. John Leech, Lib Dem member for Withington however has good green credentials, being the sponsor of a parliamentary bill to impose a 20 mph speed limit in all residential areas. "I learnt to ride in my back garden from the age of four. But today I have to drive to another appointment at Siemens." Councillor Mike Kane, chair of the Manchester Cycle Forum pedaled across from his Northenden Ward. "Growing up in Wythenshawe my first bike was a Tomahawk – the poor man's



Cycling Proficiency is (almost) dead, Long Live Bikeability

Chopper but it was good enough to get me to Tatton Hall and Dunham Massey – unaccompanied by adults." Bikeability is now the benchmark for cycle training but the old green pennant still flies in some corners of our conurbation. Trafford proudly offers the Cy-

cling Proficiency Test to 58 of its 62 primary schools. Although reluctant to accept Bikeability Trafford officers clearly could not resist the (Manchester) council cakes on offer at the launch. More information log on to: www.cyclingengland.co.uk and: www.bikeability.org.uk

What is a Proper Cyclist?

Peter Cox is well known on the cycling conference circuit. A senior lecturer in social and communication studies at Chester University he spoke at the autumn 2005 CCN conference in Warrington and Velo-City in Dublin earlier that year. His Dublin paper "Conflicting Agendas in Selling Cycling" is sprinkled with academic speak, "the cycle has been problematised as a technology revealed not as an immaculately conceived product, arriving *ex nihilo*, as it were, but taking its form, development and possibility from the outcome of a complex interaction of forces, often unexpected and rarely rational." Dr Cox can be forgiven as he does dissect cycling in an interesting way. Is all cycling good cycling – and always and everywhere to be encouraged? Can ventures such as the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative aid GMCC efforts to make the roads of Greater Manchester more attractive for (new) cyclists – or is it just another shop flogging consumer goods?

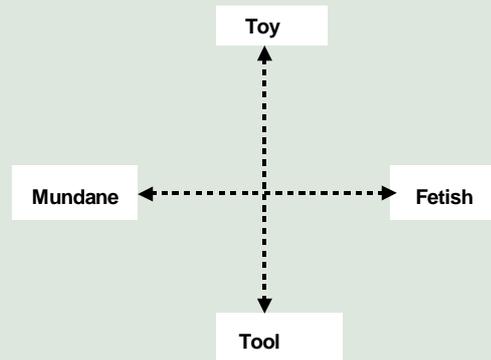
Cox point out that is not enough to train the whole population to a new CTC standard to create mass modal shift, "a perfectly able rider who perceives their cycle primarily as a means of leisure will not (necessarily) adopt the cycle as a commuting tool." The bicycle has to be recognised as a product, its symbolic value as or more important than its practical use. The

cycle industry is a fashion industry. The first perception mapped is *Cycling as Play*, which minimises stress on skills and knowledge. It can potentially provide independent mobility to children, but the emphasis is on fun, "an unstructured leisure pastime sold as a feature within family holiday packages". "The playing cyclist must be protected from any harm. Cycling is disconnected from other social factors and provision of facilities is not linked to any structured furtherance of mobility."

For others cycling is an *Active Pastime*, a lifestyle choice by which goals of fitness of health may be achieved. These cyclists "form the core of industry sales, receptive to the innovation and technology change accompanying built-in obsolescence." Manufacturers create an image of cycling as a leisure activity with parallels in skiing, snowboarding and windsurfing.

Cycling as Transport embraces utilitarian campaigning cyclists who stress the practical benefits of beating congestion, reducing pollution and enhancing quality of life. Cox believes Sustrans has little to offer them, "The creation of off-road facilities is generally irrelevant to the needs of the majority of transport cyclists. Mobility relies on transport from A to B; a purpose served by

definition through existing road networks." Encouragement of cycle transport requires a reduction in the perceptions of fear constructed around cycling. Cox suggests that an unintended consequence of the current training bandwagon is it "increases the perception of road cycling as inherently dangerous." Do our European neighbours focus on structured training or just promote cycling within the family as a normal activity such as walking? Result – a critical mass who eschew helmets. The final category is *Organised Sport*. In its road-based form it remains almost entirely unaffected by infrastructure provision, relying on continued co-operation with police and traffic authorities. Away from roads it requires investment in tracks, circuits and velodromes. These four perceptions create four different frameworks that cause major problems in selling cycling to a wider audience and selling cycling as transport to existing cyclists. Fox concludes, "just because a person cycled does not mean they share common cause with another cyclist." He maps the meaning and value attached to cycles in a grid:



At one extreme the bicycle can be seen as a mundane tool for delivering mail, at the other as a fetish revered within sections of the environmental movement. Multiple cycle ownership reflects the variety of forms and meanings of cycling and the conflicting agendas that cannot be resolved within a single machine. Investment in leisure will not necessarily generate cycle commuting – indeed it may generate extra motor travel if the bikes are carried by car to the cycling facility. As we approach Bike Week it is wise to heed Cox's warning, "it cannot be assumed that a promotional event or show drawing primarily from one area of the cycling world (such as stunt riders in St Anne's Square) will have any impact on other areas" (such as the number of Manchester children riding to school.") The full paper can be read at: http://www.chester.ac.uk/scs/documents/cox_competing.pdf Vincent Walsh

In Cateaton Street Without My Car

For the uninitiated, 22nd September is In Town Without My Car day across Europe, the culmination of European Mobility Week which is, according to the official website, for 'a world of sustainable transportation'. According to the guidance, a core element of the day is the closure of a road, preferably a major one, to highlight the benefits of reclaiming space from cars.

It was Manchester FoE who kicked off ITWMC in Manchester, back in 2001, and Manchester City Council took over the baton the following year. This year Manchester and Salford Council held a joint event, closing off Cateaton Street and Victoria Bridge Street, two small roads either side of Deansgate. Neither has much traffic normally, but they are, nonetheless, roads.

I've been asked to provide an initial reaction for Pothole. I went down without my bike (I don't have a car, but being bikeless counted as my personal sacrifice). Those of you who know me will know I wear a number of hats, so I must stress that this article is my personal opinion.

For the day, they installed on Cateaton Street some rather imposing tents (good for weather-proofing, but not so good for looking approachable) in which groups such as Manchester FoE, Oxfam and AFSL had campaign stalls and other organisations promoted car sharing and green businesses. On Victoria Bridge Street, punters could take part in Zorbing (rolling down a hill in a giant plastic ball) and wall climbing.

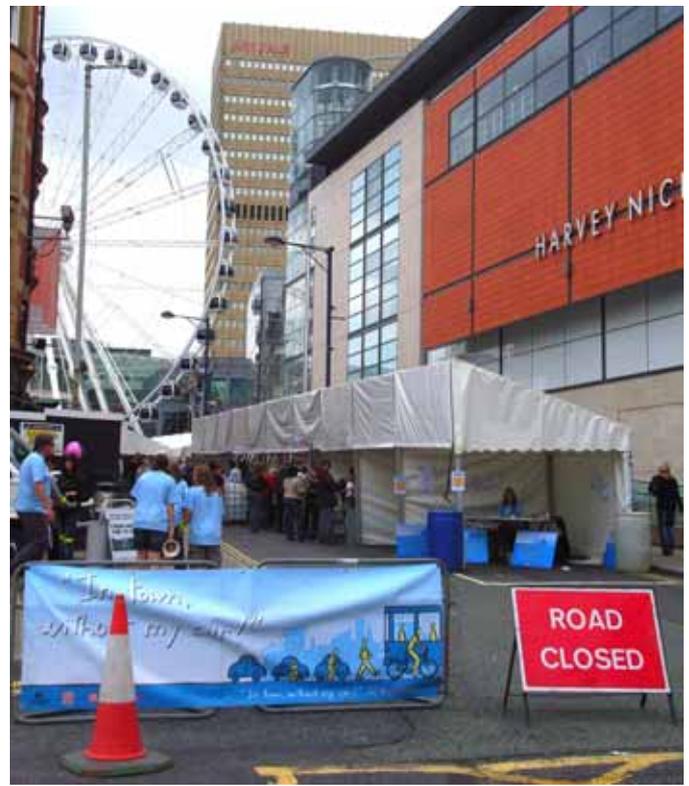
During the event, I had the opportunity to talk to many of the people who were milling round the event. One thing that was very clearly noticeable was that people were not expecting it. Very few had seen any publicity in the run

up to the event. One had come in on the Metrolink and there had been a string quartet playing, and she had not realised that it was part of the ITWMC celebrations - until it was reported later in the paper. Many people walking down the narrow gangway in between the tents and the pub didn't know what was going on and the people whose Saturday afternoon beer drinking was being overshadowed by beige canvas and smiling campaigners seemed rather bemused. Still, when we did speak to people they nodded their heads to the idea of reducing car use in general, but many of them were already walking back to the car park.

Another thing people didn't know, was that this area will form part of the proposed Irwell City Park, which would apparently involve making the area more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. However, the team who were meant to be promoting this at the event, didn't turn up - a missed opportunity to actually put some context on the event.

Some campaigners seem to subscribe to the idea that ITWMC is solely about promoting sustainable transport and that any thing, such as for example Zorbing, is a distraction (unless of course the council is intending to increase the slope of Palatine Road and install a 'Park and Zorb' site in Northenden, strapping in commuters eager to try out congestion-charge-free zorbing). I don't agree with this perspective entirely, as I prefer to see it as setting an example of what a few kilometers of boring tarmac could be used for if those pesky cars were out of the way - so there is room for zorbing, as is there for street cafes, five-a-side tournaments, Salsa sessions and string quartets.

This needs to be balanced with messages about sustainable transport with an advertising campaign that tells people why it is important. But a car-free event that consisted only of stalls of people talking about bikes and car sharing would be, apologies to all my fellow transport fanatics, boring as hell to most people, just as a street party with no message is a missed-opportunity to tell people in a fun way that time is nearly up for our beloved cars and demonstrate that there are alternatives. Many people walking by were



pleased that the council were doing something, once people involved in the event explained what it was about, and I guess there was a bit of a mixture between having fun and getting the message across. But, joking about parking and zorbing aside, where were the demonstrations of proper alternatives to the car? Where were the mass bike rides along a car-free Deansgate? Where were the guided walks around the city? In London on the 23rd, around 30 thousand cyclists rode on a 14km route made car-free for the day.

I can't speak for everyone, but I think the Council would be pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm of the cycling community to join in such an event if it made the bold move of closing Deansgate. Yeah, I know businesses complain, but Deansgate is closed for Pride marches and Marathons and the stock market doesn't crash - in fact lots of people come out to play and spend money in the area. It should be encouraging for the

council to know that people were generally supportive, when we explained that this was about demonstrating the need to reduce traffic. I was glad that Manchester had done something to promote the occasion and to join in with the European day of awareness, but as I was walking away from the event, it was the normal chaos of vehicles queuing to get out of the city-centre car parks. Against the Saturday afternoon shopping trip, the ITWMC event day was a sideshow. We spoke to a few people, they nodded their heads, but I find myself doubting if much will change. These sort of events, coordinated across the continent, open up a small window of time to shout an important message. Manchester whispered, in a corner. To me that is a missed opportunity. There was nothing particularly wrong with the message that was whispered, but few heard it. The lesson is clear to me: next year's must be bigger, bolder and better publicised.

Graeme Sherriff



Rod King's Address to the North West Cycle Planning Seminar in Liverpool Cycling Advocacy – Time to Change Gear

All of us are advocates of cycling. What are our objectives?

- Better cycling for those who cycle
- Cheaper traveling for those who cannot afford a car
- Faster travel for those who wish to beat congestion
- Healthier travel
- Greener travel

All of us are involved with a wide range of tactics which will help to achieve these. We create cycle maps, we train youngsters, we create cycle lanes and facilities, we create Safe Routes to Schools, we organise rides.

Yet we know that statistically we are not breaking through. Cycling is reducing as a modal percentage of travel. And even if we get a small increase in cycle usage it is swamped by the ongoing rise of the motor car for its convenience, cheapness and speed. And any increase in cycling for leisure purposes does not have any green or decongestion effect, but merely adds journeys on our roads.

We need to recognise some very real issues in our current campaigning:-

- 1) Cycle Lanes and facilities currently only comprise about 1-2% of our roads in towns. It is simply not possible to increase this so that journeys become practical on off-road routes.
- 2) All our efforts to make cycling safer through training courses or safety equipment merely reinforces the dangers and transfers the responsibility for that danger onto the cyclist.
- 3) Once we discount cycling for leisure then cycling for transport is probably reducing.

Yet equally we also recognise that there is a large aspiration to cycle. The cycle industry is showing unprecedented levels of growth. There is a very large elephant in the room which we fail to acknowledge. And that is the disregard throughout local and central government for an equitable sharing of our roads. Whilst many of us are involved in Local Transport Plans that purport to favour cyclists and pedestrians, the constant pressure to maximise throughput, vehicular capacity and maintain high vehicle speeds in

our town belies that boldly stated precedence of pedestrians and cyclists first, and motor vehicles last. How often have you been involved with cycle facilities at junctions which introduce inconvenience and danger to cyclists rather than simply slowing the motor vehicles down to a safe speed where they can share that junction equitably?

We must accept that the British public is frightened to cycle on our streets, which we call roads lest anyone should imagine that they are to be used by mere people. That is borne out by the fact that we have the highest percentage pedestrian deaths in Europe. There is no way that we can radically increase cycling without addressing that fear and making a substantial shift in the way that roads are shared. I will boldly predict that this will be demonstrated by our Cycling Demonstration Towns which will not show any real increase in cycling unless they incorporate such a shift. This is also shown in the increased cycling in London which has taken Congestion Charging to promote cycling and also unfortunately Buses on Buses to add to the incentive for modal shift.

So what can we do as cycling advocates to make such a change? Firstly we must start talking about the morality of placing motorist needs above our young, who are not allowed to drive, our poor who cannot afford to drive, and those who simply do not wish to drive. We have gone too far in preserving the rights of motorists to convenient and high speed travel and must now reduce those rights in favour of pedestrians and cyclists.

We must implement 20mph in all residential and urban areas as the default maximum speed limit. This is the norm in Northern Europe and is the foundation of their cycle friendly towns, cities and villages. How can we expect to increase cycling levels when we are asked to co-exist with vehicles traveling 60% faster than in Northern Europe? Some towns such as Portsmouth have taken the initiative to make such a change and the recent require-

ment for all local authorities to reassess road maximum speeds and implement 20mph without physical calming is an excellent opportunity.

20 mph sets the new standard for where people live. 30 mph will be seen for what it is, 50% faster and with 3 times the differential speed between motor vehicles and cyclists. But this must be accompanied by community level debate to ensure that such policies are driven by community needs for independent travel for our children and a better environment. Our research at Warrington Cycle Campaign shows that over 80% of the public questioned wanted 20 mph as a maximum on the road where they live. Twenty's Plenty must become the central policy for cycle campaigning in all our towns and cities.

If we are to reduce the on car dependency then it is necessary to go even further. There is no point in using modal shift to reduce the number of cars on the roads if this merely reduces congestion and attracts more motorists to fill the congestion gap so created. If we wish to reduce pollution, greenhouse gases and car dependency then we must make radical changes to the cost and convenience of using personal motor transport. For too long cycling advocates have not wanted to "rock" the motoring boat. We have stood at the sidelines hoping that a few facilities here, a better junction there, and a few thousand pounds for cycle training or promotion will help our cause and entice a few more people to take up cycling.

Frankly, we are wasting our time, our efforts and our taxpayer's money. It is time to confront those who think the answer lies in paying lip service to encouraging cycling yet also prolong the dependency of our communities on motor vehicles.

We are living in a post-Stern world with increasing concerns about both the result of using fossil fuels on our environment and also the not insignificant problem of who to buy them from and the cost associated. We must ask ourselves whether as



cycle advocates we wish to continue the soft involvement with facilities, training and encouragement with some satisfaction and little real results. Or do we take the harder route of confronting the demons and vested interests - and make a real difference in the ability of our children and adults to enjoy the freedom to cycle.

I believe that the time is right to challenge the morality of continuing with transport policies which disenfranchise pedestrians and cyclists of the right to safe and equitable use of our roads. We must confront prejudice against cyclists wherever it exists. To put the needs of motorists above those who cycle or walk is unjust and unsustainable. The modal hierarchy that puts pedestrians and cyclists first in transport must be enforced.

We must demand the implementation of 20mph as the default maximum speed on all urban and residential roads. Where higher maximum speeds are proposed then this should only be allowed where safe facilities exist for cyclists and pedestrians.

And for those who say that this will be simply too hard and the fight is against too many vested and commercial interests I would simply remind you that we are today in a city which built its prosperity on the slave trade which was in time seen to be morally unjustifiable. 200 years ago William Wilberforce was undaunted by such challenges.

Putting the convenience of motorists before the rights of our children to use the roads safely and without fear is a considerable wrong that also needs putting right. To adapt a quote by J. F. Kennedy: - "we should ask ourselves not what the cyclist can do to avoid the car, but what the car can do to avoid the cyclist". And most of all remember that cyclists are not a transport problem, they are the transport solution.

Letters

To: Manchester Friends of the Earth
 Sent: Wednesday, 12 September, 2007 8:53 AM
 Subject: MFoE: Free Bike Tagging worth £30.

Please could you let everyone know that we will be electronically tagging bikes free of charge at the event in Whitworth Park - Friday 19th October 1pm-5pm Whitworth Park, Manchester (opp MRI)

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 Crime and Disorder Team
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I write with regards to the article featured recently in the summer edition of Pothole featuring the North West Ambulance Service Cycle Response Unit. I have just had sight of the piece and must say both Tony and myself are disappointed with the content. Following the liaison between us I was under the impression the piece would be balanced and supportive of the scheme. However, I found the article to be quite mocking of the service and the work Ian (and his colleagues) carry out. I would also like to clarify once again that the reason you were not permitted to 'ride shotgun' with Ian is due to the serious health and safety risks as well as legal implications to both yourself and the Trust. It certainly wasn't Ian's manager saying no to be awkward.

Charlotte Tyler
 Communications Manager
 North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust

On a positive note a friend recounted to me the tale of a bus driver in London passing very close to a cyclist friend of his. The cyclist caught up and vented at the driver who tried to punch him out of his cab window and then tried to force him off the road. As the bus got snagged in traffic a little ahead and the cyclist prepared to chase him again a passerby ran over - and flashed their badge... they were an off duty copper and proceeded to arrest the bus driver.... made my day :) Even if it turns out to be urban myth and I sincerely hope not.
 paul d'ambra

Petition to improve road safety by introducing strict liability for motorists in collisions.

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/roadsafety9/>

- Bike Shops offering discounts to GMCC members**
- A1 Cycle Spares -**
0161 998 2882
414-416 Palatine Road, Northenden
- A6 Cycle Warehouse,**
0161 248 5400
752-762 Stockport Road, Longsight
- Altrincham Bike Shak**
0161 929 9355
10 Oakfield Trading Estate, Oakfield Rd
- Bardsleys Cycles**
0161 432 4936
482 Manchester Road, Stockport
- Bicycle Doctor**
0161 224 1303
68-70 Dickenson Road, Rusholme
www.bicycledoctor.co.uk
- Eddie McGrath Cycles,**
0161 748 2733
31 Station Road, Urmston, Trafford
- Ken Foster's Cycle Logic**
0161 881 7160
374-6 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton
www.kenfosterscyclelogic.co.uk
- Manchester Cycle Exchange**
0161 748 2532
1 Brook Terrace Barton Road Davy Hulme
- Bennetts**
0161 969 1818
172-4 Northenden Road, Sale Moor
- NW Mountain Bike Centre**
0161 428 3311
249 Stockport Road, Cheadle
- Skidmores Cycles**
0161 624 5912
37 Union Street, Oldham
- Withington Cycles**
0161 445 3492
26 Burton Road, Withington



and now the evenings are closing in again... the gmcc gilet

Still the GMCC's answer to someone that wants to be seen for all the right reasons - its own bespoke designed, Manchester made gilet and is still available among others from Will's Wheels, Harry Halls, Eddie McGrath's and Bicycle



Doctor of course. Sizes range from small to extra large (I'm a 40" chest and the large fits comfortably over a denim jacket). They can also be ordered by e-mailing your details to gilet@gmcc.org.uk. The gilet is made out of breathable waterproof

fluorescent orange fabric with reflective strips front back and sides with a mesh rear panel beneath a removable rear panel. It'll keep you quite dry when raining and keep a bit of heat in on the way home at dusk over a T-shirt.

Local authority contacts

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Pothole is the newsletter of the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign. Although the views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the GMCC

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