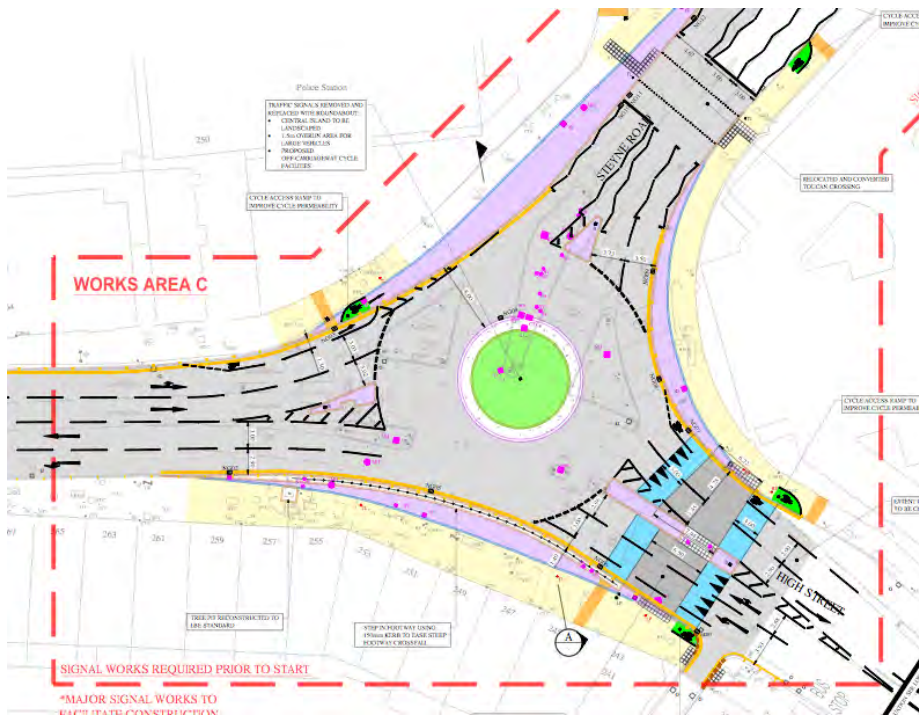


Ealing Cycling News

The LCC newsletter for Acton, Ealing, Greenford, Hanwell, Northolt, Perivale and Southall
February 2013

Uxbridge Road Traffic Schemes



Ealing Council's plan for a roundabout at the junction of Steyne Road and Acton High Street.

Ealing's main cycling thoroughfare, the Uxbridge Road is having a make-over. A section through Acton has already seen work completed, and the council has now published plans for Southall, Hanwell, West Ealing, Ealing Common and the western side of Acton. Overall the plans appear to be roughly cycle neutral – there are certainly no big gains such as dedicated cycle lanes. The most alarming proposal was for a large dual-carriageway roundabout at the junction of Steyne Road and Acton High Street, opposite the police station. At roundabouts, bicycles are 14 times more likely to be involved in a collision than other vehicles. Happily, the council appear to be rethinking this idea.

Why the Uxbridge Road Matters

On a Friday evening in the autumn of 1992, twelve-year-old Bradley Wiggins was cycling from central London to a meeting of the Archer Road Cycling Club at Ealing Common. As he pedalled along the Uxbridge Road towards Acton, a woman in a car coming the other way turned right to pull into Kwik Fit, and crashed into him. “She clearly hadn’t seen me,” Wiggins writes in his autobiography. “I went over the top of the car, hit the ground hard and was knocked unconscious.” He also broke his collar bone. It was his first bad crash. Fortunately for us, it didn’t put him off cycling, but such incidents deter many others.



Bradley Wiggins had his first serious crash on the Uxbridge Road

We don't have accurate figures for the number of cycle collisions on the Uxbridge Road, but we do know they are significantly under-reported. They could range from as few as 20 to more than 120 per year. Each collision deters the cyclist involved from getting back on their bike, and also puts their friends and family off cycling when they hear about the incident. The Uxbridge Road is the most-used route by cyclists in the borough, which is why we would like to see it upgraded to Continental standards. (see overleaf).

In Bradley Wiggins's case, the story has a happy ending. His mother sued the driver, won £1700 compensation, and Wiggins used the money to buy his first racing bike.

Next Meeting

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 6th February at our regular venue, Café Grove, 65 The Grove, W5 5LL. There will be no food available this evening.

The following meeting will be on Wednesday 6th March.

Contact:

info@ealingcycling.org.uk
www.ealingcycling.org.uk

Rides Rides Rides...

Check our website for the latest details. www.ealingcycling.org.uk

Sunday 3 March 2013
Dickens Ride

Time: Prompt 10am departure.

Meet: Ealing Town Hall, W5 4BY

Sunday 7 April 2013
TBA

Time: Prompt 10am departure.

Meet: Ealing Town Hall, W5 4BY



In November 2012 a group from WestTrans, a partnership of six West London boroughs including Ealing, made a study visit to Copenhagen to look at cycle facilities there. In Copenhagen cycling accounts for 37% of all journeys to work, with an ambitious target of 50% by 2015. This compares with Ealing's target of 5% cycling mode share by 2026. Segregated cycle lanes between parked cars and the footway are widespread, often separated by shallow kerbs.

Nick O'Donnell from Ealing Council gave the following first impressions of cycling in Copenhagen: "I was impressed by the ease of which one could hire a bicycle from our hotel at no cost and the simple locking mechanism of the bike. Despite it being a cold, windy and wet evening in November, the sheer volume of cyclists was striking. Compared to cycling in London, five main differences really stood out for me:

1. There is a more leisurely pace of cycling. During rush hour in London, everyone seems to be intent on cycling as fast as they can and the speed of cyclists is a lot higher than observed in Copenhagen. There is a slower overall pace of cycling and very few cyclists going full speed.

2. The high quality and well maintained roads and surfaces, along with the wide lanes meant cycling was a very comfortable and relaxing experience. Despite having cycled around the city for over two hours, there was no fatigue or discomfort and at times I found myself "switching off" as it was a secure and relaxing experience.



3. The behaviour of fellow cyclists and car drivers was very polite. Car drivers regularly gave way to cyclists and there was no sign of aggressive behaviour. On the odd occasion where I was in the way of a fellow cyclist, a gentle bell ring saw me move over and no words were exchanged.

4. Most people rode very standard bicycles and wore "normal" clothing. There were very few people with expensive bikes and specialist bike clothing.

5. The range of people who cycled: all ages, and a very strong parental take up of cycling with their children."

A comprehensive and really interesting design guide to cycling has recently been published by the Danish Cycling Embassy in English at:
<http://www.cycling-embassy.dk/2012/05/10/cycle-concepts2012/>

Let's hope something positive emerges from this visit. It is encouraging that a senior council officer from Ealing participated. Copenhagen regularly features in the world's top ten cities to live in.

WestTrans is a partnership of the six West London boroughs of Ealing, Brent, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. It is led by Ealing Council, and joined by key stakeholders including West London Alliance, West London Business, BAA and the Park Royal Partnership.