

Ealing Cycling News

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

Goodbye David, Hello Nick



David Lomas (left) and Nick Manthorpe, our new Borough Coordinator.

It's not the end of the current government coalition but the end of another era. At our AGM David Lomas stepped down after many years of tireless effort as the group's Borough Co-ordinator. No one is quite sure how long he has held the post but before our current meeting venue of Cafe Grove we used to meet in the council offices and before then it was David's house which pre-dates the proposed tram along the Uxbridge Road. Following the AGM David is now the Deputy and Nick Manthorpe takes over as Co-ordinator. Nick has been an active member of the group for many years and lives and works in the borough, he's a keen cyclist and an active member in the community being a school governor and volunteer at the Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre. He's also a director of the London Bike Hub. The picture shows David accepting his much deserved token of appreciation of a bike workstand – I'm sure they'll be very happy together. Thanks to all the committee members for their work over the past year.

Other posts elected:

Treasurer: Tim Greg

Secretary: Tom Hartwell

Meeting Chair: Elly Castellano

Council Liaison: Peter Mynors

Social Rides Coordinator: Paul James

Press Officer: Andy Hillier

Newsletter Editor: Martin Gorst

Deputy Borough Coordinator - Unfilled, but Nick Manthorpe can call on assistance from David Lomas and Angineh Danialian.

Route Causes

Mini-Holland Progress

We continue to work with the council on the important Mini-Holland bid for a share of the Mayor's £100 million to make cycle improvements in outer London. The bid, which includes a cycle-friendly redesign of Ealing town centre, and a cycling "quietway" between Southall and Ealing, has reached the drawing stage. We'll be meeting with the council's team every fortnight to try to make this a groundbreaking scheme.

Church Road - Good News

Last year TfL announced a proposal that included allowing HGVs to use the bus lane on Church Road during the hours of operation (Ealing Cycling News, June 2012). ECC vigorously opposed this, telling TfL that we are totally against the principle of allowing trucks into bus lanes, which by default have become one of the main components of cycling provision in west London. This opposition was strengthened by the fact that there is no alternative provision for cyclists on Church Road that complies with the recommendations of London Cycling Design Standards. In spite of this, TfL decided to proceed with the scheme.

The Traffic Orders were published in August 2013, to which ECC formally objected. However on 11 November we learnt the good news from TfL that they are no longer proposing the carriageway width reductions that would have required HGVs to use the bus lane "because of a number of maintenance issues". Although TfL still maintain that there would have been no safety issues for cyclists because of the shared use path alternative, the overall outcome means that the basic principle of no HGVs in bus lanes will not be breached in this instance.

Roundabouts

As work progresses on the new roundabout in Acton, the council has asked us to comment on 5 major roundabouts: Hanger Lane, White Hart, Greenford, Target and the Polish War Memorial. We have submitted detailed comments, but in short, these are all busy roads with multiple lanes that make them unsuitable for most cyclists. The only sensible option is to provide alternative, cycle-friendly routes.

Peter Mynors and Martin Gorst

Bob Pedals Off



Good bye to Robert Davis, Ealing Council's Cycling Officer, who is leaving the council after many years. In Ealing, Bob is best known for his Direct Support for Cycling programme, but as a transport planner specialising in road safety, cycling and sustainable transport for 24 years, his influence has been felt much further afield.

Back in 1992, his book, "Death on the Streets: cars and the mythology of road safety" led to the founding of the Road Danger Reduction Forum, an organisation that aims to identify the sources of danger on our roads, and works to reduce them, as well as promote more sustainable transport. From this came Bob's support for a new wave of cycle training. Pioneered in Ealing, Hackney, Lambeth and York in the late 1990s, on-road training gives people the skills and confidence they need to cycle in traffic and has led to the replacement of the old Cycling Proficiency Test with the new national 'Bikeability' scheme.

On-road training forms the core of Ealing's Direct Support for Cycling programme. Many of us who had cycled for years in London have paid our £5 and learnt invaluable new skills. If you haven't done it yet, then head along to the council's web site and sign up. It's the best value you'll get for a fiver. Under Bob's guidance, Ealing Council's support for cycling has also extended to free Dr. Bike maintenance sessions, discounts on cycling equipment, and - after surveys found that the number of cyclists drop dramatically on rainy days - vouchers for wet-weather clothing. On behalf of the group, I'd like to pass on our thanks to Bob for all his work over the years.

Martin Gorst

Smile! - it's a bargain



We met over summer with Ealing police and the council to discuss bike security. A shocking 90% of all bike theft involves a cable lock so for a trail period silver standard D-locks were offered to Ealing Broadway Cycle Hub users at a discounted rate. This is now rolled out across the borough and you can buy silver or gold standard locks for £20 off the retail price at a number of outlets. Obviously locks need to be used in conjunction with a secure anchor point and the lock initiative coincidences with the release of Ealing's Smile wall anchors. These are sold steel anchors that can be attached to a wall or similar and allow you to secure a bike on your property if you don't have anything suitable. The Smiles are £5 post free and can be obtained by calling 01380 840 819. For more details on this and the locks offer, check the council website. <http://tinyurl.com/pjw9sjx>

David Eales



www.ealingbikehub.co.uk

Santander grant success

Last year we obtained a grant to start an all ability cycling project in Ealing, we worked with Ealing MENCAP and provided some specially adapted bikes and other equipment as well as training to get their clients and staff cycling. The club goes from strength to strength and clients not only ride the bikes, but also operate a hire scheme to other users to allow access. During last year we started a small maintenance workshop to train some key users to keep the bikes running. This proved very popular and this year we successfully obtained further funding from Santander to run more in-depth maintenance workshops, clients are now working on their own bikes as well as bikes that can be recycled for re-sale to invest back into the project. As well as hands on maintenance training clients also gain experience of record keeping, workshop procedures, customer handling and cash handling.

David Eales

Coffee and Critics

On the 16th November, David Eales, Paul James and myself from ECC met up with some of the Ealing Today internet posters who are all too quick to unleash vitriol on cyclists and accentuate the negatives, whilst the hundreds of law breaking motorists seem to go unnoticed by them. Strategically, the meeting took place at Cafe Grove...but this time held on the ground floor. I didn't want to invite them in to our hallowed and sacred basement!

Seriously, I thought of the idea because it was getting us nowhere making our own separate points on an internet forum. As an alternative, meeting up with the car lobby to present the cyclist's case had to be more productive. All that was required was broadening their perspective to realise that cyclists are not a public nuisance, but instead should be treated like any other road user.

Top of the 'agenda' was why some cyclists will not use cycle lanes (too dangerous and / or full of debris); cycle in the middle of the road (to be defensive and to be seen); explain why some inexperienced cyclists may choose to cycle on pavements because they are too frightened to use the road (poor infrastructure). Other issues were discussed too.

We successfully got our message across and a much greater softening attitude was shown towards us from the non-cyclists present. Even to the point that one of the most frequent 'car lobby' posters bought us a round of coffees on our home patch! Great stuff and mission accomplished!

Ben Owen

Scrutiny Panel

In October, Elly Castellano presented our views to the Scrutinee Committee assessing the council's progress on its 2010 to 2016 Cycling Strategy. We applauded the council's work on cycle parking, the cycle hub in Ealing Broadway, and its HGV driver training initiative. And raised several issues including cyclists' safety, cycle theft, and parking on cycle lanes.

Next Meeting

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month. The meeting on 4 Dec is our annual meal. If you've not booked feel free to join us after 9pm for after-meal drinks. The following meeting will not take place on New Year's Day, but will be at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 8th January 2014 at our regular venue, Café Grove, 65 The Grove, W5 5LL.

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Reminiscences of a Retired BC

I cannot remember when or how I became your Borough Coordinator. It was some time during the Dark Ages, as I call it. Just four or five of us met in Perceval House. Once there was just me, joined by the then-newish cycling officer Dr Bob (Davis). I sat by his desk and he asked me what ECC were going to do for Bike Week; I can't say I really felt like doing anything. But somehow we did and the group started to grow.

Our social rides are such a success it's hard to imagine a time before them. Andy Longfellow led many, many rides on an ad hoc basis for years. I tried for ages to make them a regular fixture so that anyone could turn up on the xth of the month and know there would be a ride. Eventually Martin Tweddell took on the job as our first ride coordinator, leading rides himself (Passport to Pangbourne, The Horsenden Hill Mob; this is Ealing.) if noone else could. Neither of us could have imagined then that within ten years we'd get fifty turn up on a January morning.

The Tour de France came to London in 2007. We could get ten or twenty on a ride by then, so I told LCC, yes I'd lead a ride of oooh say thirty, and recce'd a suitable route. Over a hundred had registered by the time a handful of ECC marshals rode along for a briefing at CTUK's offices in east London. I rode home that night wondering what on earth we'd let ourselves in for. On the morning of the ride, before I'd left home, my cellphone buzzed with a short but very welcome text message from David Eales, "Let's do it." We led over two hundred cyclists to Hyde Park. That was the first of several big rides.

Before cycle superhighways there was LCN+. ECC put a lot of work into this network: surveying the routes ourselves at weekends, writing recommendations, then riding with the council and its contracted consultants during the week (typically taking holiday to do so). Touring the Uxbridge Road in the rain, compiling soggy notes then drying ourselves out at Peter Mynors' house were all part of the experience. More recently Martin Gorst and I counted bikes on the Uxbridge Road while freezing outside McDonalds in Acton to see whether the council is right to stop counting at 6pm. (They aren't.) Some things never change.

I've always felt it's best to share out the work, and the fun, and I've been lucky indeed to have seen both the group and the number of active people grow considerably since the Dark Ages. It gives me hope that Ealing really can become a great place to cycle around and live in. Thanks to you all, whether named here or not.

David Lomas