

Ealing Cycling News

The LCC newsletter for Acton, Ealing, Greenford, Hanwell, Northolt, Perivale and Southall
February 2009

Motorbikes in Ealing Bus Lanes

Martin Gorst

Ealing Council is proposing to allow motorcyclists to drive in council-controlled bus lanes. In January it published a draft order for an 18 month trial that will run at the same time as Transport for London's similar experiment on TfL roads. The council's decision means that motorbikes could be allowed in bus lanes on some of the borough's busiest cycle routes including the Uxbridge Road.

The move comes despite earlier inconclusive trials by Transport for London's Road Safety Unit. It analysed the safety effects of allowing motorcyclists in bus lanes by combining accident data from a number of sites. According to a London Government press release last March, it showed no clear evidence of safety benefits to motorcyclists and potential disbenefits to pedestrians and cyclists.

The council wants to see if the trial will reduce congestion. It's an idea advocated by Mayor Boris Johnson: "I believe that motorcycles will help combat congestion, and we should encourage greater use of them." The idea is that drivers will switch from car to motorbike but, if this happens, cycle campaigners fear there will be an increase in collisions and casualties.

Motorcyclists have a bad safety record. In 2007, across the UK, they hit 1,016 pedestrians and were involved in 272 collisions with cyclists. Of the cyclists, one was killed and 36 seriously injured. According to the Department for Transport, in 2007 over half of all motorcycles travelled faster than the 30 mph speed limit in built-up areas.

Cyclists at the January meeting of Ealing Cycling Campaign voted overwhelmingly against the idea that motorbikes should be able to travel in bus lanes. Members feared that their presence would

endanger cyclists. It was also felt that they would deter some cyclists from using roads with bus lanes and could even discourage people

from taking up cycling.

In our response to the council, we have said that encouraging motor cycles is likely to increase accidents, because two-wheeled transport is inherently more dangerous than four-wheeled transport. In the case of cycling, any increased accident risk is offset by a factor of many times by the general health benefits of cycling. However, in the case of motorcycling there are no offsetting health benefits.

Ealing Council have said that they will monitor the scheme's impact on congestion and road safety, including looking at the affect on cyclists. If the trial is successful the change will be made permanent. London Cycling Campaign has set up a Bus Lane Watch campaign. For more information, or to report a collision, see www.lcc.org.uk.

Wizz Bikes in Brentford are encouraging as many people as possible to get their bikes serviced prior to the mad rush in March. Throughout February, Wizz Bikes in Brentford are offering 25% off parts and labour for bike servicing. To obtain the discount, when booking whisper the number '42' and discounts will be automatically applied!

Don't forget Woolseys in Acton do 10 percent discount on bikes and spares if you show your LCC membership card.

ECC Wins Waitrose Grant



David Eales

We've had a relationship with the West Ealing branch of Waitrose for many years, from providing our cycling breakfasts, giving us food and staff for Bike Week one year and of course working with us in relation to the bike-hods. The branch started taking part in the firm's Community Matters scheme whereby charities submit an application to be nominated for a month at a time for a share in a £1,000, three charities a month are selected and we were chosen for November.

The scheme operates very simply, each of the three charities has a large clear collection container at the front of the store and every time you check out you are given a token in the fetching Waitrose green. As you leave the store you place your token in the desired charity's container and at the end of the month the £1,000 on offer is divided up between the groups in proportion to the number of tokens received. We were up against a local school and an allotment association I am proud to say that I collected a cheque for £242 in late December – a very useful contribution to our funds.

The above picture shows me accepting the cheque from Dawn, who kindly helped out on our stall at Bike Week a few years ago. A big thank you to all those that gave us their green token, thanks to Waitrose for choosing us and not forgetting our member Ben Owen for alerting us to the scheme and doing the leg work involved.

Ealing Signing and Deaf club are the next in-line it would be nice to give them your tokens. They train deaf children to cycle using special cycle helmets to cope with hearing aids. Cycling uses balance more than you realise and being even partially deaf badly affects your balance so this is really worthy charity giving children denied the pleasure of cycling a chance to have a go.

Family Cycling Project

David Eales

More success on the grant application front. We've been cooking up a project for several months now to specifically target people with very young children to either try cycling for the first time or get back on their bikes with their children. We surveyed several family support groups such as Netmums and the Ealing 135 group to assess the demand and the feedback we received confirmed that there is a demand for people who used to cycle before having children but lack the confidence or equipment to cycle with their new family.

Some of the responses highlighted the fact that even families with a car, it is usually the mother that stays home with the new born whilst the father takes the car to work. Providing an easy means of transport in terms of a bike rather than public transport seemed a logical step, providing convenience, exercise and getting children on to bikes at a very early age.

The project will involve loaning child seats, a trailer and some general equipment to participants and more importantly arrange training for them. We also hope to organise social rides and show them how easy it is to get around Ealing with small children, from parks and playgrounds to toddler groups to doing the shopping.

Ealing and Brentford Consolidation Charities decided the project was viable and so the project kicked off in January with 6 people. Expect to hear a lot more about this over the coming months. If you know anyone who would like to be involved, including yourself do let us know at info@ealingcycling.org.uk

Newest Member

Our media liaison member Andy Hillier has provided us with our newest and smallest member Oscar in early January. (*Presumably with a little help from his wife - ed.*) Congratulations to the new family and we sincerely hope they will sign up to our newest project!

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 4th February 2009. At Cafe Grove, 65 The Grove, W5 5LL, at 7.30 pm. All members welcome.

Yorkshire Dales

David Lomas

I had a long Easter weekend in Swaledale a few years ago, and last year I suggested the Dales to Elly for our two weeks in September. We booked a cottage near Bainbridge in Wensleydale; a good centre for rides into the other Dales.

Grand Central run trains from King's Cross to Sunderland up the east coast line: non-stop to York, then Thirsk, then Northallerton. From there we could ride across the Vale of York and on to our home before dinner time. An energetic five hours or so, I thought, with time to buy some food for the first night. From Ealing Broadway (dammit, no ramp yet) by train to Paddington, then a ride to King's Cross is easy. How would our first encounter with Grand Central go?

We had to make reservations for the bikes, but they are free. The train was renovated 1970s Intercity rolling stock, and the bikes go behind the engine. The guard opened up the door and we loaded both bikes, just laying them on the floor since there is no specific rack. At Northallerton the guard insisted on getting our bikes out for us, and wished us well. I refixed my panniers under the gaze of the train driver in the mid afternoon sunshine, pointed west and then up. He returned a grin and a thumbs up, then disappeared from view and the train pulled out.

Downhill for Ramps

Just when we seemed to be getting somewhere with the cycle ramps at Ealing Broadway station, Transport for London have derailed the project. The station master had identified a suitable supplier and obtained a quote for the ramps and at a meeting last year Transport for London said that they would fund them, but now TfL say that they never made that promise. They don't recognise the minutes of the meeting as a true account of what was said. The ramps aren't expensive - their total cost is around £2000 - so if anyone knows a public minded company or citizen who would like to fund this project, please let us know at info@ealingcycling.org.uk.

Newton's

We are sad to report that R.W. Newton Cycles in Greenford Avenue has closed. This small independent shop served cyclists in Ealing for several decades. Ealing now has just three dedicated cycle shops.

Rides...

Enjoy a winter of cycling at these Ealing Cycling Campaign rides.

Sunday 1st February 2009 Black Park

A quiet route to Black Park using parks, paths and cycle paths before returning via the canal and some Sustrans routes.

Leader: Murray

Time: 10.00am prompt

Place: Ealing Town Hall Steps, New Broadway W5

Sunday 1st March 2009 Down to Dulwich

A trip down to south London to visit the pretty village of Dulwich.

Leaders: Tim & Miranda

Time: 10.00am prompt

Place: Ealing Town Hall Steps, New Broadway W5

Sunday 5th April 2009 Islington

A ride into north London to sample the delights of the borough.

Leader: Sav

Time: 10.00am prompt

Place: Ealing Town Hall Steps, New Broadway W5

Don't get taken for a ride.... Lead one

Fancy leading a ride? Then let us know. New ride leaders are always welcome. See below for contact details.

Ealing Cycling Campaign

Contact: info@ealingcycling.org.uk

Web Site: www.ealingcycling.org.uk

Facebook: Ealing Cycling Campaign

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