

Ealing Cycling News

The LCC newsletter for Acton, Ealing, Greenford, Hanwell, Northolt, Perivale and Southall
October 2010

Biking Borough reports

While we've been out and about leading rides and holding stalls this summer, Ealing Council has been working behind closed doors on a major policy document. On October 22nd it will launch its cycling strategy for 2010 to 2026. This will lay down its plans for increasing cycling in the borough in line with the Mayor of London's target for a four-fold increase in cycling in London by 2026.

The good news is that Ealing is one of 12 outer London boroughs to apply for and win Biking Borough funding. With the £25,000 award, the council commissioned two reports on cycling in Ealing which they are using to guide their strategy. Under a Freedom of Information Act request ECC's Andrew Hillier has obtained copies of both reports.

It's not easy to compress 200 pages of information into half a page, but some details stand out. The first is that we are a divided borough. South and east of the river Brent people are more environmentally aware and use bicycles noticeably more than in the western half of the borough. But use is not that high. Across the borough, 1.6% of journeys are by bicycle, and 67% of the population have never cycled.

The rate of cycling to school is also small, with only 3.1% of pupils cycling at the highest rated secondary school, Drayton Manor High. Curiously primary schools have a higher rate of cycling than secondary schools, largely due to the success of two schools: Southfield Primary with 13.8% of pupils cycling, and St Saviours Church of England Primary with 12.4%. It would be worth learning how they achieved these levels and apply the same ideas elsewhere.

When it came to making suggestions for cycling in the borough, both reports focused on ways to increase the number of cyclists. The key idea is to create five Cycle Hubs. These are described as "areas that show the greatest potential for an increase in cycling levels, and can act as a showcase for cycling investment, partner-

ship working or pilot initiatives". The suggested hubs would be at Ealing Broadway, Elthorne, South Acton, Greenford, Southall Broadway and Northolt. Within each hub, there would be several measures aimed at increasing the level of cycling. These would include: targeted cycle training; encouraging cycling on prescription; extending the council's current Direct Support for Cycling scheme (which already offers cycle training) to include more Dr. Bikes; improved and innovative cycle parking (including residential parking), bike and ride at stations, and the continuation of the Greenways scheme (off-road cycling through parks and other open spaces). The MVA report also offers hope for a solution to the long-standing problem of access to Ealing Broadway station. "Delivering convenient cycle access to the Broadway from the south is a critical component of the hub concept... and [we] recommend that resolving this gap is considered as a priority."



Both reports recognise the importance of the Uxbridge Road as a commuter route for cyclists. The Transport Initiatives report makes several recommendations, including: minimum width 1.5 metre cycle lanes throughout; a 20mph zone in Ealing Broadway; and removing the central white line to create a "core traffic lane". There is no mandatory requirement for a central white line, and removing it has been shown to reduce traffic speeds. It would also make room for adequate width cycle lanes.

The council have been considering these ideas in compiling their Cycling Strategy. We'll have more news on that after it's published.

Summer events



Bikes in St. James's Park.

photo by Kelvin Warth

Thanks to everyone who helped out or turned up to our summer events. Sunday 5th September was particularly busy. Thanks to Angela Devas for organising the rides to the central London Skyride. It was a record year with 137 riders on the first ride and about 150 on the second. Thanks also to Mark, who led the first ride, and all the marshals who helped out.

Thanks also to Elly Castellano for running our stall at the Brentford Festival where she was reminded why the general population doesn't cycle. "In short cycling is perceived as being too dangerous. Suggesting that if you are suitably trained the risk can be managed does not impress them. They want segregated routes, traffic calming (including calming of "nutter" cyclists) and law abidance."

Wheels to Steal

You can't beat being contacted by the Police for putting you on edge, but we were delighted to be asked by Ealing Safer Transport Command team if they could borrow a decent bike that would be worth stealing. We dutifully obliged and we dropped a bike off at Ealing Central Police Station for their operation. I can't go into detail as to how the project actually ran but the police are proud to report a 66% reduction on July 2009 figures for the area where the bike was deployed. Bike theft is a major issue and either deters people from cycling in the first place or stops people cycling following theft. Our website and www.lcc.org.uk contain a host of useful tips to prevent bike theft.

David Eales

Campaign DIY tips



www.ealingbikehub.co.uk

The LCC strives to make cycling conditions better in the capital, but it relies on local activists – and in the future, it's going to rely on us even more. In the past, Transport for London gave local boroughs a pot of money dedicated to cycle improvements. From this year, finance for cycling will come out of each borough's general transport fund. To make sure that cycling continues to get funding at the same level we need to keep the pressure on the council.

There are several ways you can help. The first and simplest is to report bad facilities. The council wants better roads and aims to improve them, but sometimes things go wrong. If it doesn't know about them, they won't



broken? ...get it fixed!

get fixed. A good example comes from earlier this year. In May, a contractor laid a stretch of tarmac along the Uxbridge Road between Acton and Ealing Common. It was part of a scheme to widen the cycle lane, but unfortunately the tarmac was badly laid and the bumpy surface gave cyclists a very uncomfortable, vibrating ride. At least three cyclists brought this to the attention of the council. A council officer cycled the route, agreed that it was substandard, and insisted that the contractor relay it, which it now has.

It's quietly satisfying to report problems and see them fixed, and once they're fixed, everyone can enjoy the benefits. Just make a note of the location, including the nearest house number and street name, and then report it: either via the link on our web site; using the council's own web site; or by phoning the council on 020 8825 6000 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm). The more reports of a problem the council has, the more likely they are to do something about it.

The second way you can help is by campaigning for better cycle facilities in your local area. Ealing is divided into 23

wards, and each one has £40,000 to spend on improvement projects. Your ward will have at least three ward forums a year where the public can recommend schemes to benefit the area. Last year Perivale ward voted for cycle parking stands and a shelter outside Perivale Station. This year Walpole Ward is looking to spend money on installing more cycle stands. Are there any improvements you think your area needs?

We've put a link on our web site to make it easy to find out which ward you are in, and when meetings are held.

The third way you can help is to make your voice heard in support of cycling. You can encourage friends and colleagues to cycle, and give new cyclists the benefit of your experience. Show them where they can get Transport for London's cycling maps (tel: 0843 222 1234), tell them about the Ealing Cycle Hub where they can learn basic bicycle maintenance (www.ealingbikehub.co.uk) or, perhaps the best value of all, suggest they sign up for the council's cycle training. Just £5 buys a two-hour lesson from Cycle Training UK, and speaking from experience, it's well worth it. The skills learnt will make anyone a safer cyclist – from looking over your shoulder before you manoeuvre, to positioning your bicycle to avoid left-turning lorries and suddenly-opening car doors. (Call freephone 0800 093 6454 for details and to book training.)

A last suggestion is to make your voice heard more widely. Cycling still comes under fire from the odd disgruntled correspondent to the letters pages of the local paper, so feel free to write in and let people know the benefits and joys of pedal power. It's always heartening to see letters in the paper from people prepared to stand up for cycling.

Martin Gorst

It's been a busy few months at the Hub. We sold nearly our entire stock of bikes and gained one or two in the process. It's great to do part exchange especially on bikes for children given how quickly they can grow out of them. We also hired a bike out so someone could have some last minute cycle training and loaned a bike to the police as reported elsewhere.

We also ran our second lesson to teach cleaning, lubrication, brakes and gears – and very popular it was to, selling out quickly – some fine tuning required as it's amazing how long 8 adults can take to clean their bikes!

There were also two special workshops; building pedal powered generators where we built a number of different rigs to charge batteries as well as generate DC and AC electricity. We're not going to be able to slice our electric bills to zero just yet, but we can certainly charge a laptop at an event to collect emails that much easier. We also had our first aid training and had an entertaining day learning how to administer emergency first aid in a variety of situations, the advantage of a tailored course was that we could act through various events such as workshop injuries as well as possible problems on a ride.

David Eales

Rides Rides Rides...

Sunday 3rd October Ruislip Lido

A trip to Ruislip Lido going over Harrow on the Hill and the back roads to the Lido itself. Return via the canal or a more direct route depending on the weather. The food at the Lido is not as good as it used to be, and certainly the service is slow on a Sunday so bring a picnic.

Leader: David

Time: 10.00am prompt

Place: Ealing Town Hall Steps, New Broadway W5

Council Dr Bike Sessions this autumn

Location	Date	Time
Hanwell Clock Tower	Sat 2 Oct	12 noon - 4pm
Hanwell Clock Tower	Sat 6 Nov	12 noon - 4pm
Acton Market	Sat 9 Oct	10 am - 1pm
Acton Market	Sat 13 Nov	10am - 1pm
Haven Green	Wed 6 Oct	4pm - 7pm
Haven Green	Wed 20 Oct	4pm - 7pm

Annual General Meeting

Our next meeting on Wednesday 6th October is our AGM. All members are invited to come along and vote for the new committee. The meeting is at our regular venue, Café Grove, 65 The Grove, W5 5LL at 7.30pm. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month. The following meeting will be on Wednesday 3rd November.

www.ealingcycling.org.uk