

Pedal Power

The newsletter of Greenwich Cyclists

Issue 35
Feb 2004

GC goes to Council

Nine GC members braved the snow and ice on Wednesday 28th to table questions at the Greenwich Council meeting about the Firepower Museum cycle parking. Those of you who read last month's PP will know that this has become a serious issue for GC. In 1999 Greenwich Council gave planning permission for the new £12m museum, subject to bike parking being there before the museum opened. The museum opened in April 2001...without any bike parking. The museum told Greenwich Cyclists that it couldn't afford to provide any such parking.

This was the first time that GC had attended a public session of the Council, and we were able to ask eight questions revolving around the issue of cycle planning and provision. The questions were answered by deputy council leader Peter Brookes in his capacity as chair of the Greenwich Regeneration committee. Councillor Brookes came to the January GC meeting to speak about planning issues, and has been very supportive of what GC are trying to achieve.

On the whole, the exercise was a success: our concerns have been recorded, and the council gave a commitment to consult us in future on planning issues in the borough. Perhaps most importantly, we were assured that the council officer responsible for cycling will now devote 100% of their time to cycle planning. In the next few months, we hope to bring you news of some of the benefits of working more closely with Greenwich Council.

All in all, it was well worth the snow and icy roads.

Stolen Bike?

Had your bike stolen? Go to <http://www.mondodesigno.com/stolenbike/> This UK based not-for-profit site aims to provide advice on avoiding bicycle theft, to reunite people with their bikes and to help the trade avoid buying from thieves.

Cycling for Women

Cycling for Women is a year-long pilot project seeking to understand and address the reasons why comparatively few women compared with men cycle as a means of transport in London. Based in the boroughs of Camden and Lambeth, it uses "action research" methods as well as traditional research to understand gender issues relating to cycling and the urban environment. The project aims to encourage and enable more women to cycle, and to disseminate good practice to policy-makers and practitioners. If you are interested in keeping up to date with the Cycling for Women project, consider subscribing to the WDS information exchange email group by emailing:

CfWinfo-subscribe@smartgroups.com.

You can also use this email group to contribute to the running of the project and network with other women and men who are involved in transport, cycling, and policy fields.

How would you invest £200K?

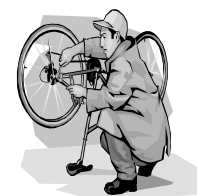
At a meeting with Greenwich Councillors Dave Moorhouse and Dave Jessup, Greenwich Cyclists were shocked to learn that money earmarked for improvements to the Thames Path could be lost. £400000 had been earmarked to complete the path at Westminster Industrial Estate; half from TfL, and half from the Greenwich Council walking budget. However, opposition from the estate businesses means that the project may be shelved, and the funds lost.

Greenwich Cyclists have proposed that the money should be used for an alternative cycling project. An obvious choice is Greenwich Town Centre, which is on the LCN+ network.

Unless you have a better idea.

Contact Greenwich Cyclists via Hilary Samuels (co-ordinator) at hilary_samuels@yahoo.co.uk or on 07929 722 973 or write to us at :The Forum @Greenwich (177 Trafalgar Road)

Keep Rolling: Tips to keep your bike on the road



Keep it tight

Loose nuts and bolts can be not only expensive, but dangerous. A loose mudguard bolt at the back may just cause a rattling rack or guard; a loose mudguard bolt at the front could put the guard in the wheel, and you under somebody else's. Listen to your bike. If there's a new rattle, knock or rubbing sound, find out where it's coming from. It might be nothing, but it could be a warning that something is wearing out, or about to drop-off.

If you hear a ping or tinkle as you are cycling, it could be something important that has fallen off your bike. I heard a bolt fall off my tandem in Normandy, but ignored it. One day, and a 50 kms ride back later, I learned the hard way that you couldn't buy French bike parts in France.

This is a list of things I would check:

⊙ Mudguard/rack bolts. Mudguard nuts and bolts can work loose, especially if they are also supporting a rack. Check them for tightness every month, or after every hard ride. It's a good idea to replace cheap bolts with stainless steel ones with allen key heads. To make doubly sure, clean the threads, and apply some Loctite thread lock (you can buy this from most hardware stores, or Halfords). Then, the bolts will only come loose when you want them to.

⊙ A regular rubbing noise probably means your mud guard is touching the tire. If the guard is

touching the top of the tire, then you need to undo the nuts on the mudguard stays, and reposition the guard further away from the tyre. If it's touching at the side, just grasp both the left and right stays, and pull sideways away from the wheel: this should centralise the guard. Don't worry about bending the stays: they are meant to be bent. A rubbing noise could also mean that your rear wheel has moved: especially if you have just ridden up a steep hill. Make sure that the wheel is aligned evenly in the frame, and if you have quick-release hubs, make sure that you know how to use them (look out for the GC maintenance class in May).

⊙ A creaking when you pedal usually means that your cranks (the arms the pedals screw into) need tightening. This is true for even a new bike, because the relatively soft aluminium cranks can work loose on the steel shaft. You'll need a socket or a special crank spanner to do this: so you might have to go to a bike shop.

⊙ Check your pedals for tightness. Loose pedals will destroy your cranks, and a new crank set could cost you anything from £40 upwards.

These are the things which commonly work loose, but you should be keeping an eye on everything.

Rides & Events

See www.greenwichcyclists.org.uk for up-to-date information. All rides leave Cutty Sark Gardens (CSG) unless otherwise noted.



February

Fri 6th: The Essex lanes ride which was rained off last year. Meet CSG at 9.30 or Liverpool Street (under departures board) for 10.32 train to Hatfield Peverel. Approx. 30 miles through villages south of Braintree, to include cycle friendly tea shop (I don't think they do any hot food). Return from Hatfield Peverel on 16.18 train. Bring lights.

Liz 020 8691 2065

Sat 7th: The Monumental. Meet 10 am CSG or 10.15 am in Island Gardens for a gentle ride into the city. Optional Monument climb for a bird's eye view of London. Find out more about our City and enjoy a coffee/ lunch break. Train or cycle back. This ride is designed for beginners and families, but all welcome. Hilary 07929 722 973

Sat 14: Love Your Bike - Maintenance Course

Fri 20th: Waterlink way path along Ravensbourne river to Beckenham Place park, Crystal Palace Park, Dulwich Park and visit to the Picture Gallery. Back to Greenwich through back streets via Honor Oak and Brockley. Approx. 15 miles. Meet CSG at 10.00am

Fri 27 : Critical Mass. 6pm National Film Theatre. South Bank. (bit political).

March

Fri 5th: Kentish Weald (some hills on this one). Meet London Bridge (outside WHSmith) 10am for 10.23 train to Sevenoaks. Ride to Sevenoaks Weald, Chiddingstone, Penshurst, past Hildenborough, Shipbourn, Plaxtol, past Knole Park and back to Sevenoaks for 16.20 train (arr. London Bridge 16.53). Approx 33 miles almost completely on minor roads.

Sat 6th: Surrey Docks Farm. Meet 10 am CSG for a gentle ride along the river to Surrey Docks Farm. Meet the animals and stop for a coffee before the ride back. 3 miles each way. Kate 020 8858 1594

Fri 19th: Local ride, to be announced.

May

4 week bicycle maintenance course. Exact details still to be decided. See web site or next issue of PP for full details.