

Pedal Power

The newsletter of Greenwich Cyclists. Issue 52, Jan / Feb 2006

Kids learn to ride

With confidence & safety

Liz Delap, of Greenwich cyclists, has become involved in a cycle training scheme at John Ball Primary School in Blackheath since the autumn. The school was awarded a grant from Transport for London, allowing them to set up a training scheme for 9 to 11-year-old pupils. The school was also able to buy in some bikes, which are loaned to children who do not have their own, or who do not have bikes with gears.

Children are trained to National Standards 1, 2 or 3, depending on their level of starting skill, ranging from beginners who are unable to ride, through to riding on busy roads with roundabouts and traffic lights. "It's amazing how they grow in confidence over a few weeks" said Liz, "and the children love the sessions too". Pupils also learn how to remove a back wheel and tyre and mend a puncture.

It is expected that the scheme will continue into the future and it is hoped that more children will cycle to school. A new covered cycle storage shed has been installed at the school and it is now often nearly full.

Maintenance classes

"Intermediate" maintenance classes: two sessions on 8 and 15 February at the Armada centre - see back page. Brake and gear adjustment, general bike servicing, and basic wheel truing. Cost £10 - further info and contact details on the Greenwich Cyclists website. Advance booking is essential.

Rides and Events

See above for a selection of rides. For a full list of rides organised by this and other borough groups, or to check for updates, go to any of these websites:

www.greenwichcyclists.org.uk ; www.lewishamecyclists.net ; www.southwarkcyclists.org.uk

All the Greenwich-organised rides and events, unless stated otherwise, are 'turn up and go' and start from 'CSG' (Cutty Sark Gardens, by the river in Greenwich). Please feel free to come along.

Jan / Feb rides

CSG=Cutty Sark Gardens, Greenwich. All the weekend rides listed here will be led by Barry (07905 889005). See the websites for each local group listed below for other rides.

January

Saturday 21: Dulwich Greendale / Peckham Cricket Bats. Meet 9am CSG / 10am Southwark Needle. Visit LCC's Best Cycling Facility of 2005 and the old bat factory and other hidden marvels that the tram may demolish. A slow 10 miles or so.

Sunday 22: The Putney/Woolwich ferry. Great chance to explore London's riverside, slowly hugging every cyclable inch (well almost) in an west-east-west 8 shape. Meet 9am CSG / 10am Southwark Needle. Full ride 45 miles so the pace will be steady.

Friday 27: Critical Mass. Meet at the National Film Theatre under Waterloo Bridge for a slow meander around Central London. (Bit political.)

February

Sunday 5: East along the Thames. Meet 9am Southwark Needle / 10am CSG. Down the Thames path and back to get home around 5pm. An easy 30 miles or so.

Saturday 11: Pollards Hill Cyclists are a newish group and today's their Luv Yr Bike Day (www.luv-yr-bike.co.uk). Lots of activities for everybody. We'll drop in. Meet 9am Southwark Needle / 10am CSG. About 20 miles.

Friday 24: Critical Mass. As above.

Xmas Blues

The editor's diary

Most girls expect perfume or lingerie as their Xmas treat. Romance is not dead for biker girls, what did I get? The full monty roof rack bike carrier and dirt buster "muck off". Well for those that know me I roam nowhere without my beloved companion, 'bikey'. Much to my dismay snow got in my way in historic England; so I missed out on the Greenwich bikers mistletoe and wine deserted ride round London. Luckily one of my spies sent me some undercover shots (don't get carried away).

Overfilled with XMAS goodies and cheer I decided to be the lone rider on the off-piste trails. I ended up riding over fields with fluffy snow; thank god I had my knobbies on.

Beauty had its downside: I spent most of the night not with my facial mud pack but scrubbing every part of my squeaky bike with "muck off". Nothing like sitting in the freezing cold with a cosy book, my favourite bike manual.



Mayor's Ride 2006

The annual Greenwich Mayor's charity cycle ride to Erith will be on Sunday 26 March in aid of Motor Neurone Research. Would you be able to help with either publicity or marshalling? Contact Julian (see below).

competition answers

The 'cycling cat' sculpture we illustrated last month can be found in Brussels (on the rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères in fact). It is in fibreglass and the sculptor was paid the handsome sum of 100,000 Euros. No-one submitted an entry, but thanks to Ray for the posting on the e-group that inspired it.

bikes by train

One of the key pillars to reduce congestion and lower pollution is to encourage people to use public transport and their bikes. South Eastern Trains policy is to ban bicycles at peak times in the morning and evening. Until recently Thameslink allowed bikes in the peak on the Brighton line but they have now applied restrictions too. Just another deterrent for the cyclist? Or a welcome improvement for other passengers? Depends how you travel. If only they could have a dedicated coach just for cyclists and their bikes!

Rules of the Road

Starting in the next issue we will be including a series of articles on the Rules of the Road - a guide to relevant signs and extracts from the Highway Code. There have been some lively debates on our e-mail group about the extent to which cyclists feel obliged to follow it, but we will be setting out how it is supposed to be!

Contact Us

We meet on the first Wednesday of every month (next meeting 1 February) at 7.30 p.m. at the Armada Centre, 21 McMillan St, Deptford. See the website www.greenwichcyclists.org.uk, or email:

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