

Do you use the Outer Ring Road on your cycle journey to work? Leicester City Council are to review cycling facilities on the Outer Ring Road, and welcome comments from pedal pushers. Send contributions to: "Outer Ring Review", Leicester Spokes, P.O. Box 30, Leicester, LE1 9DG. We will forward these to the Cycling Officer Sally Killips.

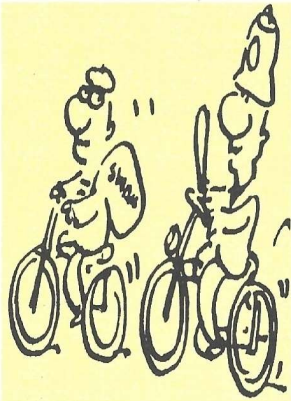
### Insurance Premium Increase

Leicester Spokes committee regret that as of immediate effect, optional 3rd party insurance is to be increased from £2 to £3 per person per year. The increase has been directly passed on from the CTC who arrange insurance cover. Spokes members who had already renewed at the old rate are unaffected.

### Built-in Bugs Bag Bike Bandits

Being a bike thief used to be among the least dangerous "occupations" one could mention. But a new strategy by police in Kentish Town may change this. The police noticed that 200 bikes were stolen in the three months before Christmas, and as conventional police methods didn't seem to work, they decided to use decoy bikes equipped with an electronic tracker. The tracker, which is hidden within the frame, is of the same kind used to protect cars. Plain-clothes police offers "planted" the bikes on streets where a high number of bike thefts had occurred. Equipped with an electronic map of the area, they were then able to trace any bike which was moved. In one case the bike was stolen only 15 seconds after it was parked, and the bike thief was immediately arrested. All in all six bike thieves were arrested in the operation. Kentish Town Police plan to use the same method again later- but won't reveal when and where. *Ernst Poulsen 10/5/99*

*The Bicycle News Agency  
http://www.bikenews.org*



### World Bike Conference

A note for your diary. The Vélo Mondial 2000 world bicycle conference will be held in Amsterdam from 18th to 22nd June 2000. Participants will learn of the potential of cycling, how cycling fits in with other policies, and what individuals can do also in co-operation with others to push cycling forward.

### Sorry John

Apologies to John, our new Membership Secretary, whose name I omitted from the committee listed in our last newsletter. *Greg. (Newsletter Editor)*

Abbreviations used throughout newsletter:  
DETR - Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions,  
CTC - Cycle Touring Club, BMA - British Medical Association


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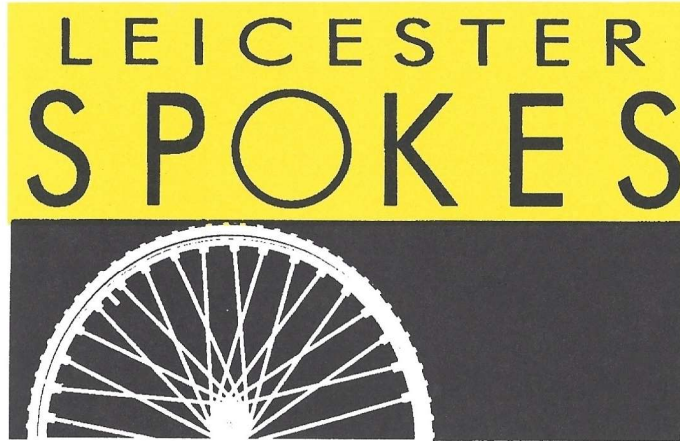
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Issue No 56

Autumn 1999

## SpokesFest 2000 - Cycling Innovations

Your friendly Spokes committee are planning a festival of human powered vehicles in Leicester in July next year.

One of the major attractions will be a talk on human powered flight. Roger, the event director, has been promised an aircraft for display, if the problem of housing its 100ft wingspan can be overcome. For comparison the wingspan of Concorde is only 85ft!

Other events planned include a regatta of boats on the canal, a come and try event with a variety of recumbents, delivery bikes and other unusual machines, and a look at cycling history at the Abbey Pumping Station.

The gauntlet has been thrown down between Roger and Simon to design and build a water craft for launch at the event. Both are now searching for scrap materials, and although a budget limit has not been set, Roger is hoping to come in at under £50! Fortunately, they decided against an aeroplane challenge for this year!



### Also inside:

Cycling in Bradgate Park - Clampdown  
Leicester wins Clear Zones Award

What creation is a Jumbo Sausage?

"A Safer Journey to School is the centrepiece of this Government's transport proposals for schools and offers practical advice for schools which want to ensure that children can walk, cycle or take the bus to school safely."

Schools' Minister  
Charles Clarke

30th June 1999



## Jumbo Sausage Hits the Streets

Simon's latest creation, codenamed the Jumbo Sausage, made it's initial test run this summer. The only reported injuries were sore ribs reported by incredulous onlookers who couldn't stop laughing. Based on an old tandem frame sawn in half, the new machine uses bits from four different bikes welded together to create a long wheel base utility cycle with a 4' load platform on the front (ideal for carrying lunch). Future developments will include optional configurations for carrying spare bikes, sofas, minibar and nose-mounted early warning radar to warn the pilot of impending bends.

## Dissapointing Crowd

Even though only 2 people turned up to the Leicester City Football Club and Leicester Spokes "What cycle parking" Open Meeting in June, still quite a few ideas were put forward for Leicester City F.C. to consider.

## "Off Yer Bike" by our Special Correspondent

I eventually got Roger off his bike at Ullesthorpe with the promise of a cake stop. Roger is a man of 100 bikes. It is always worth joining his hill dodging rides to see the latest concoction. Roger, what types of cycling do you do?

*I'm lucky to be able to ride every day. I've done long distance tours, but also enjoy riding the vintage bikes I've restored or one of the recumbents I've built.*

What do you enjoy about being a Spokes member?

*I like the rides. They're laid back affairs with the flexibility to include emergency tea and cake stops. All sorts of people turn up on a wide variety of bikes. I've even done a couple of rides on my 1930 delivery bike.*

Who would you most like to meet behind the bike sheds?

*Helen Baxendale.*

What do you do when you're not on a bike?

*I walk!*

No, I mean what are your interests outside cycling?

*I'm a traditional woodworker by trade and through my work have become interested in architectural history. I also like to tell my joke about Robin Hood at every opportunity.*

No, please, not again. Time to get back on the road, I think.

Now, can I get Spokes newly elected Chairperson "off yer bike" before the next issue?

## Spot the Kangaroo

The name Sturgess is synonymous in Leicestershire with luxury motor cars. But have you ever wondered why their emblem is a kangaroo? In 1897, William Sturgess returned from Australia and set up in business building and selling cycles on Shaftesbury Road. The brand name was Austral. Several kangaroos can still be seen on a building in Braunstone Gate that once used to be a showroom. Can you spot which one next time you cycle past? Answer next time!

## 20mph Zones Get Green Light

On 16th June 1999 new legislation came into force allowing local authorities to create 20 mph zones or speed limits in their own areas, without needing Government approval.

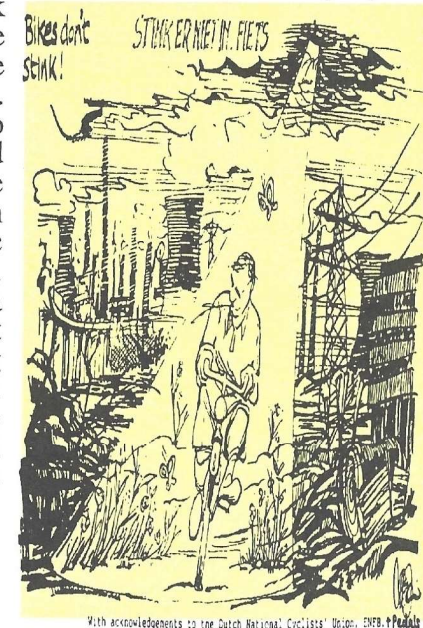
## Much better for the Dutch?

Two Leicester Spokes members recently enjoyed a cycling trip to Holland, a country renowned for being cyclist friendly. The most noticeable difference from Leicester is how many people cycle as a normal part of their daily routine, whether it's going to work, shopping, visiting friends or simply enjoying the countryside. Cycling is a very practical method of getting about as Holland is a compact country. Most people live within a short distance of their place of work and the nearest town centre. Nearly all roads are paralleled by cycle tracks. In some instances these are mandatory, i.e. it is illegal to cycle on the road. The tracks vary in quality from fast and smooth to rough, broken bricks. However most are useful and provide direct routes between towns. Some of the cities are more difficult for cycling, particularly Den Haag (The Hague). Main road junctions have traffic lights for cyclists, which are often slow to change. As several may need to be negotiated to cross a junction, it can seem a long wait. The most enjoyable cycle tracks in Holland are the long distance routes. These travel through peaceful countryside away from any roads, often alongside canals. Route 1, along the North Sea coast and Route 4, running East-West across the centre of the country are particularly recommended.

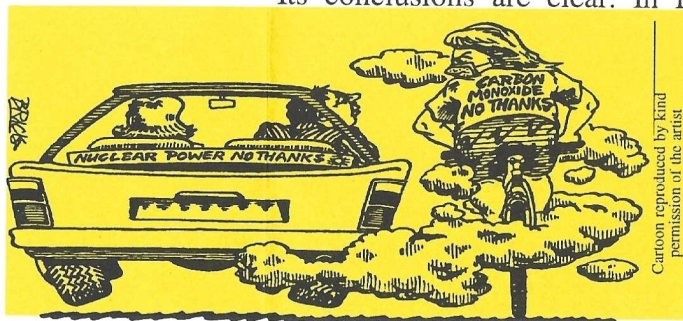
**It's the Rich wot get the Pleasure**

**It's the Poor wot get the Pollution**

People living in areas with the lowest car ownership suffer from worse traffic pollution than those living in richer areas with high car ownership, and death rates and ill health are worse in those areas too. That's the shocking conclusion of a new research report launched at a joint Friends of the Earth Environmental Justice Seminar 17th June 1999. The research findings - by Dr Simon Stevenson of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine - follow results published earlier that traffic pollution now kills more people than road accidents. Friends of the Earth said that this research should be a "wake-up call to New Labour" on the need for cuts in road traffic. The new academic research focused on London and studied the number of people dying and in ill health, the levels of air pollution, the number of roads in the area, the level of car-ownership and levels of deprivation. Its conclusions are clear. In London, poorer people suffer most from traffic pollution, largely caused by richer people living in comparatively clean environments. Roger Higman, Friends of the Earth Senior Transport Campaigner commented: "This research shows that traffic pollution is mainly caused by the better off, but the poor feel its effects. The Government must respond to this research by announcing clear targets for road traffic reduction. Surely people everywhere, whatever their income, should have an equal right to breathe clean air." *Friends of the Earth 17/6/99*



With acknowledgements to the Dutch National Cyclists' Union, ENFB, P. Peukels



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†Third party insurance is available to members only and costs £3.00 per person. It only covers you against claims from other people whilst cycling, not bike theft. Insurance is arranged through the CTC.

‡Leicester Cycling Map is published by Leicester City Council, produced by CycleCity Guides.

**Data Protection Act:** Your membership details will be held on computer



### "Short" cycle route faces possible Local Resistance

City Council cycle route proposals for the next financial year 2000/1, include the missing link of the Riverside Way near the Outdoor Pursuits Centre. This will probably require a Compulsory Purchase order (CPO) on the privately owned land. This is the first time in Leicester that a CPO is being considered for a cycle route. Even though this may be costly, it is expected there should not be much difficulty completing this course of action. Ironically another cycle route to pass through the Stonygate Shopping area, forming part of the Leicester to Peterborough Sustrans route is expected to meet stiff opposition from local residents as a few yards of the route will necessitate the conversion of a few yards of "No cycling" footpath connecting Francis Street and Trueway Road into a shared use throughfare. Leicester Spokes supports this route, and believes that local shops there will benefit from passing trade by cycle tourists. Cyclists, especially those that live near the area, are asked to give Leicester City Council their support when the time comes to consult the public about plans for the new cycle route.

### Hotel VIP Service

Expect VIP treatment if you cycle up to the refurbished 400-room Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, London. The doorman will take your bike and park it for you - and even keep your helmet and gloves warm. Richard Williams, assistant concierge at the hotel - where suites cost up to £950 a night - said the Royal Garden introduced valet parking for cyclists after management noticed a rise in the number of businessmen coming to meetings and lunches by bike. The hotel has space for ten bikes in a secure store, and can look after more in a lock-up in its car park. But the acid test is whether the casually-dressed cyclist would be allowed to wear Lycra in the hotel restaurant. Richards said: "No problem. We have no strict dress code, but the cyclist themselves may feel a bit uncomfortable."

Will Bramhill.

E-mail: will@bikenews.org  
 The Bicycle News Agency  
<http://www.bikenews.org>

### Clear Zones Award

Leicester City Council were one of six local authorities to win Foresight Clear Zones awards during April 1999, for their innovative use of technology in tackling traffic congestion and pollution. Leicester's contribution was the EFFECT/EMMA air quality and traffic monitoring system, which aims to improve existing models for monitoring air quality, by allowing for the effect of different traffic control strategies on pollution to be measured and managed.

### Spokes Leisure Rides Prove to be Popular

Spokes 1999 leisure ride programme is proving popular, with a good turn out on new faces on many rides. As autumn approaches, now is the time to top up your tan and show off the fitness gained during those long summer rides. The hill dodgers are out and about on August 22nd from The Quay on Western Boulevard. On September 12th a ride starts from Market Harborough, travelling a short distance on the Brampton Valley Way before crossing the A508 at Maidwell. From there a couple of off-road miles lead to the lovely parkland and village of Cottesbrooke. A hilly section then takes us to Guilsborough, from where it's a short ride to our destination of Coton Manor Gardens (entrance fee). Here there are refreshments to prepare us for the return journey. The autumn season sees rides out from Ratcliffe Road on September 12th, October 10th and October 24th. Full details from the Spokes Ride Guide or web site.

### Committee of MPs call for National Traffic Targets

On 28th April 1999, a powerful backbench committee of MPs backed Friends of the Earth's call for national targets to guide transport policy. The House of Commons' Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee's report on the 'Integrated Transport White Paper' recommends the new Commission for Integrated Transport examines 'the setting of national targets... as a priority'. The Committee's report confirms Friends of the Earth's view that last year's White Paper 'A New Deal for Transport: better for everyone' only aims to reduce road traffic growth, and described criticisms of the Government's 'failure to provide for road traffic reduction' as 'powerful'. The Committee found that: 'A new policy in place of 'predict and provide' is needed. Several witnesses argued that it should be based on the establishment of national targets for appropriate levels of road traffic. The targets would provide a framework for establishing other transport policies. They should guide local authorities in the formulation of local transport strategies and, in particular, they should be built into the process of appraising new roads to discourage the Highways Agency from planning on the basis of existing traffic forecasts when considering a road scheme'. Friends of the Earth welcomes this endorsement of FOE's position by an influential Parliamentary Committee. Ron Bailey, Friends of the Earth's Parliamentary Campaigner, said: "The Select Committee has hit the nail on the head. Government policy will allow an increase in traffic levels despite Government commitments to help people use their cars less. Ministers urgently need to set national targets for road traffic reduction to give their policies teeth".

Friends of the Earth 28/4/99



## Cycling in Bradgate Park

Local Leicestershire & Rutland District CTC group have enquired about cycling in Bradgate Park. The following is the reply received from the Bradgate Park Trust.

I refer to our conversation a few weeks ago. I now write, as promised, to formally advise you of a change of arrangements under which cycling is permitted, on a concessionary basis, along the main carriageway through Bradgate Park (Newtown Linford to Hallgates).

The route of the carriageway is a designated public footpath on the definitive public rights of way map and as such the public only have a legal right of way on foot. However, the Trust has been pleased to allow cycling along the carriageway through Bradgate Park, subject to the priority use and welfare of pedestrians. Cycling elsewhere across the Park has never been permitted.

As you will be aware, the carriageway becomes very busy with pedestrians at peak visitor times. A high percentage of visitors obtain great enjoyment and relaxation by just strolling and wandering along the carriageway. The elderly, and infirm feel safe and children can run about in a basically traffic free environment.

Unfortunately, amongst the cyclists who ride along the carriageway, there is an increasing number who behave in an inconsiderate/ irresponsible manner. Some use excessive speed, whilst others just do not respect the safety and well being of the pedestrian. In recent times, there have been a number of minor bumps and near misses. This Spring, a cyclist, as a result of excessive speed, knocked down two ladies, both of whom re-

quired hospital attention. A situation has now been reached whereby to continue to permit cycling along the carriageway, on a concessionary basis, at peak visitor times is positively dangerous and a situation exists whereby there is a serious accident 'just waiting to happen'.

On the other hand, the Trust appreciates that for the cyclist a ride through Bradgate Park, is an enjoyable outing and accordingly it wishes to try and avoid a Situation whereby cycling in the Park was prohibited.

Trust has, therefore decided that in future cycling will not be permitted along the carriageway at busy times, particularly at weekends and Bank Holidays. The only exception to this will be for small accompanied children. To maximise time when cycling is permitted, the Senior Keeper on duty will decide on the day if and when the Park has become too busy to allow any further cycling along the carriageway for a period of time that day. Park staff at entrance gates, will then so advise any cyclist that arrives during that busy period.

The Trust appreciates that the restriction may affect some of your members, but hopes they can, in future, plan their cycling trips through Bradgate Park for non busy periods. If they are on a cross country trip cyclists will be permitted to go through Bradgate Park at a busy period providing they wheel their cycle for the full length of the carriageway. At all times when cycling is permitted they must please ride slowly and carefully and give way to pedestrians - they have priority.

I felt you would appreciate being notified of this revised situation so you can advise your Members.

26th August 1998

## Local Transport Seminar

In May 1999, Leicester Spokes together with other organisations with an interest in transport issues, attended a Provisional Local Transport Plan seminar organised by Leicester City Council in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council. It is requirement that local councils consult widely to maximise transport funding from Central Government. The seminar invited all participants to express their likes and concerns regarding travel in the Leicester area. Many modes of transport were covered. The following outcome was with regard to cycling:

*"The Good Things": The Town Hall Bike Park, more cycle routes available, cycling taken seriously, some pleasant routes, more public transport or cycle lanes, and the Great Central Way.*

*"The Concerns": Cycle routes not continuous, Traffic lights do not detect cyclists, Poor co-ordination of some cycle routes, Insufficient or lack of cycle lanes, Not enough money spent on cycle development.*

Then discussion groups were formed and feedback was summarised. For the Cycling topic:

1. *Lack of Cycling: Safety/ accident prevention, awareness/promotion, secure parking at destination, poor provision for cycling on major roads, lack of continuity of cycle lanes, hazards.*
2. *Monitoring numbers of Cyclists: Achieve local cycling targets.*
3. *Lack of Funds.*
4. *Restrict Access to City Centre for Motorists.*

The next stage is a major public participation exercise in Autumn, prior to submission to Central Government of the Full Local Transport Plan in July 2000.

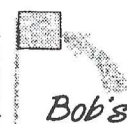
## Police - Obstruction

It is illegal for motor vehicles to drive into or wait in cycle lanes which are marked with a solid white lane. Obstructing contra flow cycle lanes in one way streets is particularly dangerous, as cyclists are forced onto oncoming traffic. So Spokes have complained to the police about continually illegally parked cars in contra flow cycle lanes in two city centre locations, with mixed results. On York Road the police would only radio a traffic warden to issue penalty tickets if the illegally park vehicle, in the contra flow cycle lane, is also actually mounted on the pavement leaving less than a gap of a metre width for pedestrians to pass. On Churchgate, taxis choose to wait near their office in the contra flow cycle lane rather than the designated taxi waiting area a few yards further away. When the police asked our Spokes man if he would like to give a statement, he was told that HE is liable to prosecution if admitting to riding on the wrong side of the road while overtaking the obstruction! Of course we declined the police kind offer of taking our statement.

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