

The Russians Are Coming!

Continuing his current love of all things Russian, Roger has been in contact with the Russian Cycle Touring Club who are keen to arrange an exchange trip. The first part will be their coming over to Spokesfest, with us visiting them in 2001.

SpokesFest Registrations

Several people have already registered for the weekend and Leicester Promotions are busy sending out the information packs. However, there is a strictly limited number of places for events such as the Friday night get together and the talks. We recommend you register early!

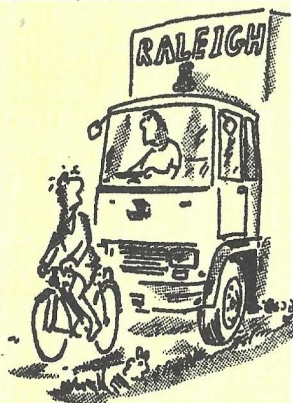
Find the Registration Form Inside!

Bus and Cycle Lane Invasion

Continued from front page

and assist motorcycles which have "unclear net environmental gains" (see article inside "The Smart Choice?"). Leicester Spokes concerns were put forward to Leicester City Council in which they replied "Initial indications are that there are a large and significant number of objections to these proposals, primarily for safety reasons but also as a matter of principle - i.e. need to reduce goods vehicles on the roads, need to promote sustainable transport etc. There are some theoretical benefits of shared use and we need to get the views of the PTW lobby and the Road Freight Industry- this is in hand and will be available for consensus making later this year." When Spokes asked what weighting cyclists safety be given against Lorry and PTW users interests in the consensus making process, no answer was offered. It seems the decision is in the balance. Spokes will let you know the outcome.

*Provisional Local Transport Plan, Central Leicestershire (ISBN 1 901156 01 X). The closing date for comments to the Provisional Local Transport Plan was 31/12/99. The final version will be published in July 2000.



AGM & SpokesFest Talk

Leicester Spokes Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held on Wednesday 15th March 2000, 7.00pm at The Friends' Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Leicester. After the business matters have been concluded, Roger will give a talk about SpokeFest, perhaps Spokes's greatest venture yet! Light complimentary refreshments will be available. Please send committee nominations (Chair, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, and Ordinary Committee members) to: Leicester Spokes, PO Box 30, LE1 9DG, by Friday 3rd March 2000. A non committee member is requested to audit the accounts. If you can help, please call Greg. on 2677369.

Midweek Rides

The myth that the mid-week Wednesday rides are long and fast is still around. Ian assures all that this is not the case and asks you to come along and see for yourself. The first of these will be on April 5th starting at 7pm from the London Road/Ratcliffe Rd Junction. The destination will be determined by the weather and who turns up. We hope to see you there.

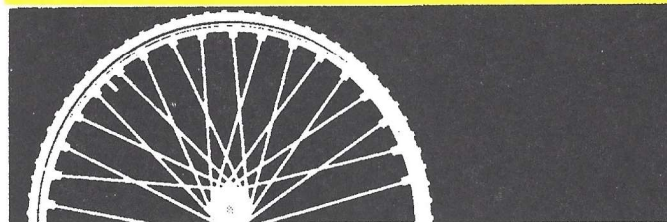
Which has more Value?

Material Possessions or Life Itself
The maximum penalty for Causing Death by Dangerous Driving is 10 years, whereas the maximum penalty for Burglary is 14 years.

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

Leicester Spokes: www.tembo.demon.co.uk
SpokesFest: www.spokesfest.freeserve.co.uk

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Issue No 58
Spring 2000

Bus and Cycle Lane Invasion

In December 1999 Leicester Spokes asked its members to write to object to the latest Leicester City and County Council transport proposals, which are considering allowing lorries and motorcycles into Bus Lanes. Cyclists are permitted to use Bus Lanes in Leicester. Local Authorities need to submit Local Transport Plans to bid for 5 years of transport funding from Central Government. In the past bids had to be made every year. Deep within this provisional version, 200 page document*, the following statements were found: "It is anticipated that the following initiatives (for lorries) will be investigated: Shared use of bus lanes" (page 56). "The subject areas that such a (Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) [i.e. motorcycles]) strategy may include are as follows: Shared use of (cycle) advanced stop lines, Shared use of bus lanes" (page 58). This is a shame, as our overall assessment of the plan is that cycling is being seriously considered, which is to be

~~Bus Motorbike
Lorry Taxi
Cycle Lane~~

No Car Lane

encouraged and good infrastructure built. We have already seen the relative safety of Bus Lanes eroded, when only recently in February 1999, the City Council approved a Traffic Regulation Order to allow Hackney Carriages (Black Cabs) into Bus Lanes. We believe this was a concession to pacify angry Taxi trade drivers having to replace their vehicles with "London" style Black Cabs. Now as part of the rules that wide consultation must take place, City and County Council discussions with Lorry Freight Operators and Motorcycle Groups, are effectively considering sacrificing cyclists lives, in order for lorries to "service businesses efficiently" *Continued on back page*

Lorries and Bikes Don't Mix!

Lorries are involved in accidents accounting for only 2.5% of cyclist casualties. However, they are involved in 20% of the accidents which result in the death of a cyclist. In 1995 6% of cyclists involved in a collision with a lorry died, compared with 0.5% of those involved in a collision with a car.

DETR 5/6/98.

Cyclists are Happier Individuals

Researchers at Glasgow University have confirmed that walking and cycling to work rather than driving or using public transport can improve mental as well as physical health. The study found that the 295 volunteers who over the past year have incorporated 'active commuting' into their daily routine had become "happier" individuals. It just goes to show that there is always room for improvement.

CTC Digest 23

Childrens Art Competition

Keep an eye out for details of a childrens art competition that Roger is hoping to organize as we go to press.

Woodgate Car Club

Car Clubs are successful on the continent, but are still relatively new in Britain. The members of a car club, join together to share the ownership and running costs of a car, and arrange to book the vehicle out for the times they need to use it. This reduces the number of vehicles on the road, encourages drivers to think about the most appropriate type of transport for a given journey, and cuts the cost of running a car for those who do not need to use it every day.

A group of residents in the Woodgate area of Leicester are currently setting up a car club, and have been working with Environ to do some of the initial planning. In this case charges being considered are £1.40/hour plus 17p/mile with an annual membership fee of £100, which assumes a ratio of about 8 to 10 members to one small car, and a total weekly car use of 40 hours. However no two Car Clubs are likely to have the same charges and rules, as these will vary dependent on usage, number of members, type and age of car, and so on.

The Woodgate Car Club are keen to hear from anyone else in the area who might want to take part in the project. Practically speaking, the scheme is likely to be of most interest to those living in Woodgate or neighbouring areas (Newfoundpool, Frog Island, Tudor Road, Blackbird Road etc). Further details of the planned club are available from Nick Jones at Environ on 2220253 (Email: njones@environ.org.uk) or Geoff Forse at Woodgate Resource Centre on 253 0717. Nick Jones can also be contacted if any group (e.g. A Residents Association) is interested in setting up a car club in their own neighbourhood.

The Smart Choice?

The Motorcycle Industry Association is calling for motorcycles to be allowed into Bus Lanes, and Advanced Stop Lines in a new publication 'Powered Two Wheelers: The Smart Choice'. The unanimous view in the cycle community is that both are highly undesirable. Motorcycles are 'motorised transport' with unclear net environmental gains. The 'smart choice' is to think very hard before encouraging this mode. *CTC Digest No.23*

Christmas Curry

15 people turned up (with many cycling) for a pre Christmas celebration to Jamal's Balti House. The food was good. Given the turn out, Ian intends to organise something in the Spring possibly riding out to the Black Horse at Walcot where the Tai food is superb.

Shaky Start for English Council Cycling Strategies

More than three years after the launch of the national cycling strategy, local authority progress towards doubling bike use by 2002 looks decidedly wobbly, according to new research. A survey of UK councils has found that while three-quarters may have adopted the plan's objectives, fewer than half have set targets☺ and only one in 10 has an action plan☺. Most point to engineering measures such as cycle lanes☺ and parking☺, but far fewer cite education☺, monitoring☺ or publicity campaigns☺. 'Cycle tracks alone don't get people out of their cars and onto bikes,' said Rodney Tolley, director of the Centre for Alternative and Sustainable Transport at Staffordshire University. 'We're disappointed by the patchy progress. Most authorities so far are not contributing towards achieving the national targets.' CAST surveyed all UK councils, and 38% responded☺. Only a fifth liaised with police on traffic law enforcement☺, and just a quarter had theft reduction strategies☺. Half mentioned monitoring☺, and a similar proportion had a cycling budget☺, but only a fifth had specialist staff☺. One hundred strategies were analysed, including all English county councils. But only one in the confidential survey had adopted the Government's model strategy package in full☺. A narrow majority closely followed the guidance☺, though most lacked funding☺. The rest tended to have very general strategy statements, including some horror stories founded on complete ignorance of the guidelines', Tolley said. It would be extremely disappointing if council engineers believed cycling could be doubled without a full range of measures, said Stuart Reid of the Cyclists' Touring Club. But most councils seemed at least to aspire to the national targets. *Surveyor 13/1/2000. Spokes added smiley faces*

Editorial Comment

"Are you are still cycling?", was the welcome as I entered the Photographers shop, to collect our new baby's passport photo. He knew that I cycled, as he had photographed me arriving on a bike at my wedding 3 years ago. At work, as I walk in carrying my folding bike, I'm often greeted with comments like "I bet you've just pulled that out of the boot of your new car". It is strange that whilst cycling is welcomed by most people, it seems that you are expected to give up cycling, once

you get your driving license, start a family, or buy a car. Do people feel slightly guilty or jealous that I am still fit and healthy, and helping to reduce congestion and pollution, or am I just considered to be a "crank"?

Finally I regret to announce that, due to my newly appointed role as Chief nappy changer (terries of course!), this shall be my last Spokes newsletter I shall be editing. I have thoroughly enjoyed producing all the issues, since no.45, and hope you have liked reading Spokes too. *Greg Puczylo*

Spokes Men Hobnob In London

Roger and Simon were invited to a lecture on Human Powered Aircraft by the Royal Aeronautical Society at their swanky conference rooms in central London. It also gave them a chance to discuss their own plans for an aeroplane with people who have experience of such things. An unconfirmed rumour suggests that Roger was going to wear something more appropriate than his beloved Dr Feelgood T shirt!

How does Leicester City Council compare?

- ☺ Positive response, or in current cycling strategy
- ☺ Being considered for updated cycling strategy
- ☹ Negative response, or not to be included in cycling strategy



MP's Helmet Climb Down

Bristol East MP Jean Corston has climbed down over the issue of making helmets compulsory for cyclists after pressure from cycling organisations. The MP for Bristol East had put forward a Ten-Minute Rule Bill which was to be read on November 2nd, with the wording "That leave be given to bring a Bill to require cyclists to wear protective headgear; and for connected purposes". Following a meeting with CTC the Bill has been changed to read "to promote the wearing of protective headgear by cyclists; and for connected purposes". Stuart Reid, campaigns manager of CTC, Britain's national cycling organisation, welcomed the news. He said: "We feel that any attempt to force the use of cycle helmets using legislation would be misguided and damaging. "There is no recognised proof that helmets would be effective in the majority of serious cycle accidents. There is however considerable evidence that compulsion would have a devastating effect on public health, by drastically reducing the number of people who cycle. "Neither the CTC, The British Medical Association or the Royal College of General Practitioners are in favour of compulsion. This is a very complex issue that does not lend itself to simplistic solutions. Experts in the areas of cycling and health have found the concept of compulsion to be neither practical nor desirable."

CTC 27/10/99

Footnote: DETR statistics state that 80% of all head injuries caused by road traffic accidents are sustained by car occupants and pedestrians. Thus indicating that these modes of transport would benefit more from the use of helmets!

Cyclists Consultative Panel Report

About 4 times a year representatives are invited from Leicester Spokes, the Local CTC and other bodies with cycling interests, to the Leicester City Council Cyclists Consultative Panel. Leicester Spokes asked about a number of issues during such a meeting held on 24th January:

Progress was requested of the Cycle Route Along Line of the A47 from Leicester Forest East. Indeed not long ago advisory cycle lanes along the A47 were scrapped at a County Council Committee, however the area concerned is now in the Greater Leicester area which has greater influence by the City Council. The City Council replied that it is proposed that this route be placed in the Local Transport plan five year programme. In practise this would hopefully mean that advanced design for the route should begin within the next couple of years with funding for detailed design and construction provided in the next three to five years. Naturally this programme depends on the Government being able to match funds to the bid. If shortfalls occur at any time the programme will slip.

Concern was expressed for the safety of cyclists at the Narborough Road/ Fullhurst Avenue junction of the Green Ringway, and additional road markings were suggested. The City Council propose that it could be improved as part of the Narborough Road Local Safety Scheme. Design on this scheme could commence next financial year and construction during the year after. The remainder of the Green Ringway, featured in the Local Transport plan bid, should be completed, subject to Planning applications, over the next

five years.

The Issue of Lorries in Bus Lanes was raised. See Headline Newsletter article for the City Council response.

The Local CTC raised a number of issues concerning damaged or contradictory signs around the City Centre. Some repairs have been given the go ahead, and investigations have begun into resolving the confusion as to when cycling is permitted around the Clock Tower Area.

Progress of cycle schemes was discussed including Sustrans Route 64 which forms part of the Evington Safer Routes Project. Advanced stop lines and in many cases Toucan crossings are soon to be constructed on Evington Lane/ Wakerley Road and Spencefield Lane/ Downing Drive, and traffic calming proposals in Evington Main Street, High Street and Church Lane are still underway. In addition consultation is also being undertaken to provide the proposed Toucan crossing on Spencefield Lane outside St Pauls school and the zebra crossing proposed outside the primary schools. Objections have been received and officers are meeting with objectors in early February. School Pupils were allowed to choose, via the School Councils, the type and style of cycle shelters (which will be surveyed by Close Circuit Cameras) and lockers to be used at 3 senior schools in the area.

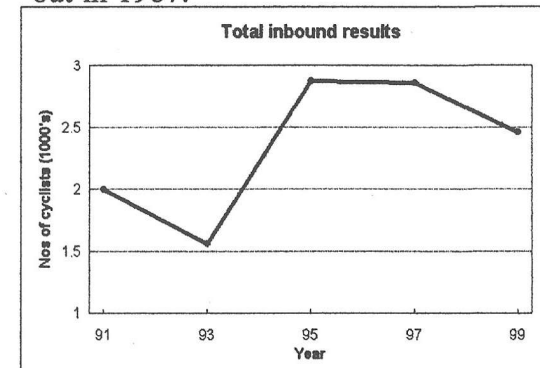
The City Council proposed the following priority for proposed cycling schemes for the next financial year in which a £0.4M bid was made:

1. Completion of the Leicester to Evington cycle route.
2. Cycle facilities at Guilford Road junction
3. Riverside Way upgrade in the

vicinity of the Space Centre.

4. Riverside Way missing link at Loughborough Road.

In October 1999 the City Centre cycle cordon surveys were collected. These surveys are collected on a single day every two years, the first being carried out in 1987.



The overall impression given by the City Council is that the largest number of cyclists still continue to be found on the main radial roads into Leicester. It was felt this gives a strong argument towards continuing the policy of providing for cyclists on the main roads, and that the existence of the cycle network is still relatively unknown and gives a strong argument for ensuring over the next five years that the network is well signed.

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Spokes Map Book Ref: Page 17,5 / H.

Sparkenhoe St.



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 Leicester Spokes, PO Box 30, Leicester, LE1 9DG

†Leicester Cycling Map is published by Leicester City Council, produced by CycleCity Guides.
Data Protection Act: Your membership details will be held on computer

Register Now for Spokesfest!

28th – 31st July 2000

The boats and bikes event on Sunday afternoon is a public event free to all. However, to get free entry to all the other events you should register now. This costs £12 and entitles you to free entry to all events including fun rides, Friday night's free buffet and party with live music, the human powered aeroplane display and talk, access to the racecourse area, and other impromptu fun events. When you arrive you will get a welcome pack with lots of info about Leicester, and your Spokesfest card which will also get you various discounts and offers at selected bars and restaurants in Leicester over the four days of Spokesfest.

Camping is available at the lovely racecourse site for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, this costs £15.

Official Report Advises to Half the School Run

A recently published Government-commissioned report by the School Travel Advisory Group has stated that the number of primary school children ferried to school by car, from 37%, should be halved over the next 10 years, to 20%. The report's recommendations which would increase the total of children under 11 walking, cycling or catching the bus to school by at least half a million, were accepted "in principle" by Keith Hill, the junior transport minister. Currently the school run accounts for 20% of the morning rush hour. Extra money is being considered by Ministers for new bus bays and secure cycle parking and lockers. Other recommendations include: Non distance related fixed minimum bus fares for all school-age children, better school courses in pedestrian and cycle safety; and allowing Ofsted inspections to check for school green transport credentials. Opposition transport spokesman Bernard Jenkin, rejected restrictions on school runs where they interfered with parents' choice of school stating "The advantage of a car-owning democracy is that people have more convenient choices over a wider geographical area. That is something to celebrate, not despair about."

Roadkill Bill

by KEN AVIDOR



Source: Car Busters No.7 Winter 2000 (www.antenna.nl/eyfa/cb)

Pedestrians and cyclists are exposed to lower levels of traffic fumes than people in cars, as they travel closer in to the kerb where pollutant levels are lower whilst cars tend to draw in fumes from the vehicle in front. 'Road User Exposure to Air Pollution' DETR & the Environmental Transport Association

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