

CTC/CCN Conference: Cambridge, 10th May 2008

Simon and Andy attended on behalf of Pedalpushers/Sheffield Cycling Campaign. Simon presented. Here are just a few notes about the major themes of the day.

About 117 delegates so very well attended.



Introduction by Cambridge MP David Howorth

A be-suited (he walked there) David Howorth, MP for Cambridge, opened the conference with an interesting anecdote-sprinkled talk about cycling being for everyone – the elderly, children, and even himself, Boris, David Cameron, Snow and Paxman

Matt Seaton, former cycling columnist of The Guardian

Cycling has stayed the same in Wales, gone up slightly in London and Yorkshire and Cambridge but everywhere else car usage has increased and cycling has not or has gone down. What is the next stage ?

Need to think about superstructure (not infrastructure) – make it seem cool and desirable.

Need to reconceptualise our image as not “merely cyclists” but bus users, motorists, pedestrian’s etc. because otherwise we become competing road-users.

Martin Lucas-Smith, Cambridge Cycle Campaign

The local context:

Idea: a No Cycling Day (everyone go by car and show them what its like with 25% extra people going by car).

Lots of good local (Cambridge) decisions being made but still bad things also.



Cycling 2020: A programme of improvement for Cambridge.

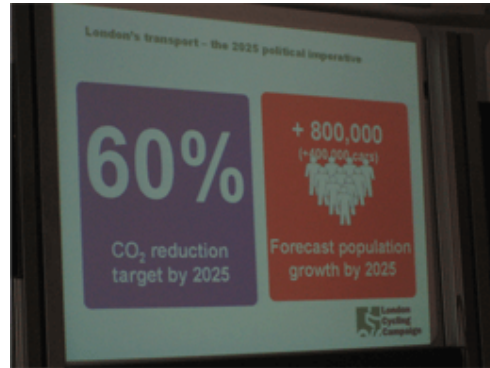
Chisholm Trail – a Super Highway for bikes

Hybrid cycle lanes (on-road but cobbled dividing strip), 2.4m wide

Many other components to the plan. Simon has the glossy brochure for anyone interested. The brochure may also be downloaded from here <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/cycling2020/>

Tom Bogdanowicz, London Cycling Campaign

London cycling growing a lot (couldn't catch the figures – see the slides). An interesting and wide-ranging talk.



Two of Tom's slides

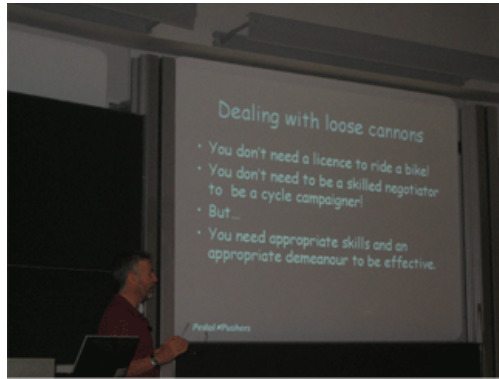
It seems that London is one of the very few places where cycling has actually increased in recent years. The prognosis was good and whilst Boris's approach to cycling could not be completely predicted the thinking was that he was likely to continue to give it a high priority.

Simon Geller, Sheffield Cycle Campaign/Pedalpushers

Running a Successful Cycle Campaign Group

Our very own Simon Geller presented an interesting talk which argued that success critically involved people management and development of community but that in this current Internet age the ways we must do that must change to be effective. Simon showed how we were in SCC attempting to support that with the use of IT. This went down very well and there were several follow-ups on this with Simon and Andy after the talk.





Simon in full flow

Philip Darnton -, Cycling England –



Philip updated us on the progress that Cycling England have made. They have increased funding and are expanding the Cycle Demonstration Towns pilots, with one 'cycling city' (Sheffield didn't get it unfortunately) although some campaigners are wondering when we will move from demonstrations to reality. Nevertheless Philip is always an entertaining speaker and the commitment he shows and the progress he has made is commendable.

There followed breakout sessions

... on Talking to the Media, Marketing and Mapping, where Martin Lucas-Smith and Simon Nuttall demonstrated the mapping project that the Cambridge Cycle Campaign are doing. Whilst the importance of the first two should not be under-estimated Simon and Andy were both seduced by the "sexiness" of the mapping session so both went to that. The session was so popular in fact that it was run twice with a change of audience between. The technology use was very impressive. In this scheme cyclists take photographs along a route and record the location. Route segments are then drawn on maps using google maps and videos of routes that put the segments together generated on demand. Thus an eventual user can find a route and see what it is like on demand. There was considerable discussion around the relation

of this work to the Open Streemap project (there should be a relationship but isn't). All good fun interesting stuff with the potential to become a national scheme – a strategy currently being explored but I didn't quite catch the status of that part. The technology can be explored on the Camcycle website here <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/map/>.

The Media session featured Will Bramhill, from Colchester who as well as being a cycle campaigner is an editor on his local paper. He contradicted my long-held belief that local papers are influenced in what they print by the revenue from motor industry advertising, and had a lot of helpful tips on how to keep in touch with the media. I'll be happy to pass these on to our media rep if we ever get one.

TADAAAA TADAAA TADAAA (loud trumpets herald success)

We won third prize in the poster competition. Well Done Anna!!!!



After the conference – the ride to see the good and the bad in Cambridge

There followed a tour of cycle facilities in Cambridge – mostly very good although there are some turkeys around - a very impressive bridge is shortly to open to take NCN11 over the River Cam. CamCycle don't need to work on building a cycling culture in Cambridge, as with 25% of trips already being taken by bike it is already there, so they have concentrated on high quality infrastructure, reversing some of the earlier attempts to force cyclists off the road and on to shared-use pavements and encouraging the council to introduce permeability and improve on-road cycling instead. The net result of this is that the town has been able to grow sustainably, with no need for huge road infrastructure schemes that would destroy the fabric of this historic city.

Camcycle have produced an impressive planning document, [Cycling 2020](#) which includes an ambitious plan for a cycle route following the controversial guided bus scheme (controversial because it follows a closed rail route that may think should be re-opened as heavy rail – will the buses carry bikes? – it seems unlikely) the 'Chisholm Trail.

Networking and other matters

Simon's presentation (with IT material from Andy) generated a lot of interest in the idea that development of the CCN required some IT infrastructure support. Simon and Andy were involved in several conversations about this, notably with Tom Bogdanowicz, the Cambridge guys, Chris Juden, Rod King from Warrington & Olli Glover from GMCC . Interest was such that Simon suggested we might host in Sheffield a half-day conference devoted to this theme with all the people that are doing anything this way presenting what they are doing and starting the debate on how some infrastructure could be established – what should be in it and organisational context – who and what and so on.

Conversations with Chris Juden highlighted the split there is between persons campaigning for on-road cycling and the mountain-biker people campaigning on matters relating to off-road use such as long-distance tracks. It may be worth Pedalpushers establishing who in our number has contacts with these organisations so as to know quickly who to talk to so as be singing from the same hymn sheet when matters of common or conflicting interest arise.

The conference slides will all be up on the Camcycle Web Site (but at time of writing are not).

A big thanks to Camcycle for a well-organised conference in an excellent venue, great hospitality (we were accommodated by Beth from the campaign for which many thanks) and we were blessed with splendid weather! Oh & Simon cycled back to Leicester in 9 hours.

And finally



Some Brompton Porn
Seen in the foyer – so many that I couldn't get them all in the
photo!

Simon Geller
Andy Heath