

Minutes

Cyclox Monthly Meeting Weds 3rd Dec

1. West Oxford Cyclox

West Oxford Cyclox had their first monthly meeting on Weds 20th Nov

Simon Banks and Richard Mann described this very successful first meeting with approx 30 people aged 29–78 years in attendance. For the timebeing, West Oxford Cyclox will meet on the 3rd Weds of every month at 7.30 pm in West Oxford Community Centre, opposite St Frideswide Church, Botley Rd.

NB: West Oxford Cyclox's meetings are independent of the main Cyclox Monthly Meetings, which will remain at East Oxford Community Centre (Cowley Rd) at 7 pm on the first Weds of the first few months of 2004, before we move it to a central Oxford venue.

Where is it difficult to cycle in west Oxford?

A brainstorm of where there are difficulties for cyclists in West Oxford showed that by far the biggest problem is the railway junction area, particularly going under the railway bridge. The group had received a very supportive letter prior to the meeting from the mother of the girl who was killed cycling under the railway bridge, asking West Oxford Cyclox to try to do something about this area.

Railway Bridge the campaign focus for 2004

The group agreed to start 2004 with a campaign to have the railway bridge made safe to cycle under. Potential stunts to attract media attention were discussed – ‘building’ a tunnel for cycle next to the road under the bridge is the likeliest media stunt: *watch this space for details!*

West Oxford Cyclox's second meeting – Weds 16th Dec

The group discussed options for making the railway bridge easy to cycle under, and agreed in the first instance to demand a sufficiently wide cycle lane marked under the bridge to signal to drivers the need to make way for cycles. Cyclox's longer-term goal here is to have a dedicated cycle route built under the railway bridge, possibly by building a suspended walkway over a 1m-wide cycle lane. Though expensive, this is feasible and we know that the Council has considered this as the safest option in the past.

Media success!

BBC Radio Oxford interviewed Simon Banks about West Oxford Cyclox's campaign on the railway bridge very favourably and at some length. Cllr David Robertson, the Council's head of transport, was also interviewed about the railway bridge, where he agreed that there is a lot of cycle-car conflict. He stated that the Council wants to improve the area, but that it is difficult in terms of space available. He stated that the Council is producing a list of the most troublesome spots for cyclists in order to prioritise work in these areas, which sounds like a great opportunity for Cyclox to get involved.

The 3rd meeting of West Oxford Cyclox is on Weds 21st Jan at 7.30 pm, West Oxford Community Centre, Botley Rd.

2. Headington & Marston Cyclox

The Headington & Marston group had their first meeting at the end of Nov to discuss what they could do in their areas for cyclists:

- **Cycle routes that don't meet up:** Cyclox needs to develop its existing plan for a dual-network for fast and slower routes here (and around the rest of the city) in 2004.
- **Safe routes to schools.**
- **Meeting with Oxford Radcliffe Hospital Transport Manager:** was very constructive and it was agreed Cyclox could collaborate with the hospital to great effect.
- **Barton Road traffic calming:** Les Hitchins described Cyclox's response to the Council's consultation on this scheme. Contact cyclox@oxfoe.co.uk for further details.
- **Lime Walk traffic calming; Old Road cycle route:** both projects have been scheduled by the Council for 2004. Contact cyclox@oxfoe.co.uk for further details.
- **Cycle route standards:** Cyclox is going to produce technical guidelines so when we're asked to comment on proposals there's an agreed policy for what is/isn't acceptable in terms of the width of cycle lanes, cycle lane positioning, etc.

3. Proposals to stop rat-running on Divinity Road

The Council and Halcrow (the same engineering consultancy that's doing the work on Cowley Road) held a public exhibition in Manzil Way showing ways they propose to stop commuter parking and rat-running through East Oxford. Contact cyclox@oxfoe.co.uk for full details of this HAMATS (Headington & Marston Area Transport Strategy) proposal.

Cyclox borrowed the information boards and maps from the exhibition to use at our meeting to find out what people who cycle think of the proposals. Richard Mann talked the meeting through the options which include:

1. the fairly radical proposal to close Warneford Lane to all traffic except cycles, buses and emergency vehicles. Local residents and the Council are surprisingly keen to go for this option;
2. closure of Divinity Road (Morrell Avenue end) and Stone Street;
3. traffic calming – perhaps home zones – to slow traffic on Divinity Road.

All the measures would make it safer and easier to cycle in East Oxford, but option 3 would not really make that much difference to the amount of traffic nor its speed.

Cyclox is pleased to note that as part of this HAMATS scheme, the Council intends to build a new cycle track from the top of Southfield Road / Bartlemas Road area north to the hospitals. Everyone at the meeting filled in one of Halcrow's consultation feedback forms which were sent to the Council.

THE NEXT CYCLOX MONTHLY MEETING IS ON WEDS 7TH JAN AT 7.30 PM, EAST OXFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE (COWLEY ROAD).

PUT IT IN YOUR NEW DIARIES NOW! And do bring a friend, as this meeting will be a short, fun one: a multimedia presentation by Graham Paul Smith on examples of good cycling facilities that have been implemented to such great effect in countries such as Denmark and Holland. This will lead into a discussion of what we can learn from these, and especially what could be implemented on Cowley Road as part of the £1m safety improvement scheme.

Don't forget to return those blue Cowley Road feedback forms (from the Cyclox Monthly Meeting in Nov) to Dominic Scholfield at OCW (39 Magdalen Road, OX4 1RB).