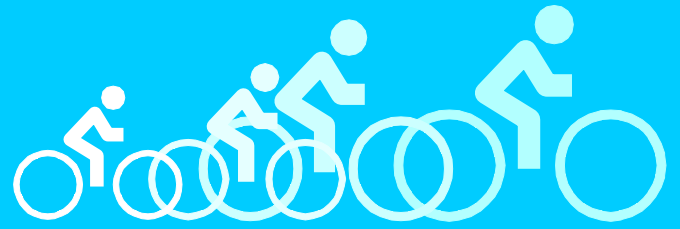


CYCLING Wakefield

Newsletter of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



Edition number 7

December 2010



What do you think of the new access point for cyclists on the cycle track in the new country park at Fryston?

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Survey result set cycle forum priorities

Thank you to all members who completed the survey sent out with last month's newsletter. We received over 170 replies and the responses will help us to focus our campaigning and activities for the next year.

The full results of the survey are enclosed with this newsletter and you can see that they endorse the forums focus on campaigning for better cycle infrastructure both on the highways and on off-road tracks. As you will see from the articles in this newsletter we are still busy driving forward these priorities.

David's work recognised



Our vice-chair, David Keighley, has won official recognition for his work to promote cycling in Wakefield District.

And no wonder he is smiling he won a weekend break at Center Parcs courtesy of Team Green Britain Bike Week and Center Parcs! The prize was for the organiser who encouraged the most participants to sign up to a Team Green Britain Bike Week event on the website.

Cyclists at Traffic lights

In the February issue of the newsletter we reported that we had a positive response from traffic engineers to reports from members about traffic lights that did not respond to cyclists. Below is the report of investigations into the problem. It is quite technical and a bit long but we hope you find it useful. Thank you to members who raised the issue and do let us know of any further problems.

'We share the Wakefield District Cycling Forums frustration that the problem of detecting bicycles at traffic signal junctions would still appear to be a significant problem, despite the advances in technology the traffic signal control industry has made in recent years.

The 'inductive loop' technology used to detect vehicles at traffic signals is still used in the vast majority of traffic signal installations throughout the UK. They detect vehicles as they pass through a magnetic field induced above cables cut into the road surface. Their reliability at detecting the smaller profile of a passing bicycle however, remains problematic, particularly since their use is mandatory in a number of traffic signal control situations.

Given a list of problem locations identified by our WDCF contacts, we commissioned our traffic signals maintenance contractor to assess the performance of inductive loops using a standard frame steel bicycle. Two engineers were commissioned to each location where detection problems have been reported. One engineer crossed the bicycle over each loop at varying positions in the road to clarify if the positioning taken up by a cyclist was critical to detection. A second engineer, positioned at the traffic signal control cabinet, monitored the detection systems success rate.

The electronics of the detection system allow for some adjustment of inductive loop sensitivity. Any 'failure to detect' at the traffic controller therefore, was subject to further investigation. Incremental re-calibration of the loop sensitivity (and repeat testing) was carried out whenever the loops failed to detect the bicycle from any position on the loop. We found during these investigations that even the maximum values of sensitivity in some locations, failed to register a bicycle presence on the inductive loop. Our specialist contractors have advised why this occurs:

Detector loops are cut into the road surface using either a chevron, diamond or square pattern with the different shapes used being dependant upon the specific requirements of the control system. A loop's size, shape and its position in the road will all impact on its ability to detect the lower metallic mass of a bicycle.

The magnetic field induced by any loop is not uniform over its entire surface area. It is more sensitive to disturbance (detection) nearer to the corners of the loop where a change in the direction of the field occurs. Positive detection is more reliable where approaching cyclists cross this zone at an angle i.e. cutting tangentially across the corner of the loop. Chevron and diamond shaped loops are more likely to be crossed by the cyclist through this more sensitive zone of the loop, but our results would indicate that even this is no guarantee of detection. Larger loops (cut across wider traffic lanes) will have a more dispersed field, reducing the maximum sensitivity of the loop. Adjusting the sensitivity of a loop is also a trade off between detecting the traffic you want whilst not picking up the traffic travelling in the opposite direction.

It had been our intention to assess the reliability of current inductive loop technology against bike frame specifications containing little metal. The performance outcome of our basic bike frame study however, has rendered this part of our study somewhat obsolete since we had clearly identified problems detecting basic metal framed bicycles. It is our conclusion that supplementary detection systems are needed in some traffic signal control situations where cyclists could find themselves stranded at a traffic signal control stop line.

We have re-researched alternative inductive loop configurations and infra-red technologies approved for use to the traffic control industry to help us move forward on this issue. We are trialling these in one of our traffic signal control junctions presently undergoing re-construction at Featherstone. The outcome will inform the design principles of all of our future traffic control installations and any refurbishment programs we are in a position to undertake. We do not however expect to be in a position to retrospectively implement wholesale modifications to all 100 of our traffic signal junctions throughout the Wakefield Council area. Cycle detection faults reported will continue to be investigated but until such times as we are in a position to refurbish or otherwise upgrade our installations, best efforts will have to be made with the technologies currently in place. '

Improving cycle paths and cycle lanes

One of the results of our recent survey of cyclists in Wakefield District was the high priority they gave to the introduction of more off road cycle paths and the expansion of cycle lanes on the districts roads, of sufficient width. Last year the Cycle Forum submitted proposals for agreed standard for cycle paths and cycle lanes.

We proposed that cycle lanes will be incorporated into all new and renewed road construction and that these lanes will be a minimum of 1.5m and 2m wherever possible in compliance with national guidelines. In addition we proposed the incorporation of advanced stop lines and feeder lanes into all new and renewed signalled junctions and crossings in line with national guidelines with a uniform surface colour, red or green, being adopted for all cycle lanes, advance stop lines and feeder lanes.

In addition to these points we have been seeking clarification of the use of traffic calming and we need some standard which prevent such welcome measure creating a hazard for cyclists. We suggested the following simple standard. A gap of 1m ([750mm](#) minimum), in line with national guidelines, will be left between kerb and speed cushion/build outs/chicanes. Parking restrictions will be introduced for 3m on each side of build outs and chicanes.

While the provision of any new traffic-free cycle paths might be welcome it is important that they are of good standard and easily accessible. In future therefore all new paths should have Tarmac surfaces (machine laid) and bollards should be the standard access control on all cycle paths and other paths and tracks where cyclists are permitted.

Unfortunately the highways department at Wakefield Council have not responded to our efforts to reach agreement on these standards. Hopefully we have now made a breakthrough. At our recent meeting with the chief executive of the council she accepted that agreement now needs to be reached on these standards. We are now awaiting contact from the council and will keep you informed in future newsletter of the progress we are making.



Another example of the access barriers we want to outlaw.

More cycle parking at railways stations

If you travel round by train, you will have noticed the installation of a lot of new cycle parking at railway stations in West Yorkshire. This is the result of a grant awarded by the government earlier this year to Northern Rail to introduce cycle parking to all their stations.

The most extensive of these parking improvement is in Leeds at the Hub. Below is a photograph of the new parking at Sandall and Agbig station, which is a bit more typical of what has been installed elsewhere.



Let us hope that they are all well used.

Wakefield Wheel Officially Recognised

It is now nearly two years since the Cycle Forum published its first map, 'The Wakefield Wheel'. This was done with the help of our first grant from the Big Lottery and a lot of hard work by our vice-chair, David Keighley, who researched and tried out the route before the final map was produced. It has proved a huge success with hundreds of copies being sold at our information stalls, Squires café at Anglers Country Park, the Tourist Information office and other outlets.



Hopefully many people have had many happy cycling days exploring the 'Wheel' and making use of the various suggested routes on the map. But the Cycle Forum is sure that that the route would be even more useful, and user friendly, if it was signed with its own dedicated logo. Despite numerous requests, till recently we have not had sufficient cooperation from council officials to make this a possibility however a change of heart is afoot. At our recent meeting with the chief executive of the council she agreed that our proposals for signing the route would be a great idea so, with the help of Cycle Forum volunteers, the 'Wheel' should become an official signed route. We look forward to its completion in 2011. Volunteers will be needed to put up the signs so we hope you will be ready to give a hand when the time comes.

As you can see there is a proposed logo for the 'Wheel' but we are open to suggestions if you have a better idea.



This is the map of our other route, The Wonders of Wakefield, which we now have on stands outside Squires café at Anglers Country Park, beside the cycle parking at Pugneys and on the Trans Pennine Trail, at Walton Colliery Nature Park, Walton.





WHEELS FOR ALL



the coalfields
regeneration trust



Wakefield District

WHEELS FOR ALL



CYCLING FUN FOR EVERYONE ON OUR FLEET OF ADAPTED BIKES!

The bikes are especially good for people with disabilities and differing needs

Come and join our FREE cycle sessions!

(Trained Leaders present/ Helmets provided/Children to be accompanied)

HAVERCROFT & RYHILL SPORTS & YOUTH CENTRE (WF4 2BD)

OPEN SESSION HELD ON THE 2ND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10.00 - 12.00AM

SESSIONS COMING UP ARE:

SATURDAYS: 11th December 2010, 8th January & 12th February 2011

Sessions are held outside if it's fine, inside if it's wet and cold!

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

Call: Havercroft Sports Centre :01226 723659