

# Wakefield District Cycle Forum



Number 1

## Wakefield District Cycle Forum September 2008 Newsletter

**Our first six months as Wakefield District Cycle Forum** have confirmed that we made the right decision in March to become an independent constituted organisation. In a very short time we have built a sound membership base, strengthened our relationship with the highways department and developed good links with other partners. As you will see from the reports in this newsletter it has been a busy and successful six months. Let's go from strength to strength.



Photograph taken at  
Nostell Big Green Day  
Names left to right  
*Des Hampshire*  
*Graham West*  
*David Keighley*  
*Dr Sandy Clark*  
*Rodger Talbot*  
*Gill Ross*  
*John Matthews*

**Prior to March 2008** the Wakefield District Cycle Forum had existed for a number of years to provide a point of contact between cyclists and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WMDC). This was mainly an informal arrangement which permitted discussion and communication between the two parties. The Forum was serviced and supported by a dedicated cycle officer located within the Healthy Transport Team.

When WMDC encountered a shortfall in their finances, amongst other cutbacks it was decided to dismantle the Healthy Transport Team (along with the post of dedicated cycle officer and to place responsibility for cycling in the district within another part of the WDMC organisation

During March 2008 it was decided that the Wakefield District Cycle Forum needed a different structure and organisation to take forward the concerns and interests of cyclists in the Wakefield district. In order to be able to achieve some form of recognition as a properly constituted organisation and to aid our approach to funding organisations, it was decided to produce and adopt a constitution and elect officers to specific posts. In addition a small working committee was formed to carry out the work programme on behalf of the membership and provide feedback on specific issues.

To avoid a lengthy news update the items under work currently are listed below in bullet points with a brief explanation below each topic.

## **Cycle Parking**

- There is a general concern amongst cycling groups over the lack of adequate parking for cyclist. Cycle parking in public places is provided by the local authority and whilst this is variable in nature it does enable cyclist to leave their bikes chained to a secure anchorage. Parking outside shops and private business premises is the responsibility of those who control the premises and tends to be much more varied in nature.
- Supermarkets websites appear to have encouraging corporate policies which talk about their commitment to the environment, yet these very same organisations often have little or no provision at all for their cycling customers to leave their bike whilst shopping.
- A meeting with WMDC over the matter of cycle parking showed that they were committed to maintain public place cycle parking arrangements and would be happy to take guidance from Wakefield District Cycle Forum on the best type of parking facility to meet our needs.
- It is proposed that we undertake a survey of cycle parking in the Wakefield District to establish more widely what cyclist feel about the parking provision available to us. If members would like to take part in the survey then please email the Secretary of Wakefield District Cycle Forum indicating your willingness to join in the survey.

## **Health Rides**

- The Health Rides programme seeks to give the chance to those people who are interested in going for a ride in the company of other cyclists. Such rides are led by volunteers and take place mainly off road, over a mixture of distances. The rides are meant to be family friendly and operate on a co-operative, non competitive basis. So far in this summer programme, some 52 people have taken part in the rides and have hopefully enjoyed the experience and exercise. A new programme for the winter months is currently being agreed.
- There is emerging interest in the Health Rides programme from a couple of local organisations in its potential to involve some of the community in taking part in some cycling as gentle exercise. This is still at an early stage of development but the signs are promising that cycling might help with establishing an exercise routine for those in the community who might benefit from it.
- To enable us to offer these rides to a wider audience we need to have a number of cyclists who would be prepared to volunteer to be ride leaders. This would be a commitment as the programme once printed, has to be honoured, as people are invited to turn up without appointment and they cannot be contacted if the ride is cancelled.
- We are also interested in hearing from you if you have any ideas about suitable rides in the district which provide a good off road experience on relatively flat yet interesting routes.

## **Membership**

- It's great news that we have exceeded 50 members, but we need to recruit as many fellow cyclists as possible to show those who might be prepared to fund us, that there is plenty of interest in securing full cycling facilities for the Wakefield District. We are keen to have members with all sorts of interest in cycling, no matter how far, or how slowly you cycle, or even what sort of bike you use. I'm sure that you all have family and friends who are also cyclists so please show them this newsletter and encourage them to join. The application form for membership is attached to this newsletter

- All the elected members of the Wakefield Metropolitan District Council were sent an invitation to consider joining the membership of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum. It was felt that this would demonstrate a public show of support for cycling in the Wakefield district. Of those approached some five councillors replied, two have joined the Forum's membership.

### **Shows & Events 2008**

- Since Wakefield council disbanded its Healthy Transport department including the post of cycling officer, the Wakefield District Cycle Forum has taken on a more active role to promote cycling in the district. This year we have, under the heading of Wakefield District Cycle Forum and Sustrans, attended a number of events handing out leaflets, maps and advice on all aspects of cycling to encourage more people to cycle.

1. Wakefield Food and Rhubarb Festival.  
Wakefield city centre 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> March
2. May Day Gala, Thornes Park 5<sup>th</sup> May
3. Green Living Day, Anglers Park 15<sup>th</sup> June
4. Horbury Show, Carr Lodge Park 29<sup>th</sup> June
5. Pontefract Liquorice Festival 13<sup>th</sup> July  
(including a Bike Doctor)
6. Hospice Bike Ride, Pugneys. 3<sup>rd</sup> August  
(including signing and marshalling)
7. Big Green Day Nostell 31<sup>st</sup> (including a Bike Doctor, cycle ride obstacle course and guided rides in the park.)

Pontefract Liquorice Festival



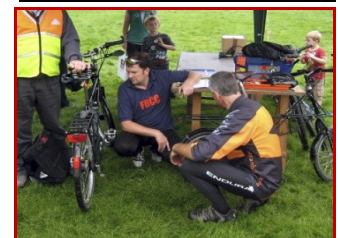
Obstacle course Nostell



Hospice Bike Ride, Pugneys



Bike Doctor, Nostell.



- Members of the forum who manned the stand at the events found it interesting talking to fellow cyclists and potential cyclists. Some of the comments received were: - *"It's too dangerous to cycle on the roads these days"*. *"There needs to be more cycleways in the district"*. *"Where can I cycle with my family safely?"*. *"I haven't cycled for a while how can I start again"*. *Where can I get some cycle safety training?*.

### **Lots of things for the Cycle Forum to work on**

The 2009 events list is under way. We hope to include more cycling activities this year.

If YOU have any suggestions or would like to help or participate in any please contact us.

## **Infrastructure and Partnerships**

One of the main tasks for the forum still remains working to improve the infrastructure for cyclists in the Wakefield District. A major part of that is keeping the highways department on their toes. To that end your forum representatives, (since the removal of the cycle officer), meet with the highways engineers on a regular basis to discuss planned schemes and to influence what future schemes are to be implemented. As a consequence of these efforts (believe it or not, first time ever) we have managed to ensure that the entire budget allocated to cycling in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is actually spent on dedicated cycle schemes.

As a result we hope you will see some important cycle routes with dedicated cycle paths and lanes come to fruition in the next few years. For example we hope to see a complete route linking Wakefield to Walton and Crofton and a link between Pontefract and Castleford. All this work whilst time consuming, is really important and needs to be done to make the highway more cycle friendly. One of your representatives, David Keighley, has been working closely with highways engineers to ensure that the new road layouts, as you enter Wakefield from Barnsley and Doncaster roads, are an improvement on previous highway schemes. Whilst it still may not be perfect, it is likely to be better that it would have been without the forum's input.

Although the money from the LTP is an important source of funding for cycle projects it is obvious that the LTP alone will not get the job done the way we would want it. The forum has therefore been active since its inception in seeking out other partners who might work with us in securing funds for infrastructure developments. The local Primary Healthcare Trust (PCT) has shown an interest in working with us and has acted as co-ordinator with a view to linking a number of different agencies and a number of different cycle schemes in the Castleford area. One of the agencies involved in this initiative is British Waterways. They have also agreed to lead on the issue and in conjunction with the forum, are seeking funding to improve sections of the canal tow path between Stanley Ferry and Castleford. This would complete one more section of a greenway that would link Dewsbury with Wakefield, Castleford and Knottingley along the canal and river network.

Our vice-chair David Keighley, held discussions with the manager of Nostell Estate and we have secured their agreement that paths through the estate to the south of the Doncaster Road are now a permissive cycleway. Nostell Estate have suggested the upgrading and improvement of a footpath that would complete the cycle path network linking Nostell with Crofton and Anglers Country Park, a useful link for both commuters and leisure cyclists. In this case the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) has agreed to work with us to acquire funding and to manage the construction of this path.

We hope you will agree that a lot has happened in a very short life of the forum. As always we welcome feedback from members on any existing or potential cycle routes. Do also let us know if you want to get involved in any of the fund raising, planning or campaigning activities.

Thoughts or suggestions on any cycle matters can be fed through

Sandy Clarke Chairman (email; [fatcyclist@talktalk.net](mailto:fatcyclist@talktalk.net))

David Keighley Vice Chairman (email; [davidcycle@talktalk.net](mailto:davidcycle@talktalk.net))

John Matthews Secretary (email; [matthews2398@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:matthews2398@tiscali.co.uk))

## Cycle Matters

Wakefield Cycle Parking.....Warning!

This is to urge cycle forum members to be vigilant when leaving their cycles anywhere in Wakefield. On Tuesday 2-9-09 I left my cycle in the parking stands at the bottom of the Springs, on return approx one hour later I found the rear tyre flat.

Passing the County Hall a cycle parked in the cycle stands also had a flat rear tyre. I have had a report alleging that some individual (or group) are in Wakefield piercing the rear tyres with a sharp pointed object. The stands where this first started are the ones at the top of Westgate outside Argos. I have contacted the anti-social team about the problem but do not expect things to improve.

Des Hampshire.

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This is the junction at Doncaster Road and Agbrigg Road. Before changes to the junction both lanes served straight ahead and left turn traffic used the left lane.



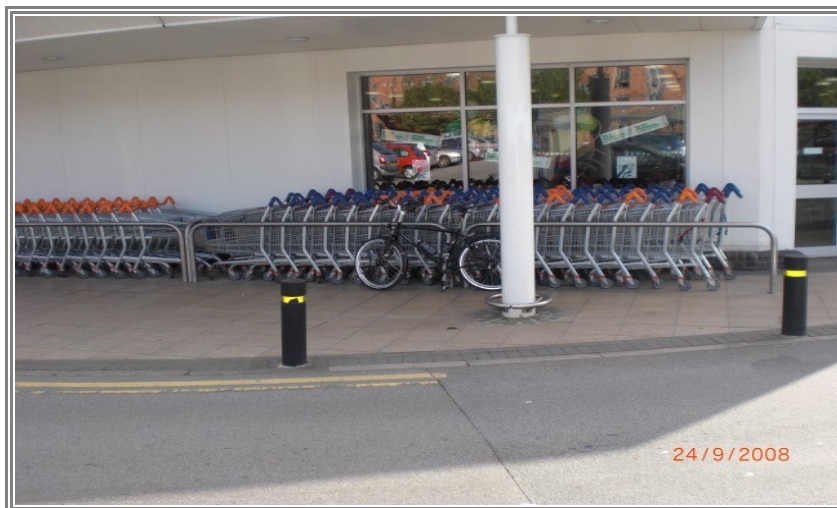
Road planners appear to have given little consideration to the needs of the cyclist in the changes made at this very busy junction. So why are cyclists excluded from this bus lane when buses and cyclist share a lane in so many other situations? We will attempt to find out.

Does the left hand really know what the right hand is doing?

This is the start of a cycle lane outside Westgate Station, Wakefield. At this point a wide pavement offers good space for a cycle lane. Signs erected, lines painted....then someone else decides that a large tub with plants and a refuse bin could be placed in the cycle lane. Perhaps yet more evidence that cycling provision is all part of a well executed plan.



This picture of just one supermarket in Wakefield is taken at random. The store makes adequate provision for trolley storage, parking for those with a disability, customers with young children, customers cars, taxi drop off and pick up points.....but nothing for their cycling customers. Should we be more demanding?



John Matthews

**We hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter and please note that the next meeting of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum will take place in Wakefield Town Hall at 7pm, on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008.**

Cycling is good for:-

YOU

The Environment

And it's Fun



# Wakefield District Cycle Forum



## Are you interested in cycling?

If so the Wakefield District Cycle Forum may be of interest to you.

The Forum is a voluntary organisation whose aims are to promote and campaign for better cycling facilities for all cyclists within the Wakefield Metropolitan District. We aim to represent all kinds of cyclists, to improve cycling infrastructure in the district and to encourage the organisation of a wide range of cycling events throughout the district.

Forum members meet periodically to determine the Forum's priorities and hear of the progress being made towards its aims. The greater our membership the greater our influence with the District Council and other organisations responsible for the delivery of cycling services and we would like to see a membership of as many cyclists as possible from the Wakefield District.

We are asking for a small membership fee of £2 per person to cover costs.

Please join us by completing the enclosed form and return with the fee to the treasurer.



**Please complete the membership form and return it with the fee to the Treasurer at the address below**

**Gill Ross  
40, Oakleigh Avenue,  
Wakefield,  
WF2 9DF**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Number.....

Email.....

How would you prefer to be contacted? Post  Email

What type of cycling are you interested in? *(Please tick all relevant boxes)*

Commuting/utility

Racing

Family rides - on road

Family rides - off road

Day rides - on road

Day rides - off road

Touring/holidays

MTB Trails

BMX

**Please note, to aid administration, details will be held on personal computer**

**(Please tick the relevant boxes)**

I joined to show my support for cycling in the Wakefield district.

I would also like to be kept informed of the Forum's activities and district meetings.

I am also willing to assist the Forum where possible in the following categories:-

Newsletter and publicity

Fund raising

Health cycle rides.

Events and exhibitions.

Contribute to web site updates.

Cycle parking location survey

Be informed of other areas that may need volunteer assistance from members.

