**NEWHAM CYCLISTS – ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2017-18**

**Headlines:**

* Increased participation in meetings, activities and rides although our London Cycling Campaign (LCC) membership has dropped from 143 to 128.
* Full Calendar of interesting rides programme which has become the foundation for LCC’s east London offering.
* Developing partnerships.
* The Fix Your Ride Stalls give a strong boost to our profile and help our funding.
* A higher profile for cycling issues in the London Borough of Newham (LBN), although the borough still falls behind others in infrastructure.

**The Future**

The change in the political landscape presents opportunities to secure political engagement in cycling.

The fact that LBN has finally adopted a Local Cycle Strategy (LCS) is encouraging but we must use it to ensure that a requirement for good quality cycling facilities is embedded in the transport infrastructure and planning processes. This will also involve engaging with London Legacy Development Corporation, the planning highway authority for the Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park (QEOP), which has a poor record desirable cycling infrastructure in the QEOP area.

We can continue to develop using the tools outlined above and there is some scope for developing our communication – but we need to keep new data protection requirements in mind.

**Partnerships**

* **AAA**: This was the first year of a partnership with Ambition, Aspire, Achieve, a charity based in Canning Town which runs a children’s cycle club from the Terence Brown Arc in Hermit Rd Park. In 2017 we piloted two bike fixing stalls, and led a [Newham Greenway](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Transport-and-infrastructure/Transport-planning/QW_Newham_Greenway_Map.pdf) ride. For 2018 we are developing this by having a series of three double sessions of a bike fixing and checking on Saturday followed by a ride the following Saturday. The first has successfully taken place. AAA still have a stock of donated bikes that need attention. This partnership helps promote cycling in the south of the borough and promote children’s cycling and the Newham Greenway.
* **Bike from Boleyn:** This organisation seeks to maintain the connection between the Boleyn area and West ham United by promoting cycle rides from the Boleyn Statue to the Ground. We led and marshalled 2 rides along the Newham Greenway. Again this partnership promotes cycling in the south of the borough and because of its high political profile, helps increase the political profile of Newham Cyclists.
* **LBN:** In addition to our good relations with Council officials we joined Richard Wadey, Newham’s sustainable Transport Officer, in cycling along the Newham Greenway during some cold January evenings to promote the 24 hour opening and pick litter. This partnership also helped promote use of the Newham Greenway.
* **20’s Plenty (20P):** Jeremy Leach, London Campaign Co-ordinator, provided the invaluable [briefing](http://www.newhamcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Microsoft-Word-Newham-RoadDangerHealthyStreetsBriefing-29Jul17.docx.pdf) on road safety and public health in Newham which was used in the October paper. We liaised with him over the 20mph limit for the Stratford Gyratory/Town Centre redevelopment and some of our members supported him at a London Borough of Redbridge meeting to promote 20mph speed limit concept in the Wanstead area.
* **Community Roadwatch:** we participated in three of the weekly Thursday sessions at which seeds of motor traffic were monitored with those caught speeding being sent a letter. These have not been successful for us as they all have taken place in the area of Stratford High Street. However it demonstrated some astonishing speeds being generated in an urban town centre.
* **Living Streets**: The recently formed Newham branch of Living Streets is just getting started, but we look forward to working with them on the [My Liveable London](https://lcc.org.uk/pages/my-liveable-london) campaign for the election - which will be upon us by the time of the AGM - and going forward on other issues that affect both pedestrians and cyclists in the Borough – especially planning issues which are important but resource intensive.
* **Forest Gate Womens Institute:** We have worked with the WI to increase the cycling profile amongst women, including by leading special rides with them

**Communication**

We have endeavoured to communicate with members and supporters in as many ways as possible.  Our use of Social Media has increased - with Twitter and Facebook being active and an Instagram account that has been created this year.  Our emails are slightly erratic, but thanks to Peter, we have a new system in place through the website that will hopefully make them less so!

Specific LBN cycling infrastructure issues e.g. consultation responses, property development travel plans etc. is still primarily done via the Newham cyclists Yahoo group list.

 **Campaigning**

* We have continued to seek engagement with LBN local councillors and others to promote active travel in Newham and to seek improvements to the cycle infrastructure. Wherever we think it beneficial we contact local councillors with our responses to consultations. Whilst the political response is often disappointing there are now a significant body of local councillors with a positive interest in cycling. The new Local Cycling Strategy advocates a cycling champion in each Community Neighbourhood.
* We have continued to be active in responding to consultations (list annexed below).
* The Bike for Boleyn Partnership helped raise our political profile.

**Fix Your Ride and Bicycle Maintenance**

Our monthly stalls at Woodgrange Market have now recommenced.  We have been overwhelmed by the success of this project! Following a grant of £750 from LBN (not the full amount we applied for) we were able to purchase work stands and tools and pay for a year’s worth of stall rental.  On the second Saturday of each month from March-October (inclusive) we set up our stall and spend 4 hours providing a bike maintenance service and basic tuition on items like puncture repair. Over the winter months, Bill worked hard on rebuilding our rather battered trailer and it is now very professional looking and should last many years. We have attracted a real mixture of people - lot of children, a good number of women and a very good mix of ethnic backgrounds.  As well as providing what seems to be a much needed service, there has been an additional positive impact on the market, which has been appreciated. We have a good team of volunteers but we are always happy to welcome more.

In addition as touched on elsewhere, we have been running sessions at AAA, working on donated bikes as well as the kids’ own bikes.

We also ran a series of maintenance classes for women that were fully subscribed and very well received. This may be a pathfinder for further bike maintenance training.

**Rides**

As Newham Cyclists aims to represent all those in Newham, and beyond, who like to ride, we therefore aim to have a ride that suits everyone in terms of fitness, confidence, age and gender. The level of participation on these rides has been growing steadily with numbers depending on the type of ride on offer, the annual free cycle in July claiming the award for the most popular with close to 100 participants

Some rides were 30+miles, with hills, through the countryside lanes of nearby counties including Essex, Kent and Herts. Some were less than 20miles off road, along canal towpaths and tracks in urban landscapes. We organised rides specifically for children, with AAA and women with the local Womens Institute (WI). We organised rides for those that love local history and we even accommodated football fans, not well known as strong advocates for cycling, with Bike from Boleyn. Our ride destinations have included, disused nuclear bunkers, bird sanctuaries, breweries, art galleries, beaches and many historical sites, including the oldest stave wooden church in the world.

All ride reports, including photos, video clips and animations are posted on the website and can be found in archives

**Infrastructure**

We have continued to benefit from very good communication with Newham Council’s Sustainable Transport Officer who has given his time freely in response to individual questions and regular catch up meetings. We have benefited from open communications with the other responsible officers on individual projects.

In October we published a paper “[Cycling in Newham](http://www.newhamcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Cycling-in-Newham.pdf)” which highlighted a historic lack of a strategy or coherence by the Council in respect of active travel, exacerbated by negligence and/or instances of antipathy towards measures promoting safer cycling. The not unexpected consequence has been poor modal share for cycling in a borough of rich cycling potential; and a safety and child obesity record which compares poorly with neighbouring and comparable boroughs. This was distributed to Councillors who had previously indicated an interest in cycling matters.

Since then (and coincidental with the publication of an article in the [Newham Recorder](http://www.newhamcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Newham-Recorder-Feb-18.pdf)) a Cycle Strategy has emerged from the deep freeze of the Mayor’s Office in updated form – see below. We were consulted in 2016 on the original but not on any updating.

Major infrastructure developments on the ground:

* Stratford Gyratory/Stratford Town Centre works have started. This is essentially a good scheme provided that (a) conflicts with pedestrians are managed, (b) lights are not phased in a way that discriminates against pedestrians and cyclists and (c) surrounding areas are improved for pedestrians and cycling. The 20mph proposal highlighted in the NC paper has been restored but only on an experimental basis. Paul Gannon the Council project officer, has been very open and communicative on reducing the impact of these major works and on 22 January we did a ride audit with Michael Barratt, Transport for London Development Improvement assessment Lead, a representative of the Met Police and Paul.
* The Newham Greenway opened 24 hr early January 2018 from High Street North to Stratford High Street with route lighting along most of its length. It will form part of Quietway 22, which is essentially a beneficial off road route for cyclists (although the ridiculously adverse light phasing at road crossings remains) A programme of extra ramp link building has started with the exceptionally useful ramp linking the Newham Greenway to the Channelsea Path and Stratford High Street which opened in March 2018. Some issues of antisocial behaviour have revealed that some of the security cameras which have been installed have not been operational.
* The very disappointing Crossrail related works at Manor Park have been almost completed, the even more disappointing plans for Forest Gate have started and the disappointing plans for Maryland are about to start. They represent almost £5m of poorly spent public money and demonstrate many of the issues highlighted in the Cycling in Newham paper.
* Quietway 6 (QW6) across the north of the borough remains a disappointment with junctions which are not safe and do not meet LCC standards; again representing poor value for public expenditure.
* LBN have decided recently to remove a point closure at Glenparke Rd/Palmerston Rd junction which is likely to facilitate “cut through “ motor traffic – a retrograde step in the promotion of the Liveable neighbourhoods concept.
* LBN have entered into an agreement with Mobikes for the latter to provide dockless bikes on a pilot basis in Stratford/West Ham and the Royal Docks areas.
* The well-publicised £100m “Keep Newham Moving” project does virtually nothing specifically for cycling.

Annexed is a list of formal and informal consultations. Our responses have reflected our policies of:

* Meeting the London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS) or better.
* Promoting cycle lanes and tracks on through routes.
* Creating areas without through traffic, “area wide filtered permeability”.
* Promoting permeability through cycle contraflows as a second-best to filtered permeability.
* 20mph.
* Copenhagen style pedestrian priority crossings at minor junctions (although these are still “experimental” in the London Cycle Design Standards).
* Opposing pavement parking.
* Seeking sensible phasing for lights to give walkers and cyclists a fair chance.

Forthcoming key issues:

* A 406 Flyover at Ilford Hill, the “Ilford Garden” project.
* Royal Docks walking and cycling scheme.
* Silvertown Way/North Woolwich.
* Major developments such as Stephenson St, east ham Market Hall
* Action on strategic routes identified by TfL in its [Strategic Cycling Analysis](http://www.newhamcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Microsoft-Word-Newham-RoadDangerHealthyStreetsBriefing-29Jul17.docx.pdf).
* Using the analysis in the Local Cycling Strategy to improve walking and cycling in the borough and avoid it being used to promote/excuse “business as usual”

If LBN is to improve local cycling levels it needs to keep the Local Cycling Strategy up to date and apply it to all new projects to achieve coherence. This requires political will to promote cycling as well as walking; which we consider has been absent so far. In particular in a borough rife with new development projects there has been very little “development benefit” for cycling compared to the neighbouring London Borough of Waltham Forest, which has extracted more cycling benefit for fewer developments.

LBN has also adopted an [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](https://www.newham.gov.uk/Documents/Environment%20and%20planning/SD09InfrastructureDeliveryPlanFeb2018.pdf) which is even less concrete than its cycle strategy comprising some major projects but very few with any solid funding identified.

We have a benchmark of the London Borough of Waltham Forest which we toured as our summer evening ride for July 2017..

**Newham Council Cycling Strategy 2017/18 – 2024/25**

This [Cycle Strategy](https://mgov.newham.gov.uk/documents/s118611/LBN%20Cycling%20Strategy%202018-2025%20DRAFT%20FOR%20CABINET.pdf) has been approved by the Council after a long gestation period. Newham Cyclists were informally consulted on it in late 2016 but it has been substantially altered since then to take into account TfL’s subsequent Strategic Cycling Analysis of June 2017 which identified (again) how Newham had a low cycling modal share but very high cycling potential.

This document is potentially a game changer for cycling in Newham and we were very pleased to have Murray Woodburn (Head of Highways and Traffic) and Richard Wadey (Sustainable Transport Officer) to discuss it at our March 2018monthly meeting.

The document has an excellent analysis of the current position which largely reflects the paper we produced in October 2017. It recognises the need and potential for more cycling in Newham; and that Newham has fallen behind. It then puts forward 5 Objectives:

* *Create safer and more inviting conditions for cycling*, using the “Cycle Level of Service” CLOS tool[[1]](#footnote-1) to create a high density network of quality cycling routes and areas of “filtered permeability”. This sets out programmes for the short, medium and long term and culminates in a series of maps indicating the anticipated effects of these programmes.
* *Provide the education to cycle*, showing cycle training available at schools and for adults.
* *Improve access to, and maintenance of, cycles,* covering the provision of maintenance/checking events.
* *Improve enforcement and security for cycling,* outlining secure parking and enforcement measures.
* *Normalising cycling in Newham and inspire residents to cycle,* including supporting rides (including by Newham Cyclists) and seeking a Councillor walking and cycling champion in each community neighbourhood.

The fact that there is a Cycle Strategy Is welcome as is a commitment to walking and cycling which has not been demonstrated in the past. Furthermore the Council can rightly take pride in its cycle training and support for “soft” cycling measures. However the absence of a “hard target” for improving the level of cycling is noticeable as are the following, which all relate to infrastructure:

* The need to embed cycle improvements in infrastructure development is acknowledged but there is no system for doing so – such as requiring every project to be given a CLOS score, and plans with below a score of 70 to provide an explanation.
* There is an aspiration but no requirement for projects to meet London Design Standards. This is particularly necessary as the borough has been plagued in the past by poor design. It has to move from the mind-set that a stencil in the road is an improvement in cycling facilities. Indeed the Cycle Strategy itself demonstrates this where it shows, as part of its short term infrastructure improvements, the Twelvetrees ramp on the Leaway which is in fact a “Cyclists Dismount” ramp.
* The analysis in favour of filtered permeability (i.e. areas without through traffic) is not carried through into concrete proposals as the infrastructure programmes morph this into “cycle permeability” (i.e. cycle contraflows on one-way streets, which are helpful but nowhere near as beneficial as area wide filtered permeability).
* There is a recognition that Newham needs to do more to secure walking and cycling benefit from development but no system for ensuring this happens. Hence Newham has fallen behind other neighbouring boroughs in this regard – which is possibly why the developers of Stephenson Street feel they can put forward plans where the cycling connectivity is by routes involving lifts.
* There is no commitment to a change in approach. The Council is still intending to progress with removal of one of its point closures (Glenparke Rd/Palrmerston Rd junction and could still improve the sub-standard plans for Maryland Crossrail improvement where no spade has gone in the ground.
* The medium and long term programme lacks substance, comprising many feasibility studies; and some key corridors identified in TfL’s Strategic Cycling Analysis are not prioritised.

This having been said the document is intended to be a “living document” and Newham Cyclists should use the analysis it contains to ensure that this is not an excuse for “business as usual” which has proven a failure.

**Accounts for 2017-18 and Budget for 2018-19**

See separate documents

**Consultations:** Formal (F) and informal (I)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date (2017/18) |  | Scheme | Newham Cyclists position | Reaction |
| 5 April:  | I | Maryland | Cycle lane Junction with forest lane unifiedBetter access to Windmill laneBetter positioning of pedestrian crossings | Meeting with Cllrs Tripp and Okiwowo.No detailed acceptance or otherwise. |
| 6 April | I | Keogh Rd | Concern at vehicles ignoring one way | RW Proper traffic order to be put in place to aid enforcement |
| 14 April | F | TfL – Bow and Marshgate Lane | Concern to enforce exclusion of mvs from areas exclusively for buses, cycles and peds.Peds and cyclists to be given priority across junctions.Future connectivity in area. | None |
| 15 May  | F | Greenway ramps | Support | No response but scheme going ahead |
| 16 May | I | Honour Lea Ave QW6 | Side road cutting cycle lane | RW – temporary |
| 13 June | I | General | Need for cycle strategyCross borough issues: Liveable Neighbourhoods, n-s connectivity, poor design e.g. QW 6. | Meeting with Cllr Murphy.No response.  |
| 12 June | I | QW6 | Detailed critique with emphasis on poor junctions, 20 mph | Audit ride with Council Officers |
| 15 June | I | Maryland | General | Meeting with Maryland Residents Group |
| 26 July | F | Maryland | Parking and loading restrictions need to be enforcesGeneral 20mph in area. | None |
| 27 July | I | Bow Flyover | Scheme is “guaranteed delay” for cyclists and still prioritises motor vehicles over pedestrians and cyclists. | Caroline Russel for GLA Transport Committee inquiry |
| July ff | I | Stratford Gyratory works | Retaining cycle safety | Ongoing e-mail correspondence and responses from Newham Council officersAudit ride with TfL, Met Police and Newham Council. Changes achieved. |
| 27 July | I | Bow Flyover and area | Attended site audit with Caroline Russell MLA (member of Transport Committee), other NGO’s and TfL. | Report hostile streets published December 2017. |
| 2 Aug | F | Gallions Reach | More Toucan crossingsBetter shared use paths | Acknowledgement and support from Cllr ChristieNot clear improvements incorporated into scheme. |
| 4 Aug | F | High St North | 20 mphCopenhagen pavements | No response despite Cllr Jo Corbett promising (twice) to follow up our comments. |
| 4 Aug | I | Letts Rd construction | Should allow cycle access to Carpenters estate and Olympic park | RW engaged in discussion seeking improvement for cyclists |
| 18 Aug | F  | Draft infrastructure Delivery Plan | Request for update and promulgation of Cycle Strategy; include plans to deal with Romford and Barking Rd; use of a significant proportion of Keep Newham Moving money for sustainable transport; promote areas without through traffic | None |
| 18 Sept | F | Boleyn Road | Supported contraflow, suggested better signage, encouraged more contraflows. | None |
| 29 Sept | F | Two way cycle movements | Supported and suggested some better signage and 20 mph and extension of cycle contraflows. | Official acknowledgement, no suggestion that NC suggestions taken up.Cllr Paul asked for follow up. |
|  | F | Cumberland Road | Supported contraflow and cycle lane and suggested some better signage, removal of excessive car parking. Encourage wider cycling provision. | None |
| 29 Sep | F | Canning Town Roundabout |  | Informed by Cllr Scoresby of a consultation not sent to us. |
| 3 Oct | F | Glenparke Rd/Palmerston Rd – removal of road closure | Formal opposition as it permitted rat running. | Reasoned , but unsatisfactory response at official level that removal going ahead on experimental basis.Followed up by formal response to consultation. |
| 20 Nov | F | TfL proposal for A117 Woolwich Manor Way | Strong objection on grounds that scheme made no improvement for non-motorised traffic | None |
| 3/11 | F | Dames Rd traffic calming | 20 mph | Response to individual submission |
| 8 Nov | F | Tollgate Rd traffic calming | Should be 20 mph, Copenhagen pavements | None |
| 23 Oct | I | Construction traffic at Strand East | Cutting across CS2 | Official response that route had been given a permit. |
| 25 Oct | F | Chant St and Grove Crescent Rd closures etc. | Supported wider use of point closures and closure of side roads to create areas without through traffic | None |
| 22 Jan | I | Stratford Gyratory | Audit ride with Michael Barratt (TfL) Met police and Paul Gannon (NC) | Ongoing discussion with Paul Gannon |
| 30 Jan | I | Cycle Parking at Westfield | Removal of cycle parking at John Lewis access | Response at official level that NC will liaise with Westfield. |
| 4 Mar | I | CS3 to Barking via Jenkins Lane | Seeking future proofing against junctions created by future developments | Reasoned response at official level. |
| Mar | F | Redbridge Plan for A406 Flyover (“Ilford Gardens” | Support but asked cycle provision to be brought forward to the funded phase 1. |  |

1. A score of over 70 out of 100 is a good level of cycling, between 40 and 70 is “improved” and below 40 is poor. The strategy is aimed at maximising routes with a score of 70 or more. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)