

Newham Cyclists(NC) Annual Report April 2023 to March 2024 Period

NEWHAM CYCLISTS (NC) 2023-24.

Officers/Management Committee

- **Co-ordinator** (Olawale Ajibola)
- **Deputy Co-ordinator** (Jonathan Rothwell)
- **Treasurer** (Bill Bremner)
- **Deputy Treasurer** (currently vacant)
- **Secretary** (currently vacant)
- **Outreach Co-ordinator** (Karen Flanagan)
- **Rides Co-ordinator** (Steve Smith)
- **Infrastructure Representative** (Chris Kershaw)
- **Olympic Park Representative** (Jonathan Rothwell)

This annual report is based on the records of the Newham Cyclists (NC) monthly meeting notes sent out after every monthly meeting in period of April 2023 to March 2024 held and more 'in-depth' details are available on the NC website archive section.

April 2023

NC agreed to look further into providing teaching on bike maintenance to the *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* children's cycle club and a *Fix Your Ride (FYR)* stall to the local Community at the ARC.

NC have committed to provide a feeder ride to the *London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Freecycle* on 28th of May 2023.

NC also agreed to support (but not run) a *Kidical Mass* event in the *Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park (QEOP)* on 2nd of July 2023.

June 2023

Fix Your Ride has been busy at Woodgrange Market and will be held as part of the *Forest Gate Festival* on the 8th of July 2023.

The *London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Freecycle* feeder rides from and back to Stratford was well attended and successful. Feedback has been given to LCC HQ.

The *Brewery Ride* due on 1st of July 2023 has been postponed to 16th of September 2023.

NC are planning to support a *Kidical Mass* ride, likely to be 22nd or 23rd of July 2023.

NC have been pursuing with the LB Newham instances where road works have involved unnecessary blockage of Active Travel mode movements (i.e. cycling and walking). There is a need to keep up pressure on the Council and its contractors.

NC made a *Freedom Of Information Ask (FOIA)* request which has revealed that the appalling bus priority scheme for Prince Regent Lane was undertaken without reference to the Cycling Level of Service tool in LTN 1/20, contrary to Transport for London (TfL)'s and LB Newham's own best-practice standards.

July 2023

Bill Bremner was elected as NC Interim Treasurer from the post of NC Deputy Treasurer.

The *Fix Your Ride* at the Forest Gate Festival on 8th of July 2023 was very successful in terms of number of bikes looked at and donations to the group (in excess of £110). The next *Fix Your Ride* session in Woodgrange Market is scheduled to be on 12th of August 2023.

NC marshalled the *Kidical Mass* Ride based on the QEOP and Stratford Town Centre on 22nd of July 2023. It was great fun and established some useful contacts amongst the 25 or so participants.

The next scheduled NC social rides are – *Greensted* (10th of September 2023), a Brewery Ride (16th of September 2023) – this may be proceeded by assisting the *Woodcraft* group (start their Lea Valley Ride) and *Rainham Marshes* (24th of September 2023). Details to be confirmed on the NC website.

NC had not yet received any payment for marshalling the feeder ride from Stratford to the *London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Freecycle* Ride from LCC.

The NC website update is proceeding with new front page giving information about the group which will allow better links. We are considering how to make best use of our various means of communication, in particular the LCC mailing list and our own discussion group. io.

The proposed *McGrath Rd Bridge Public Improvement Scheme* (in the LTN4/LTN Atherton area) was left to individual responses.

Transport for London (TfL)'s proposed Express Bus Superloop has few implications (i.e. 'neutral') for cycling modes.

NC made a formal response to the *Silvertown Tunnel Active Travel Bus* proposals. It was considered a fundamentally unsatisfactory provision to alleviate the many problems arising from the *Silvertown Tunnel* brings to Active Travel modes encouragement.

NC made a formal response to the consultation in respect of the Jupp Road/Station Street connecting walking and cycling Bridge (Stratford Railway/Bus station area) widening.

A major planning application on land adjacent to the old North Woolwich Station is an opportunity to press for a *Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF)* from the estate developers to improve retrospectively TfL's recent poor project plans for the Pier Road approach to the Woolwich Ferry usage for Active Travel modes.

NC members attended a workshop in respect of a possible Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) scheme '*LTN8 aka LTN West Ham Park*'.

NC have asked for reinstatement of the monthly meetings with Newham Council on the project to upgrade the *Romford Road Active Travel Scheme (aka Romford Road Public Improvement Scheme)* and also to resume the 'catch up' meetings with relevant LB Newham officials following changes in related Council officer posts.

NC made a formal response to the proposed high quality Active travel infrastructure provision in the Westfield Avenue (retroactive) proposals which is a step in a 'step in the right direction' from *London legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)*.

September 2023

NC are now using the registration facility for our social cycle rides on the *London Cycling Campaign (LCC)* website.

The next NC social cycle ride will be the *Bike from Boleyn Ride* on Sunday 8th of October 2023 from the 'Champions Statue' (opposite the Boleyn Tavern, Barking Road) to the *London Stadium* to coincide with the *West Ham United FC (WHUFC)* home English Premier League(EPL) match.

NC are putting together an autumn programme of maintenance and a ride for the children's cycle club at the charity *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* with whom we have been partnering with for some years.

The NC September 2023 cycle maintenance event *Fix Your Ride (FYR)* stall was not as busy as the previous month but there were nevertheless generous donations.

NC have had regular monthly meetings with the LB Newham council team working on the Romford Road Active Travel Scheme (RRATS) improvements.

At the RRATS September 2023 meeting it was stated that the completion of phase 1 has been pushed back to December this year (2023) and phase 2 (at the Ilford end of the scheme) will not now start until the New Year (2024). A current project recurring 'issue' has been the need to secure approvals from the Transport of London (TfL) bus team with

regards to the existing bus service enabling infrastructure on Romford Road, but LB Newham plan to seek approval for the whole RRATS project from TfL by July 2024.

The LB Newham RRATS team are planning a further public engagement event next month (October 2023). A very important point was made at the meeting which was that what had been constructed/installed and planned so far was good, but there needed to be more publicity and explanations of the overall plans to provide reassurance and continuing support for the project and final aims.

Delays on the implementation of RRATS caused by TfL 'issues' were a concern and if this jeopardised the current scheme (for which time limited central government funding is at stake) then an earlier Newham council plan based on making existing Romford Road bus lanes 24 hour operational and existing cycle lanes mandatory should be explored. It will be useful to engage with London Cycling Campaign (LCC) HQ on these issues.

There was a NC *Catch Up* meeting with the new LB Newham Head of Transport Policies and Programmes on the Tuesday, 8th of August 2023.

The *Catch-Up* meeting discussion centred around the financing of LB Newham's sustainable transport developments for which there was £5m from the capital budget for the 2023/24 financial year.

Highlights of the *Catch Up* meeting were :

#1. A LB Newham borough-wide 20mph speed limit on borough adopted roads had been approved by the LB Newham cabinet on the 5th of September 2023.

#2. A programme of installing bike hangers (aka on-street secure cycle parking storage units) was progressing. The council wanted these storage units spread across the whole borough.

#3. 4 more Healthy School Streets (HSS) were proceeding taking the total up to 25 (out of a possible 84 borough schemes).

#5. Consultation was proceeding on the TfL Cycle Future Route (CFR7) [Leytonstone to Stratford section] – a high cycleway quality scheme. However there were no plans announced for the section of CFR7 from Stratford Town Centre southwards towards Plaistow and Barking Road A124 along the current A112 alignment.

#6. Early work had started on the proposed Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN 8/LTN West Ham Park) area scheme (south of the Romford Road A118 alignment). NC plan to accompany council officials on a planned audit ride on 26th of September 2023.

#7. Work was under way on improvements to the environment within existing LTNs with regards to new Public Realm schemes around the filter location areas.

#8. No further progress to report on the proposed LTN 5 (aka LTN Woodgrange) and LTN6 (aka LTN Capel). The sense of the meeting was concern at the lack of progress given the money already spent and allocated to these schemes in the near future.

There are tours of the proposed development at the *Bromley by Bow Gasworks (BBBG)* mentioned and continuing engagement on the development's Active Travel modes intention and provision.

NC have been active in consultation response on the Beckton Riverside (aka Beckton Walking and Cycling Project) proposals.

These include much needed improvements to Tollgate Road and Woolwich Manor Way for Active Travel modes. We were pressing for Active Travel mode facility improvements within the development area itself.

NC submitted a highly critical response to the *Silvertown Tunnel* Active Travel mode proposals.

October 2023

The *Bike from Boleyn* social ride took place the last meeting in October 2023 and went well.

A local Newham Ride scheduled for the 12th of November 2023.

There was a maintenance session for the children's cycle club of *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* at the ARC.

There was a *Fix Your Ride (FYR)* session at Woodgrange Market on 14th of October 2023 and the last one of the year (i.e.2023) is scheduled to take place on 11th of November 2023.

A report on the last monthly meeting with the Romford Road Active Travel Scheme (RRATS) team was made available. The completion of the current phase #1 has now been put back to December 2023 with phase #2 (eastern end, Dersingham Avenue to Ilford Hill) due to start in January 2024.

NC have been emphasising the need for good publicity for the scheme given the piecemeal approach to this project in terms of implementation at the moment. The LB Newham RRATS team are planning a public event in November 2023. The meeting expressed frustration at the delay in opening the sections of phase 1 that appear to be complete.

A report on the useful LB Newham *Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN)* team organised audit ride of 26th of September 2023 of schemes around the Romford Road, western end and the

residential estates to the north of the alignment was created. There was a good turnout from the LB Newham new *Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN)* and *Transport for London (TfL)* teams.

The audit ride looked at the schemes in the recently created (from 2020) Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in the Stratford, Maryland and Forest Gate areas which have now been made permanent and examined a possible new LTN scheme (*LTN 8/LTN West Ham Park*) bounded by Vicarage Lane, Romford Road, Ham Park Road and Upton Lane, the major motor traffic 'cut through/rat runs' routes being Ham Park Road, Margery Park Road and Tavistock Road.

NC are seeking regular LB Newham *Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN)* events of this sort for potential Active travel mode infrastructure in the future.

No more LB Newham related news on the proposed LTNs for Woodgrange and Capel areas and a concern about project lack of information.

There are major developments coming up for planning permission around the North Woolwich Road which provide opportunities for the Newham council to leverage funding to support local Active Travel. Specific current 'planning permission' related schemes include the *Beckton Masterplan* and the *Bromley by Bow Gasworks* where NC have a particular concern about the fact that the major routes providing potential local Active Travel mode connectivity are currently designated 'private roads'. London Cycling Campaign (LCC) HQ have provided membership by ward data.

NC have increased membership to 171 (LCC registered members by residency) but most reside in the north of the borough. The meeting noted that the opening of new university campuses in Newham provided an opportunity for outreach, as did spreading our activities to different areas of the borough. It was also worth seeking lessons from other LCC local borough groups with a more successful outreach in terms of local membership and activism.

Notice of London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Community Skills Summit Saturday 18th of November 2023. Registration needed.

Notice of London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Annual General Meeting and Campaigners Conference Wednesday, 6th of December 2023.

Notice of London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Board of Trustees interest/Board elections 2023.

There was support for the idea of a joint Christmas Social December 2023 event with *Bike from Boleyn* partners at the *Boleyn Tavern*.

NC also received news that an organisation called *State of Mind* received *National Lottery* funding for a project (which we supported at the stage of application) to deliver a LB

Newham focused cycling heritage project. NC agreed to continue to support the project.

November 2023

Ted Maxwell, representing the informal group *Save Our Safer Streets*, spoke about the removal of the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in LB Tower Hamlets even after being made permanent. The meeting was supportive of the campaign. Ted outlined ways in which NC could provide practical assistance.

There has been one NC Newham Ride since the last meeting, on 12th of November 2023. The next NC ride is the Christmas Lights Ride on the 10th of December 2023. There was discussion on improving the link with the LCC website and providing a GPS link of our rides.

The ride for the *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* children's club proposed for 2nd of December 2023 will not go ahead because AAA are engaged with their toy delivery issue then. A new AAA calendar will be put together for maintenance and rides in the New Year (2024).

Fix Your Ride (FYR) events has now finished for 2023. It will start again in 2024.

The opening of phase #1 of the Romford Road Active Travel Scheme (RRATS) scheme will happen when LB Newham feel satisfied with the road safety audit that accompanies such projects. The regular NC dialogue with the LB RRATS team(which is good on this particular project) will continue.

There will be a further RRATS liaison meeting in December 2023 when there should be information on Phase #2. Public engagement events are planned by LB Newham RRATS team for December 2023.

Implementation of the LB Newham borough-wide 20mph speed limit will be rolled out in #4 Phases, starting from northern part of the borough to the southern part. The Traffic Order for Phase #1 has been published.

Liaison will continue with the organisation **20isPlenty** and other interested organisations in case of problems occur in the implementation and to ensure enforcement of the traffic speed regulations.

A NC response has been submitted to the *Bromley-by Bow Gasworks (BBBG)* planning application raising the fact that some of the critical roads for local Active Travel mode connectivity are currently designated as 'private roads' (i.e not adopted or controlled by LB Newham so don't guarantee 'public access').

The *Mayor of London (MoL)* rejected the planning application for the *MSG Sphere* (to be located next to Stratford railway station), to which NC had opposed from on the onset.

LB Newham *Liveable Neighbourhoods(LN)* team published proposals for complimentary measures for Low Traffic Neighbourhood/ LTN 2 (aka LTN Odessa).

There was feedback from the *London Cycling Campaign (LCC)* Campaigning Summit. A key message was that campaigning by 'personal witness' stories was more effective than reliance on 'dry data' (to promote and support cycling).

There were also tips on improving outreach through partner organisations and cycle shops.

A strategy could usefully include means to attract younger activists. A consolidation of mailing lists increased the numbers by 10%. The suggestion of a separate meeting of the interested to develop an outreach strategy was favourably received.

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, 6th of December 2023. Voting ends on 29th of November 2023 for the *London Cycling Campaign (LCC)* Board of Trustees interest/Board elections 2023.

The *Newham Cyclists* Christmas Social event is scheduled for 11th of December 2023 at the *Boleyn Tavern*.

January 2024

The NC Ride Programme is now listed on the *NC* website and on *LCC* website.

In accordance with *LCC* changes to rides limited to #15 people, which is plenty for our local rides, there is a new risk assessment template which requires both a leader and a back marker to be named.

NC will indicate in advance that there is a maximum of #15 people and first #15 people who have signed in will be guaranteed a place. Larger rides over #15 people require the risk assessment to be signed off by *LCC* Office.

The next *NC* social/campaign ride is the *LCC Women's Freedom Ride* feeder on 3rd of March 2024 for which marshals needed.

NC plan to run a ride for the children of the *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* children's cycle clubs on 24th of February 2024. At the moment there are not enough volunteers to run bike maintenance sessions for these clubs.

NC's Fix Your Ride (FYR) programme will start again on March 9th of March 2024.

NC agreed to participate in the *Newham Green Fair* run by *Sustainable Newham* in West Ham Park on 6th of May 2024 and will look forward to the provision of some bike

maintenance and NC campaigning outreach/information.

The NC bank account is in the process of changing signatories persons to reflect the current NC Committee.

In respect of Community/Public Engagement, there are 358 people connected to Newham Cyclists, either as LCC members in Newham, or via the mailing list or both, but 223 people on the mailing list.

The NC Community outreach person will ask LCC to email the 125 members who do not receive our newsletter, and ask if they want to sign up.

A stand alone meeting to discuss strategy for increasing and diversifying NC membership was agreed to and to be arranged.

There was a LB Newham Romford Road Active Travel Scheme team in January 2024. The only new development was on the 're-configuring' of the phases of implementation, with separate sections within each phase.

The next section due for implementation will be the south side of Romford Road section between Dershingam Avenue and Fifth Avenue. This will be considered by the LB Newham cabinet on 5th of February 2024.

Implementation of the scheme and opening sections, including public engagement events, has been slow and there are 'flooding' issues on some of the sections already built. RRATS has a good project engineer and an experienced project manager has recently been appointed. There remain outstanding issues with regards to TfL and the current schemes omission of major junction plans.

LB Newham are promoting a cycle route via Osborne and Hampton Roads (in the *Woodgrange* estate, parallel north of the Romford road alignment) – running parallel to the by carriageway aspect way-marking and vertical pole mounted signage. NC consider this 'unsatisfactory' and agreed that this route should not be accepted as the replacement for the proposed RRATS.

LB Newham made proposals to making the existing bus lanes 24hrs/7days a week enforcement designation on the a section of the A112 (New Plaistow Road/Plaistow Road/West Ham Lane).

It is encouraging that there is some acceptance/recognition that effective bus lanes provision should have a 24hrs/7days a week enforcement designation given the reluctance of TfL to follow their own policy/recommendations with regards to another section of the A112 (Greengage Street/Barking Road junction and Prince Regent Lane) in terms of their recently funded 'Bus Priority Schemes'.

Bus lanes provision with a 24hrs/7days a week enforcement designation with exemptions for pedal cyclists help make for better and safer local cycling traffic use. The A112 route is part of the TfL's Cycle Future Route 7. NC made a formal response to above mentioned proposals emphasising the commentary issues.

The proposals contained in Traffic Orders for the *Beckton Walking and Cycling project (BWCP)* – essentially Tollgate Road and south part of Woolwich Manor Road look good but don't cover the whole of Tollgate Road and do not address the linking of Cycleway 3(alongside the A13) and Tollgate Road. NC responded to these proposals in 2022 and made additional commentary to the project engineer on additional local Beckton Active Travel issues at the cycling site audit visit on the 6th of February 2024.

NC formally responded to the *East Village Connections* (in the *Olympic Park*) proposals are going to consultation next month. The main features are a 2 way cycleway on Celebration Avenue and Penny Brookes Street and improvement of Liberty Bridge Road for cycling traffic.

Work on the excellent Westfield Avenue scheme in terms of Active travel infrastructure provision has started.

NC formally responded to TfL's Lower Lea Crossing.

Planning permission has been granted for the *Crown Wharf* development (Canning Town area) without taking on board NC's suggestions for a pontoon path under A13 to link to Cycleway 3.

It is proposed to hold the NC AGM on 22nd or 29th April 2024. All posts are up for re-election.

February 2024

The *LCC Women's Freedom Ride* took place on 3rd of March 2024. The risk assessment has been done for our feeder ride. The main ride had over 600 signed up although there is not a huge number for the feeder ride, which will start at 10.30 am from the View Tube. There is unlikely to be a feeder ride back.

A *Call the Midwife* ride has been added to the calendar for Sunday, 21st of July 2024.

Redbridge Cycling Campaign (based in LB Redbridge) and *Havering Cycling Campaign* (based in LB Havering) groups are planning a social ride on the Saturday, 16th of March 2024 with an invite to NC members.

The ride for the *Ambition, Aspire, Achieve (AAA)* in ARC children's cycling club took place on Saturday 24th of February 2024 took in on the Greenway, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic

Park and Hackney Marshes. It was enjoyed by the children. Maintenance is still required on for the bikes at the ARC and Abbey Road centres. Bike maintenance help still requested from NC members.

The *NC Fix Your Ride(FYR)* programme scheduled to start on the 9th of March 2024.

Two more NC committee member signatories have been added to the NC account which will facilitate paying for the market space.

An expenditure NC budget for 2024/25 period should be formulated by the NC Committee for consideration at the April 2024 NC Annual General Meeting. In the meantime any outstanding requests for legitimate NC expenses should be made before the end of March 2024 to the NC treasurer to make the annual accounts collation simpler.

A NC Public Engagement issues themed meeting was held on the 23rd of February 2024 with recommendations for improving the borough group.

Romford Road Active Travel Scheme (RRATS). The consultation on the full scheme has been published. It appears well designed. Individual responses are required and it is key that there is a good response. NC are able to take individual points to the RRATS Project Manager.

There was a NC monthly meeting with the RRATS team on Friday 23rd of February 2024. Related report sent out.

There have been workshops on the *West Ham Park* Low Traffic Neighbourhood which members have attended.

A filter area focused Public Realm improvement scheme (Keogh Road) in the Atherton LTN area was completed in February 2024.

A cycle audit ride was held on the Tuesday, 6th of February 2024 with LB Newham officials along the *Royal Docks Corridor* and the area of the *Beckton Walking and Cycling Project*. Both could be a step change improvement for cycling and walking modes in the areas. Major outstanding issues are connectivity with Cycleway 3 (C3)/A13 at Canning Town, junctions of access roads heavily used by *Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)* and the roads around the Canning Town London Underground/Docklands Light Rail/bus station.

It was emphasised that at the NC April 2024 AGM, all elected and committee members positions have to be re-elected as all posts are up for re-election as required by the NC constitution and LCC procedures. There are some existing NC vacant committee posts and there will be some new vacant ones as stated at the meeting.

March 2024

NC participated in the *East Village Connections(EVC)* Olympic Park project audit ride with LB Newham/LLDC officials on the 7th of March 2024.

NC March 2024 meeting included a cycle ride from the Atherton Centre on the Romford Road to *Here East* checking out some developments in the Atherton Low Traffic Neighbourhood and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park areas.

Discussion on the *LCC London Loves Cycling* events scheduled for 27th & 28th of April 2024 and the *LCC FreeCycle* event on 26th of May 2024

NC formally responded to *Romford Road Public Realm Improvement Scheme* (aka *Romford Road Active Travel Scheme*) and *East Village Connections (EVC)* scheme proposals.

Olawale Ajibola

April 2024