



# TOM MCCLELLAND R.I.P.

**CTC NORTHERN IRELAND CAMPAIGNER TOM MCCLELLAND PASSED AWAY AS WE WERE PREPARING THIS ISSUE. INSTEAD OF THE INTERVIEW WE PLANNED, IT IS WITH SADNESS THAT WE PRINT HIS OBITUARY INSTEAD**

**T**om McClelland, who passed away on 13 February 2014, was the consummate cycle campaigner: endearing, insightful, and highly effective. He was CTC's Right to Ride campaigner for the whole of Northern Ireland, and his impact extended across the UK. He was a winner of CTC's Volunteer of the Year award, and had recently been chosen to receive CTC's Certificate of Merit.

Tom was a passionate transport cyclist. He once arrived at a Royal Garden Party at Hillsborough Castle on a tandem with his wife Catherine (above). 'The Prince of Wales came by helicopter,' Tom said, 'and there was a lot of car parking provision but none for cycles. I wanted to make the point that cycling is normal.'

Tom worked with politicians from all parties to get cycling on and further up the agenda of the Northern Ireland Assembly. In 2013, he helped establish an all-party cycling group at Stormont and set up a committee, along the lines of CTC Scotland. That same year, he single-handedly organised two highly-successful conferences on 'Politically Painless Cycling'. These conferences

enabled CTC to address audiences including the Minister for Regional Development, the chair of the key parliamentary committee, and the Mayor of Derry/Londonderry. It was through Tom's efforts that CTC began working in Derry/Londonderry as well as Belfast.

Tom communicated constantly with opinion formers and policy makers on behalf of CTC. He secured important meetings for CTC with senior officials in the Northern Ireland government and put an astonishing network of contacts at our disposal. He also worked with Sustrans, Friends of the Earth, the NI Cycling Initiative, as well as colleagues in the Republic of Ireland in Cyclist.ie.

CTC Campaigns Direct Roger Geffen said: 'Tom had an amazing ability to forge contacts and get things done. One time, he persuaded the Northern Ireland Assembly's Regional Development Committee, whose remit includes transport, to hold an inquiry session on cycling, inviting a Danish cycle campaigner and myself to give evidence. When I asked if there were any other key decision-makers in Northern Ireland we should speak to while there, Tom immediately set up meetings with the Road Safety Minister and the Regional Development

Minister – and that was just in the morning. In the afternoon, he arranged for us to give a presentation on cycling to around 30 NI government officials. And in the evening, he organised a well-attended public meeting with us as speakers. I had asked him to make good use of our time in Belfast – and boy, did he do so!

Tom was an active campaigner in his own right, generating much of CTC's media coverage in Belfast. He helped defeat the threat of a helmet law in Northern Ireland; he campaigned to keep taxis out of Belfast bus lanes; and he backed the introduction of 20mph speed limits. Indeed, Rod King MBE, the founder of the 20's Plenty for Us, said that it was Tom who sowed the seeds for this campaign by persuading Rod to make a presentation at Velo-City 2005 on 20mph limits.

'Tom has left us one last legacy,' Geffen said. 'Shortly before he died, he had persuaded the NI Regional Development Committee to hold a full-blown inquiry into the economic benefits of cycling and how to maximise these: effectively, a Northern Irish equivalent of "Get Britain Cycling". We'll now throw everything we can into ensuring that the outcome of this inquiry is a fitting epitaph to Tom's campaigning.' 🚴