

PAGE 74 AN UNUSUAL-LOOKING BIKE FOR URBAN ROADS

Coming up



CAROLINE CARRIES TORCH PAGE 8

CTC member Caroline Waugh carried the Olympic torch through Conisbrough on her recumbent trike



CYCLISTS SEE RED AT STATS PAGE 10

You know what they say about statistics and 'damn lies'? Some recent media coverage hasn't been even-handed...



THE GOOD & BAD OF BIKE-RAIL PAGES 8 & 10

Nominate and vote now in the 2012 Bike-Rail awards – but probably not for cycle carriage during the Olympics

Photo: iStockphoto.com



SAFETY CATCH

Cycling gets another £15m for safety improvements at junctions. Meanwhile, casualties soar

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THE DEPARTMENT for Transport (DfT) has found an extra £15m for cycle safety improvements at junctions in England, and has announced where the last £266m of its Local Sustainable Transport Fund will be spent. However, it is still unclear whether ministers and officials will commit to the kind of comprehensive action plan for more and safer cycling that CTC has called for.

The need for such a plan was reinforced only days later: new figures showed that serious cyclist casualties had increased by 16% from 2010 to 2011, a much steeper increase than the slight rise in cycle use. Although cyclist fatality numbers fell slightly (from

111 to 107, the lowest ever recorded level), total cyclist injuries were up by 12%. In a bad year for road safety, other groups suffered too: pedestrian fatalities rose by 12% and motorcyclist injuries rose by 8%. Total road

fatalities went up for the first time since 2003 (by 3%), and serious injuries rose by 2%, the first increase since 1994.

Some of these changes can be

attributed to the weather: the increases in cyclist injuries were marked at the start and end of the year, corresponding to the wintry conditions in 2010. But the fact that other road user groups also saw increases, and throughout the year, suggests that other factors are also at work.

Safety 'not a priority'

CTC's Campaigns and Policy Director Roger Geffen said: 'We may now be seeing the results of the Government's rhetoric about "ending the war on the motorist", which had suggested that road safety wasn't a priority. Ministers now need to reassert the importance of creating safe and attractive cycling conditions, promoting safe driving and tackling the threat posed by lorries. This is important not just for our health and the environment, but for the safety of other road users too.'

CTC welcomed the £15m funding for cycle safety outside London, which comes on top of £15m previously announced in George Osborne's spring Budget for similar junction improvements in the capital. However, in a letter to The Times, CTC Chief Executive Gordon

Seabright noted that the Chancellor had the same day deferred plans to increase fuel duty, effectively handing back around £550m towards motor travel.

Meanwhile, the tight time scales for spending the junction safety money would make it, he wrote, 'very difficult for councils to come up with the radical and innovative schemes needed to transform the nightmare junctions nominated by Times readers into places which feel safe enough for people of all ages to give cycling a try'. He urged that the funds should be spent wisely, but also that more substantial and consistent funding will be needed for cycling to achieve its full potential.

CTC understands that discussions are underway within DfT over a possible transport strategy, to be published later this year, and that parts of DfT are keen to ensure that cycling and active travel are given due prominence. But they are warning that there is little prospect of significant new cash, at least not until the next Comprehensive Spending Review, widely expected next year.

For more details, visit the website ctc.org.uk/campaigns



(Top) King's Cross: one of London's cycle unfriendly junctions. (Above) Roger Geffen



(Above) Caroline with CTC's Steve Marsden and (right) carrying the torch on her hastily-fixed recumbent trike



Photos: Gavin Wood

CTC'S CAROLINE CARRIES TORCH

CTC MEMBER Caroline Waugh, who first learned to ride a recumbent trike two years ago after a car crash left her brain damaged, was one of this summer's Olympic torch bearers. She rode through Conisbrough, South Yorkshire, with the torch attached to her trike.

Her ride almost ended before it began. There was some confusion among the organisers that Caroline was to ride her trike rather than walk. Then the back wheel fell off her trike and the torch holder

became bent. CTC's Steve Marsden repaired the trike while the Olympic team fixed the torch holder.

'It was as smooth as a Formula One pit stop,' said Steve. 'Caroline was ready to roll and off she went, the streets of Conisbrough lined with people with bells, whistles and flags. The Olympic carnival had started, and Caroline was off. As she appeared with her police escort, all smiling and waving and people shouting and waving, I could feel a tear!

'After 500 metres or so, the

Olympic torch was passed on, Caroline pulled over to the side, and the flame continued its journey. She was then surrounded by well-wishers and people wanting a photo of themselves, the torch and Caroline.'

'It was brilliant!' said Caroline. 'I took both hands off the steering and just waved to all the fantastic crowds. I couldn't believe that they had come out to see the torch and me.'

For a video, see tinyurl.com/7r9alnt

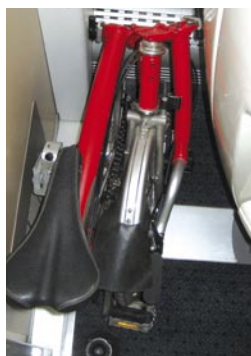


Photo: iStockphoto.com

(Above) Cycle carriage is being restricted near London during the Olympics. Folders aren't affected.

Train for the Olympics?

IN THE run up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, residents of London and the south east of England have been urged to 'get ahead of the Games' and find alternative ways to travel, including, of course, the bicycle. Unfortunately, the train operating companies in the area are preparing to ban cycles from many trains for much of the period, with the worst closures affecting the cycling road races on 28-29 July.

This will be one of the major events for the thousands who missed out on tickets for the Games, yet getting to the venue will be tricky for anyone who wishes to cycle out from a station to see it.

It's not just spectators

attending the Games that will be affected: commuters who are currently permitted to take full size bikes on some trains may find they can't, even, in some cases, for the two-week period between the Olympics and Paralympics. This means those commuters – 19,000 of whom currently leave London's mainline stations by bike – may have to get on the packed Underground to complete their journeys in London.

CTC has been in discussions with operators to try to limit the bans as much as possible, but as we were going to press the restrictions remain severe, with most trains not permitting bikes anywhere near the area.

For more details, visit ctc.org.uk/cycle-rail

FROM THE CHAIR OF CTC

David Cox

Mud, sweat and gears – this was the poster when the European Cyclo-Cross Championship came to

Birmingham. It would be a fair summary of the roller coaster many of us have been on for the last two months. There has been a lot of water under the bridge since the last issue of Cycle, and I hope you have found some cycling fun in this meteorologically challenged 'summer'.

CTC is now a registered charity in England and Wales, as it already was in Scotland. You cannot know how pleased I am to type those words! The work we do to encourage and support cycling and cycle touring in so many ways is now recognised as being in the public good. The effort now continues with the background work needed to make the most of this historic opportunity for CTC.

After the Sheffield AGM, I was off on a holiday in the climatic sauna of Hong Kong and Vietnam, which prepared me for the rigours of the York Cycle Show. We had mud, wind, and lots of sweat and courage from the heroic organising committee, who triumphantly pulled through.

It was a great exhibition, with fun activities and auctions and a gear-grinding Challenge Ride up onto the moors. I did try to hang on to editor Dan's lead out chain for 30 seconds but then settled down to enjoy the ride.

It was nice to be on the CTC stand and meet so many visitors. One group rode in from Nottingham, surfing traffic bow waves but remaining cheerful. In amongst the new bikes and kit on show, I finally met 'Colin 531', whose wise words on frame design have long been a highlight on the CTC Forum.

Good preparation for the sunlit uplands of Ellesmere and this year's Birthday Rides?



STATS MAKE CYCLISTS SEE RED

Just 2% of cyclists regularly jump red lights, not the 57% the Institute of Advanced Motorists implied



Photo: iStockphoto.com

EARLIER THIS year, dodgy statistics were being flung around like advertising displays at the windy York Cycle Show (p14). First of all, the Institute for Advanced Motorists, having run a self-reported 'survey' of road users, shrieked in a press release that '57% of cyclists jump red lights'. On inspection of the data, it turned out this was the proportion of cyclists who had ever jumped a red light; only 2% regularly did.

CTC highlighted a similar RAC survey, showing that 83% of motorists admit to breaking the speed limit and

nearly half admit to using a mobile phone while driving. The Guardian's Peter Walker and BikeBiz both castigated the IAM's disgraceful spinning.

Meanwhile, Boris Johnson's second mayoral term began badly when he claimed that 62% of serious injuries and deaths of cyclists involved the cyclists themselves breaking the law. As yet, no one in the Mayor's office has managed to track down where these mysterious (and inaccurate) figures come from. CTC believes the source was a garbled version of a study into the risks of cycling

published a few years ago – which reported almost the exact opposite figures.

Confusion over numbers got even worse when Virgin Money (which has taken over Northern Rock, including its sponsorship of cycle rides) announced their most 'cycle friendly' town, based on the numbers of cyclist injuries, cycle thefts, bike shops and cycle route kilometres.

Having failed to account for levels of cycling, the places that came top were those with the lowest cycling levels in the country, such as Dudley and St Helens, where just one in a hundred people cycle to work. Cambridge is a pretty safe place to cycle, yet because it has by far the highest levels of cycling (and therefore lots of injuries and bike thefts) it scored very badly. This failure to connect cycle use with the number of injuries has been a perennial failing of road safety analysis.

More on the IAM, RAC, Boris Johnson and Virgin Money news at ctc.org.uk/campaigns

2012 bike-rail awards

NOMINATIONS ARE now sought for the 2012 National Cycle Rail Awards, which recognise progress made by the rail industry and associated organisations towards encouraging integrated cycle-rail travel. The deadline for nominations is 30 September, and the awards will be handed out in the Houses of Parliament on 14 November.

There are 11 categories, with new awards recognising increases in cycle parking at London stations, train companies' involvement in promoting the Summer of Cycling, and a video and photography competition – where members of the public can win £400 GoPro helmet cameras.

Entries and nominations are welcomed for the following categories: Best Customer Service; Best Local Government Scheme; Innovation; Cycling Champion; Station of the Year; Operator of the Year; Best Station Travel Plan Measure for Cycling; Partnership Working; London Cycle Parking Award; Summer of Cycling Award; and Cycle-Rail Video and Photography Competition.

Conrad Haigh, Integrated Transport Manager for the Association of Train Operating Companies, said:



The awards recognise best practice in bike-rail provision, by operators, stations, and people

'The Cycle Rail Awards are a key part of spreading best practice as they allow the industry to reward good provision for cyclists and to learn from the most successful examples. So please nominate the best examples and help us improve the cycle-rail experience for everyone.'

For more about the awards and to enter online, visit the website cycle-rail.co.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

► BIKE PATH LAW FOR WALES

The Welsh Government has proposed a new law placing a duty on local authorities to map the walking and cycling routes in their area and make a plan and budget to improve them. The legislation will also include stronger guidance on designing better quality routes, as well as an overhaul of the antiquated and dysfunctional cycle tracks legislation which permits footpaths to be turned into cycle ways. CTC will respond to the consultation on the Bill later in the summer.

► SEASIDE CYCLING

After nine years of lobbying, local campaigner Roy Spilsbury has finally persuaded Conwy Council to permit cycling on a trial basis on Llandudno's Promenade. Roy's struggle was featured in Cycle a year ago. In Weymouth, however, local campaigners are still battling to be allowed to use the promenade. The Council claim they couldn't afford the small legal fee to change the by-law to permit cycling, but over £100m has been spent on new roads and in preparation for the Olympic sailing events.

► KEEP FORESTS PUBLIC

The Forest Advisory Panel, set up by the Government after its U-turn on forest sell-offs, has published its recommendations. The good news is its advice to retain public ownership of the existing national forest estate. The less good news is that, although the panel suggests incentives to encourage private forest owners to improve access, they suggest this should be mainly for walkers, with cyclists having limited gains. This is a shame – whilst the Forestry Commission provides 40% of England's publicly accessible forest land, it accounts for 98% of that accessible for cycling. CTC will nonetheless continue its strong partnership with the Forestry Commission, as well as working with other landowners to increase opportunities for off-road cycling.

► JUNE/JULY CORRECTIONS

p22: The Rido Lt saddle review was in the Feb/Mar 2012 issue, not the Oct/Nov 2011 issue.
p25: a Commons debate on access was being planned by the Sport & Recreation Alliance, not the Search & Rescue Association.
p26: David Rix is secretary of East Sussex CTC, not Essex CTC.