
Darlington Cycling Campaign

Executive Committee report to the 2011 Annual General Meeting

Darlington Media Workshop • Friday 18 February 2011



Beauty and the Bike farewell party

Executive Committee Report

DARLINGTON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Darlington Media Workshop, 7.30pm Friday 18th February 2011

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2010 AGM & Matter Arising
3. Reports – Retiring Committee Report ; Finance Report
4. Election of New Committee
5. Any other Business
6. Presentation by TIM STAHL - Report on Infrastructure Scrutiny

Retiring Executive Committee Members

Chair: Richard Grassick Vice Chair: Andy Samanjoul Secretary: Mike McTimoney Treasurer: Sally Forth Media: Nick Bagshaw Co-opted: Tim Stahl, Beatrix Wupperman, Marie Brown

Minutes of 2010 AGM

Darlington Media Workshop, 29th March 2010

Present: Richard Grassick, Christine Brown, Beatrix Wupperman, Tony Couch, Paul Turner, Nick Bagshaw, Duncan Buckingham, Tim Stahl, Andy Samanjoul, Marie Brown, Sally Forth, Mike McTimoney

Apologies: Steve Rose, Yvonne Richardson, Brian Vigurs, Ellie Grassick, Jenny Chapman

1. Minutes of 2009 AGM and matters arising

2009 treasurer's report: total expenditure should have been £26, Bike Nation should have read Cyclenation. Tim Stahl's report on local bike shop visits should state they were not interested.

2. Report of retiring committee

RG went through exec committee report.

Meeting in April of Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee – worth sending someone along; he normally attends, but will be away. TS explained importance of scrutiny committees. RG to circulate date/time.

TS raised need to ensure we know facts around 20MPH zones and need or otherwise of speedbumps.

Discussed whether we should send anyone to Cyclenation conference this year, and/or offer to show Beauty and The Bike film. MSM to check on time of conference.

TS explained background behind creation of code of conduct on Pedestrian Heart cycling. Campaign still opposes much of the content of the code but feels like it has “gone away” of its own accord. There was some discussion of what counts as antisocial cycling and the lack of verified incidents.

RG explained further about creation of darLOVELO bike pool and how it will operate.

RG stated aim to start a series of darLOVELO-based social events on which the Campaign could help. One such event could be a link-up with a Taunton-based group who are visiting in August. End of June: Sustainable Cities meeting in York – one visitor is a Vancouver bike advocate who we're going to invite to Darlington to give a talk at the time.

April 19th – Llyn Sloman is visiting town. NB to contact her to see about meeting for a chat near her visit, or to give a talk.

22nd September is International Car Free Day. Could we organise something around this day? Talk? Rides? “Lots-of-bikes-in-same-place-at-same-time” ride?

New committee explained – Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee. RG explained problem with current process by which we are consulted. TS expanded upon this, with respect to Grange Road island on NCN14; consult with us, then go ahead anyway. Council Highways

Engineers are getting in touch with York Highways Engineers, so TS is getting in touch with York Cycle Campaign.

Need for manifesto/agreement for when consulted on Local Transport Plan Three, which is in place until 2025.

3. Treasurer's Report

SF outlined accounts and income/expenditure for the year.

Expenditure: £230.59

Income: £165

Balance: £20,082.13 (of which £20,000 due to Darlovelo Ltd)

4. Election of committee

NB nominated RG as chair, MB seconded

RG nominated MM as secretary, MB seconded

BW nominated SF as treasurer, MB seconded

Agreed unanimously.

Co-opted: MB, NB, AS, TS

5. Affiliation and subscriptions

Suggested having voluntary contributions rather than collecting subscriptions, or hold social events to raise money. Those present donated £21.36

6. Any other business

Web presence. Do we need a website or can we update the blog? MM to "redesign" blog to make more web-like. We need more people to be involved as authors. MM to email everyone with details on how to contribute.

Engaging with Council. Encourage members to lobby their local ward councillors.

Campaign could try to link members who live in same wards. NB to write down some thoughts.

7. Presentation by BW on cycle Campaign Roadshow/Manifesto

BW gave presentation and draft manifesto was circulated. Discussed language of manifesto; could it be made less anti-car to avoid putting people on defensive? How can we be more proactive with this to get non-cyclists to petition councillors?

AGM was happy with slideshow and basic structure/thrust. Agreed principle of manifesto and committee can tidy-up/complete.

Report of Executive Committee

2010 has been a difficult year for the Cycling Campaign. Chair Richard Grassick began his long-predicted move to Bremen in Germany, also depriving us of Beatrix Wupperman for much of the year. Meanwhile, secretary Mike McTimoney asked for a sabbatical of indeterminate length for personal reasons. This left the Campaign with a seriously depleted committee. Fortunately, Nick Bagshaw and Tim Stahl have stepped into the breach, taking over many of the functions previously carried out by our chair and secretary. Meanwhile, they have been ensuring that the infrastructure scrutiny promised at last year's AGM continues to be carried out.

National Context

2010 was a general election year, and cycling has been significantly affected. As part of its "burning of the quangos", the new coalition government announced the demise of Cycling England, which will mean the end of the "Cycling Demonstration Town" experiment. Heralded as the way forward by Cycling England when CDTs were first introduced to Darlington and 5 other towns in 2005, the hope was that "continental levels of spending" on cycling would prove to central government that a modest investment could deliver impressive results. Impressive or not, the new government clearly is not interested in these arguments. Instead, it has decided to end the "war on the motorist". So goodbye Cycling England. In its place, a "Sustainable Travel Fund" is being set up for local organisations to bid. The Fund covers ALL types of sustainable travel, including local rail, bus, walking and cycling. Don't hold your breath. The fund has £560m to spend over 5 years. Meanwhile, in the spirit of austere localism, the Borough Council also announced the abolition of the town's Cycle Forum and has ceased funding of Neil Mitchell's post (Sustrans Area Manager).

Bikeability would appear to be the only cycling specific item that has avoided becoming a 'cuts casualty'. There is no commitment beyond 2012. Our view is that a few hours training will not alter driver behaviour, make cycling an easier transport option, or significantly alter most parents' perception that cycling on Darlington's roads is inherently dangerous.

Darlovelo

The Cycling Campaign helped launch our bike hire scheme Darlovelo at the Darlington Cycling Festival in South Park on 25 July. The hire scheme, set up thanks to a successful Cycling Campaign bid to the cycling industry's New Ideas Fund, makes town bikes, including a range of Dutch-style, available to hire for a modest £20 per month (£10 for students). In contrast to well known big city schemes like Velolib in Paris and the Barclay's scheme in London, Darlovelo only costs around £20,000 a year to run. The scheme

currently has a fleet of between 30 and 40 bikes. It is now managed by a not-for-profit social enterprise, and in October appointed a part-time worker, Annie Ravazzolo, who is now preparing for a spring blitz of Darlington.

Darvelo is the Cycling Campaign's contribution to a more relaxed cycling culture in Darlington. But we are keenly aware that casual riding on lovely bikes in style ultimately needs the lovely cycle paths to make it a success.

Ecotopia Bike Tour

On June 26th, the Ecotopia Bike Tour 2010 started with a Cycling Campaign-hosted event in Darlington. The Tour rode through the UK, France, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany. Their 1700km itinerary focused around climate justice issues, and took more than two months. The Campaign organised a social and accommodation for the 20 or so participants, who came from all over the world, at the Clow Beck Eco Centre near Croft. The social featured a screening of the film *Beauty and the Bike*.

Local Transport Plan 3

All local authorities are now in the process of submitting their new Local Transport Plans, which in the case of Darlington will cover the years from 2012 to 2025. This is clearly an important document, and the Cycling Campaign attended events that offered consultation opportunities, principally "Talking Together". But the feeling we got was that the clear priorities stated by many members of the public at that event - reduced space for motorised traffic, and increased space for all other forms of transport - are not being taken seriously. We are now in discussions with Darlington Friends of the Earth regarding a joint statement about LTP3.

Car-Free Cities Conference - Beauty and the Bike

Two Cycling Campaign members took the film *Beauty and the Bike* to the Car Free Cities Conference that was held in York at the end of June. The film drew loud applause, with some members of the large audience speaking of "tears in their eyes". The film has had worldwide impact, with screenings organised in towns and cities from New Zealand to Germany to Canada. It continues to be screened in 2011, with showings planned for Berlin, Prague and various venues in Eastern Europe, Spain and Portugal.

Campaign Talks

The Campaign organised a short series of talks by invited guest speakers in 2010. Cycling journalist Carlton Reid's appearance in January was followed by consultant Karl McCracken in March, and in June cycling advocate Bonnie Fenton came all the way from Vancouver to explain what the local cycling campaign had achieved there. But attendances

were disappointing, considering the effort that went in to bringing such distinguished guests to the town, and the series was discontinued.

Campaign Rides

Even more disappointing were the rides organised by the Campaign. A Pedal Picnic in August attracted few takers, and the subsequent autumn ride organised with Darlovelo was scarcely better.

Darlington Infrastructure

Tim Stahl will be making a presentation to the AGM of his overview of Darlington cycling infrastructure. However, some of the consultation work carried out by the committee includes:

- *Haughton Road bridge.* The long-awaited bridge on Haughton Road that completes the Haughton cycle route is.....still awaited. Repeated attempts at nailing a specific date for its installation have been rebuffed with assurances that all is still on track, but without a clear completion date. An attempt at putting a date on completion was last made in November 2009, when a council spokesman said that the bridge would be started "in 2010". The Campaign was indeed consulted about the approaches to the bridge last year, but so far there has been no sign of work commencing on site. The bridge is being made from recycled plastic and fibre-reinforced polymer, which is ordinarily used in the maritime industry, and requires minimal maintenance. It will be the first time the material has been used for a bridge in this country. The finished bridge will be 65 metres long and 15 metres high.
- *Pedestrian Heart.* A recent report to the council explained that there has been no report of any collision between cyclists and pedestrians since monitoring began. Despite continuing evidence that cycling in the town centre is not dangerous to anyone, certain groups remain opposed to the concept.
- *Hummersknott Cycle Path.* This project, first mooted by Tim Stahl, came to the attention of DCC via a local objector. Media reports suggested it was likely to be rejected following an overwhelming negative response to the idea by local residents. DBC were responding to a request for such a path from Hummersknott School. The plan, with a couple of minor alterations, met with the campaigns approval. The school subsequently withdrew their support for the scheme and two local councillors effectively killed it off. DBC acknowledged they had been remiss in failing to notify the campaign, something they say will not occur in future.
- *Woodland Road.* The Cycling Campaign held a meeting with Darlington's new MP (and cyclist) Jenny Chapman. Amongst other issues, the idea of the Campaign developing a staged engineering solution for the creation of a cycle path the length of Woodland Road

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was discussed Ms Chapman stated she would support the project. DCC will be developing an initial survey and plan in 2011, and agreed to keep her fully briefed of developments.

•*Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs)*. DBC have confirmed that ASL's will now be considered for installation at selected junctions, after years of resistance.

Financial Report

With the launch of Darlovelo, the Cycling Campaign held the first £20,000 of Bike Hub grant until the Darlovelo had established its own bank account. Subsequent payments were made directly to Darlovelo. Our only expense in 2010 was an affiliation fee to Cyclenation of £40.

Balance brought forward from 2009	£20,082.13
Income	
Donations from AGM (subscriptions)	£ 21.36
Interest	£ 0.48
Outgoings	
Paid to Darlovelo	£20,000.00
Cyclenation Affiliation	£ 40.00
Year End Balance	£63.97

Retiring Executive Committee, February 2011