Petition comments

that say it all...



I have not yet seen a better potential cycle map of London than this one. This captures the way we cycle.

An excellent idea which will help to make travelling around London easier, safer and greener.

I LOVE cycling but don't always feel safe to in the capital... Brilliant idea!

CSO

This is a matter of urgency. If we want more people cycling then a unified cycle map is a necessity.

This is
a great idea. Let's
get it implemented
and make London
the world's cycling
capital!

Great idea! Why has the Mayor not pushed for this already?



This small investment will investment will have HUGE payoff have HUGE payoff for years and years to come.

I spend a lot of time in London, and commute to work by bike when staying.

A map would be good for letting me know how to get around at weekends.

Make it happen!



Really happy with moves to support cycling so far but this would help still further.

If Boris really wants to make
London a 'cycling city' then
this is a must!

14 huge cumbersome maps. Great if you are only going a short distance and can keep the map folded. Awkward if you want to travel any distance.

I cycle every day to work, but to venture outside of my normal route is hard without a GPS. We need a map.

I've cycled on roads and cycle routes in London for years and I feel it's safe to say we're a bit behind the times when it comes to provisions for cyclists. More needs to be done to encourage people to cycle more; a clear, simple map could really help, along with clearly marked out routes.

This is a superb idea and I would really like to see it taken forward. It could make a huge difference for cycling in the capital.

Would be great to arrive in London by train and explore it easily on my own bike. Let's set an example to the world and show it off in 2012!



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Why I am backing the London Cycle Map Campaign



By Brian Deegan, Development Manager for the London Cycle Network

t is true to say that Simon Parker's colour-coded Tubestyle mapping system has met with mixed reviews from the current cycling establishment. Some believe the system to be too complex, too much of a departure, or not aligned with their own policies. Some prefer signing using London Cycle Network route numbers, or bikeability ratings, while others concentrate on greenways and leisure routes.

"Simon Parker's system is a great invention and the compass colour methodology is ingenious. I wish to give his work and Cycle Lifestyle's London Cycle Map Campaign my full backing and support."

The trouble is, with 33 different local authorities, TfL, The Royal Parks and British Waterways adopting different policies towards cycle signage, the result is a somewhat confusing mess. The current state of affairs – with several cycling mapping systems in operation – is simply not acceptable and in my view discourages and impedes cycling growth. I think we all need to put our heads together and agree on one system then implement it consistently across London.

This system would have to be expansive yet inclusive

of work on both a macro and micro level, be elegant yet informative, and not be confusing or overcomplicated. Like many cycle planners, I have spent years trying to find this system, and in my opinion the best idea to have come along is the Tube-style approach based on the compass colour system devised by Simon Parker. This has the highest potential to attract new cyclists, as well as offering schematic simplicity and engaging design. It will take a lot of work and commitment to establish this system, but I believe it is one that can fulfill all of our diverse requirements as planners.

I do not in any way want to disparage any effort to promote cycling through mapping systems developed so far. In fact, I applaud them and am personally responsible for some of them. My reason for providing this testimonial is that we are now in a position where cycling can truly become a mainstream transport option in London, and I believe we need a sophisticated mapping system to make the best planning tools and information available to cyclists, enabling them to better plan their journeys in a convenient way.

Because London is a complex and unique city, it is hard to find systems that can be translated from other cities to ours. So we need to invent our own. Simon Parker's system is a great invention and the compass colour methodology is ingenious. I wish to give his work and Cycle Lifestyle's London Cycle Map Campaign my full backing and support.

The views stated above are very much my own and not those of the organisations I represent. I write this testimonial to applaud the effort of the amateur, which is in keeping with the true spirit of cycling.



very year hundreds of thousands of students accept places at UK universities. For many, moving away from home is part of the university experience, but the resulting change of lifestyle can be dramatic, both emotionally and physically.

Shortly after starting a Linguistics degree at University College London at the age of 19, Sara Redgewell, originally from Essex, was like many students – drinking more, eating poorly and doing little exercise.

'I was broke, which meant I was eating cheaply and not very healthily, and I wasn't really exercising,' says Sara, now 26. 'As a result I gained quite a lot of weight. By the end of my first year I was 16 stone and needed to tackle it.

'I couldn't afford to join a gym, and when you're big your confidence can be low and it's embarrassing to go to the gym or join in with team sports. I felt self-conscious about exercising around other people, so I bought a bike knowing it was something I could do alone and at my own pace.

'My low budget meant the bike wasn't expensive or flashy — in fact it was quite a girly sit-up-and-beg style, totally different from the one I have now. But it was perfect to use as a runaround for getting across London, travelling between lectures and for going over to friends' houses or on nights out.'

Cycling turned out to be the perfect solution. Not only did

Sara notice a difference in her fitness quite quickly, she was saving money too.

'I did away with my monthly travelcard, which was costing around £70 every month, and cycled everywhere instead.

'In the end I lost seven stone. It took a couple of years, and it wasn't just exercise – I had to change my eating habits, too – but cycling was definitely the catalyst. It helped me begin my weight loss and once I started getting in shape I got more confidence to do other activities and work out with other people.'

"Lea Valley is one of eight routes nominated by Sustrans that will allow people to get to and from Olympic venues on foot or bike."

It was a habit that Sara has sustained beyond her years at university. Having graduated in 2007, Sara still rides everywhere. She now lives in Seven Sisters, North London, and every day cycles three miles each way to and from Homerton Hospital, where she is training to be a nurse. She also goes out on weekend canal rides along parts of the National Cycle Network in London.



'My favourite route is Lea Valley – Route 1 of the National Cycle Network. It's a tranquil little escape from the hustle of the city centre, away from the roads and passing through some of London's beautiful parks and green spaces.'

It's been an exciting 18 months along Route 1 of the Network. The Meath Bridge has become a popular traffic-free crossing over the Regent's Canal after opening in Autumn 2009 as part of Sustrans Connect2 project, in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, Transport for London and Tower Hamlets Borough Council.

Also, Lea Valley is one of eight routes nominated by Sustrans that will allow people to get to and from Olympic venues on foot or bike. The Olympic Delivery Authority and Transport for London have put money into improving the eight routes and will officially open them as Olympic routes in June.

'London has certainly improved for cycling since I've been doing it,' Sara continues. 'There are noticeably far more cyclists now, so everyone is more aware of bikes on the road and there's a feeling of safety in numbers. I also participated in the free cycle training my local borough offers, which helped me to build my confidence on the bike and improve my road riding skills and awareness.

'When I started I didn't know anyone else that cycled, and now lots of my friends do. I know I've directly inspired a few people to take to their bikes. A flatmate started cycling because I was doing it, and another friend recently asked me to go with her and help her choose a bike. Once you start and realise how much easier, quicker and cheaper it is to get around London by bike it's a real revelation.'

To find out more about cycling routes in London email london@sustrans.org.uk or telephone 020 7017 2350.

Tuesday 31 May, 2011: A talk by Dominic Gill At: The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ

Dom will be talking about his ride from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, approximately 18,449 miles down the west coast to Ushuaia, the most southerly city in South America. He did the journey on a tandem giving people a lift along the way and has now written a book about his experiences.

For more information email supporters@sustrans.org.uk or telephone 0117 915 0115



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New Bike on the Block

by Gareth Jenkins

've just spent a week in Norway hunting for the northern lights. I tell you this mainly to show off, but also to let you know about an amazing cycling scheme I found in Trondheim, a city just north of the Arctic Circle.

My cycling takes me to many places: Leyton, Hackney, and sometimes even Islington. But the snow and icy climes of one of Europe's coldest countries was not an environment where I thought I could get in a cheeky cycle. How wrong I was! It turns out loads of Norwegians cycle around, even in the most freezing conditions.

With a mixture of careful tyre choices, good clothes and loads of help from the road authorities, the cyclists were all buzzing past me in the many snow-covered bike lanes that twist through Norway's cities.

"I once heard a friend of mine say that his perspective on what it was to be a considerate lover was essentially 10 minutes of crippling, uncomfortable, unnecessary effort followed by a short-lived exciting bit at the end. This is pretty much how I feel about hills."

There is a cycling expression that explains when something is "Bad Luck" or "Just Typical!" and it goes like this: "Isn't that just like the old lady to use the zebra crossing halfway up the hill?" Ok, I just made that up, but it keeps happening to me on this one particular hill that is a bugger to pedal up. You stop and lose all your momentum, and when she's finally crossed you can only continue at a worm-like speed, using the same amount of energy required to run 16 medium-sized food processing factories.

Me and hills don't see eye to eye. I have long since mused on whether the freewheeling, wind in your hair, zoom down a hill is worth all the effort to get up it in the first place. I once heard a friend of mine say that his perspective on what it was to be a considerate lover was essentially 10 minutes of crippling, uncomfortable, unnecessary effort followed by a short-lived exciting bit at the end. This is pretty much how I feel about hills.



The Norwegians don't have any of these issues. Not only are they fantastic and naturally limber lovers, they also have a solution to the "cycling up difficult hills" problem, I soon discovered.

The laid back Norwegians were always helpful to everyone, so I had stopped to ask a passerby why there was a man waiting on his bike not doing anything by the side of the road.

He replied, beaming, "Ah! He's waiting for the tramp to help him up the hill! We are very proud of our tramp!"

More than a little confused, I squinted at the horizon to catch a glimpse of this famous homeless man who can single-handedly carry cyclists up hills. He must be huge. I was envisioning Harry Potter's mate, Hagrid, rumbling down the hill, ready to pick up the next cyclist under his arm and skip back up to the top. I wondered how someone who had these skills could potentially be homeless and not rich and famous.

The mystery was quickly solved when I found out there was a mechanical cycle lift there which was called the "TRAMPE".

I'm not going to lie, I was disappointed. My imagination had got the best of me and I had set my expectations a little too high. But in the absence of the giant charitable hobo I longed for, it turns out the TRAMPE was the next best thing.

The system works like this. Place your bike next to the cycle lift at the bottom of the hill. Sit in the saddle. Put in your card or your money. Get ready, and wait for the foot support to come. Then place your right foot on the step and it will pull you and your bike up the hill at about 3-4 mph. Genius. Awesome. Inspiring.

This is the point where, if you can, you should search for the TRAMPE on youtube and have a look. I found one clip which seems to have been an advert for it. It uses effects and graphics that would have looked out of date in 1982. It's brilliant.

Ok, the name isn't the greatest, but I'm sure that it's some



sort of acronym that makes sense to the Norwegians. The mechanics of the TRAMPE are so simple they seem like they've been dreamt up by an 8 year old who is daydreaming and doodling in class. In action it is a thing of beauty, and you find your own creativity running wild. (In fact, it was at that moment I dreamed up the Hover-Bike – but that's another story for another time.)

To my knowledge, not one other city has implemented this fantastic invention. The reason for this is probably that it hardly helps anyone and it doesn't really encourage the extra cyclists it claims to. But the fact that they have thrown caution to the wind and put such an interesting and risky venture into place speaks volumes about the Norwegians.

I find the idea of just giving new things a go extremely romantic. The message they are sending with the TRAMPE is that "ideas are good" and "cycling's good" and we will back you up in both of these always. When you look at the reams of red tape that you must go through to get any new schemes through in Britain, you can't help but long for a bit of reckless impulsiveness over here.

The TRAMPE is one of my favourite things I have ever seen on my travels. It captures the imagination – so expect to see my Bubble-Gum Hover-Bike levitating to a store near you soon.

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Barking and Dagenham: an Outer London

an Outer London Biking Borough

he end of the financial year provides an opportunity for us to take a snapshot – a look back at Barking and Dagenham's contribution to the cycling revolution in London.

Being awarded 'Outer London Biking Borough' status from Transport for London is a proud achievement for the borough, demonstrating our dedication to encouraging, facilitating and promoting cycling – as emphasised by the increasing number of cycle journeys being made here, year on year. The recognition has led us to produce a single overarching cycling strategy that emphasises the importance of the cycling agenda and how it can benefit the entire community in the short, medium and long term.

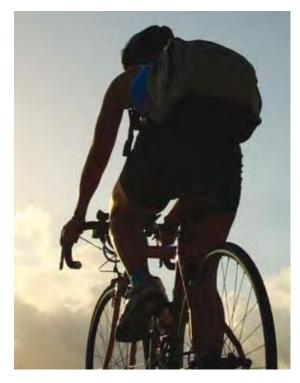
Being selected as the Home Zone for the new pilot Cycle Superhighway route 3 means not only that local residents are able to cycle on a direct and clearly defined route between Barking and Tower Hill in the heart of London, but also that there have been opportunities to improve local cycling facilities too.

Convenience for cyclists has also been enhanced by the provision of 160+ new cycle parking spaces, complemented by improved way-finding and cycle information points located at key destinations within the Barking area, including transport interchanges, shopping hubs, leisure centres and the Broadway Theatre. Hosting a local cycle event in Greatfields Park enabled us to engage with the local community and to highlight the benefits and ease of cycling whilst demonstrating firsthand its fun side. Cycle Training, a busy Dr Bike Session, and a game of cycle polo all contributed to a positive feel for cycling among local residents.

One of the most vital contributions we as an authority make to the cycling revolution is free cycle training – for all residents, pupils, workers and visitors. Guided by qualified cycle instructors, it gives people the opportunity to gain the knowledge, experience, skills and confidence to be able to cycle within the borough safely, and has assisted with the surge in local cycle journeys. This year alone, in excess of 2,000 of the borough's school pupils have successfully completed cycle training to National Standards. In addition, an educational cycle awareness course targeted at freight drivers, emphasising professionalism and raising awareness of the continually changing streetscape of London, has helped to improve road safety. The course has been completed by 360 drivers in 3 months, with demand being so great the programme has been extended.

The new 'corridor' approach from Transport for London will ensure that future infrastructure development schemes will consider cyclists as a key route user, and help provide more safe and direct facilities. This year's cross-borough corridor schemes on Green Lane and Rainham Road (North and South) will involve the reallocation of road space by removing a running lane and replacing it with a dedicated cycle lane. This will provide a defined 5.8km cycling link between the borough's boundary with Redbridge in the west, and Havering in the east.

Whilst we have made many positive impacts over the past 12 months, we still have a long way to go to fully change attitudes towards cycling. However, our efforts, determination and commitment, backed by investment from Transport for London, will continue in the year ahead, helping to make Barking and Dagenham a borough to be discovered by bike.



The Best Cycling Streets in London

By Elizabeth Hunter

n this issue's 'Best Cycling Streets' we're moving south.
Riding around south London can be an absolute delight –
there are plenty of green open spaces, so many routes can
be planned to take you through at least one park. There
are also, challengingly, a fair few substantial hills.

"Denmark Hill allows you to really experience just how jumbled-up the capital is, how higgledy-piggledy is its mix of architecture, population groups, incomes and eras."

Cycling back from green and pleasant West Dulwich one Saturday, I tackled Herne Hill, the most direct route to get back towards the river and onwards to the north. From the burning in my thighs, it didn't immediately feel likely that this road was going to make it onto my list of favourites. Yes, it is wide, with a marked cycle lane and relatively light traffic, but it is also a long, fairly unforgiving hill lined with unremarkable houses and flats.

As I reached the top panting, though, I immediately knew it was going to be worth it. At the crown of the hill the road becomes Denmark Hill, and beckons you to a long, brilliant freewheel down to Camberwell. Before you kick off, take a moment to admire the view over the city, which is particularly spectacular at night. Depending on the angle (and how much the trees have been pruned) you can see the Gherkin, and occasionally catch a glimpse of the London Eye and Canary Wharf.

Once you've marvelled at how great our skyline is, and how near everything looks, you're ready for the descent. Denmark Hill demonstrates one of the best things about cycling in London: it allows you to really experience just how jumbled-up the capital is, how higgledy-piggledy is its mix of architecture, population groups, incomes and eras. You could sort of get it through the steamed-up window of a bus, but will more likely have your nose in the Metro.

All of life flashes past as you career down the hill on your bike with the wind in your hair; blocky council estates, grand old villas, neon takeaways, elegant Ruskin Park on your left, King's College Hospital on your right.

Enjoy the view, and the exhilaration of the freewheel, and, if you're not in a rush to get anywhere, pull over by Denmark Hill station and get some refreshments in the rather lovely Phoenix pub. Then take a wander a little further east to Love Walk, off Grove Lane, which feels like a perfect little village in the heart of the city. In Camberwell, of all places. You'd never find that from the Tube.

Check out Elizabeth Hunter's blog 'The Trusty Steed' at: thetrustysteed.blogspot.com





The Peddler

A day in the life of a London cyclist

by Adam Copeland

ycling in the capital is a joy. The freedom, the large open parks, the potential to run over Grand Slamwinning former international rugby star Jeremy Guscott (if my ride to work last Tuesday was anything to go by).

Cycling in South Africa, however, turns out to be a rather more perilous adventure. A recent news story told the tale of a brave cyclist in rural North West South Africa ("North West South" basically being all the areas that

"Always, always, always wear a cycling helmet. It represents a serious choking hazard for any carnivorous wildcat."



aren't "East") who used his bike to fend off a leopard.

"The leopard's head stuck out just above the saddle," said Pieta Ncube, who had used the triangle of the frame to trap the creature's head, thereby substantially reducing its ability to eat anyone. According to the report, he then went on to attack the cat with a steel bar that was attached to his bike.

The brave actions of Ncube (which, interestingly, is Afrikaans for Xbox), teaches us all a striking lesson. And that striking lesson is, swing from the hip and aim for the head.

But given our relative paucity of leopards (to say nothing of the impracticality of lugging a steel bar up Archway on a bike), what do his courage and ingenuity teach cyclists in London? I'd say it was pretty clear.

One. Avoid anywhere in the North West South region. As far as I can tell, this just leaves you with Shoreditch.

Two. Always, always, <u>always</u> wear a cycling helmet. It represents a serious choking hazard for any carnivorous wildcat.

Three. Don't dress up as a leopard when Pieta Ncube is about.

Of course, the most dangerous wildlife likely to imperil you in London is a pigeon, or perhaps a fox. Several times I've had to swerve dramatically to avoid a pigeon, either careering

"Unless you spend your whole time riding round and round wheelie bins at night like some sort of nocturnal litter pervert, foxes are unlikely to do anything more threatening to a cyclist than run away looking sheepish."

towards my head, or waddling, apparently deliberately, right into my path. (Any cyclist will tell you about the remarkable ability these birds have to see a tyre bearing down on them, panic, and lurch directly towards it.) Alarming, maybe, but somehow a pigeon doesn't quite have the menace, or indeed jaw power, of an adult leopard.

But what of the fox? (And I'm not talking about Dr Fox, who can easily be avoided by simply not switching on Magic FM on a weekday morning.) Yes, foxes are everywhere, but unless you spend your whole time riding round and round wheelie bins at night like some sort of nocturnal litter pervert, they're unlikely to do anything more threatening to a cyclist than run away looking sheepish. Well, 'foxish', if you want to get technical about it. The way I see it, they're basically the closest I'll ever come in London to owning a dog.

In short, the streets of London are safe for cycling. As long as you can find a way of swerving round Jeremy Guscott, of course.



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