

CycleNation Conference, Edinburgh

6 Nov. 2010

Notes taken by Peter Hawkins

Paul Tetlaw (Chair, Transform Scotland)

Welcomed the delegates and gave us a timely reminder that 98% of transport is fuelled by oil, and that Scotland is the fattest nation in Europe, and fourth in the world.

Gordon McKenzie (Chair, Transport etc City of Edinburgh Council):

Cllr McKenzie put up a slide showing **steady growth of cycle use in Edinburgh** over the past 15 years, noting that more growth occurred after the program of on-road facilities and bus lanes was introduced. The target is now 15% of modal share by 2020. Cycling gives a good rate of economic return and he hopes the local economy will remain strong despite the recession. He noted particularly the social benefits of cycling.

Active Travel Action Plan (ATAP) has been recently introduced, with focus on the short and medium term, and hopefully action rather than policy or strategy. Aims to target areas with greatest potential; will include 'soft' as well as 'hard' measures; and wants to make cycling 'trendy'. ATAP will include a 'family network' (an innovation); a cycle-friendly city program; parking; road maintenance; promotion; cycling to school; safety; and bike share.

A **Quality Bike Corridor** (QBC) will run from the south-centre to Kings Buildings, to link the 2 main university campuses and enhance a part of the city where cycling levels are already high, Pilot 20mph zones will also be introduced on this south side – Marchmont, Grange, Newington, out to Blackford.

Parking in tenements is a challenge, but Council will tackle it. They want to hear from users.

Promotion will include signage, maps, leaflets, and web facilities like CycleStreets.

Slide of potential cycle modal share, with darker/lighter shading, shows some areas could reach 50% for short 2-5km journeys.

Jennifer Calvert (TfL Senior Policy Officer)

Spoke mainly on **hire** and **cycle superhighways** (S/H). 3 areas – Central – 'short hops'; Inner to Central; and Outer (utility cycling). 2010 has featured 'Catch up with the bike' campaign, and Skyrides with 100K participants, when streets were closed.

Barclays Hire Scheme (aka **Boris Bikes**); 5000 bikes; 300 docking stations; 5-year £25m deal. Pricing encourages use for short trips. 100K registered users. Soon to be available for casual/visitors. Eastern extension for 2012 Olympics.

S/H – 12 routes to be ready by 2015 – radial, from outer to centre, intended for commuters. 'Home end' and 'work end' promotion measures. Re-surfacing; directional signage, including at tube stations; safety 'trixi' mirrors; junction improvements; and

parking. Aims for 20,000 journeys per day. Being used by businessmen as well as the lycra lot. Have caused a 20% increase in usage, up to 90% in places. No adverse impact on bus times. Enforcement is a feature – 1300 tickets issued already for ASL infringement. Action Plan to be based on evidence from collisions. HGV driver training courses introduced. Task force of 30 appointed to tackle theft. Making case for economic benefits. Showed short video of S/H.

Dave duFeu (Spokes, Edinburgh)

Noted that most **cycle funding** comes from national rather than local sources, so national lobbying is essential. CEC has said that if funding withdrawn, no hope of meeting targets.

Cycle use took off once on-road facilities were built. Example of lanes on The Mound – unrestricted route for going uphill. Lanes also benefit pedestrians and tourists by keeping traffic further at bay. Problems have arisen at crossing of Princes St and The Mound, with tram lines.

Politicians and top officials – it's often the person rather than the party that makes the difference, eg LibDems made great promises in manifesto but once in power did very little for the first 2 years. Then came new people as Director of City Development, Head of Transport (Marshall Poulton) and Transport Convenor (Cllr Mackenzie). Suddenly, cycling then moved up the agenda, the Action Plan was developed, and detailed attention started being paid even to 'under the radar' issues such as giving cycling higher consideration in deciding which roads are prioritised for maintenance spending.

Ashok Sinha, Chief Exec of London Cycle Campaign

Noted the greater **diversity of cyclists now on the road** and a **change in attitude by the media**. **Support from Mayor** has been of great value.

But the **devolving of resources to local authorities could be disastrous**. Only LAs can now bid for Sustainable Transport Fund.

Hire scheme is working well, but there's a need for better infrastructure in the Centre. **S/H** always wanted by LCC, but implementation falls short in places. LCC wants lessons learnt from existing two S/Hs before the rest are built.

Outer boroughs have much potential for growth but lack of strategic direction now, with demise of Cycling England.

LCC has opposed allowing motor cycles in bus lanes. Partnership with HGVs/TfL on safety. Loss of Olympic Legacy body.

Cycling has come onto the political agenda, and is backed in high places.

Q/A session

Raised issues of Strict Liability; police enforcement eg 20mph limits; hire bikes not suitable for short women; more training needed for Asian women, who are keen to cycle; DdF plugged the 20mph consultation on Spokes website.

John Lauder noted that a Strict Liability desk-based study is going ahead for Scotland, and a 20mph scheme in Kirkcaldy has police backing at top level.

Philip Darnton (former Director, Cycling England)

The main problem is that **cycling is not part of transport policy**, so has to rely on '**champions**'. A succession of Transport Ministers funded cycling according to their views on it, from Alistair Darling (£5m) to Ruth Kelly (£140m over 3 years). Compared with the Dutch, where cycling gets all-party support, and they now talk of investment at levels of £40/head. Consistency is the core requirement.

Cycling England (CE) with £5m (and a staff of 4, all voluntary) had to show value for money so focussed £10/head on 6 towns, all with c.100K inhabitants, and prepared to match the funding, and the CEO had to sign up to show commitment at the highest level. Facilities proposed had to satisfy rigorous questioning – who's it for? Where is it going, and why? Slowing of traffic is the single biggest contributor. Learning to cycle should become a right of passage for all children. Money works hardest in hubs – schools, hospitals, stations. Personalised travel plans must be preceded by better infrastructure. Expensive unless one works with champions, eg school heads, Asda, directors of Public Health.

The DfT has stated the **economic case for cycling** – a return of 3.5-5.0 to 1 on investment. *But arguments for cycling aren't based on rational grounds (it's a no-brainer), they're political, and emotional.* The future – demise of CE is irrational – very low cost. More money now on offer, but no-one organised to spend it.

Ian Aitken (CEO, Cycling Scotland)

Noted that CS is an independent charity, not a quango. **CAPS has a target of 10% modal share by 2020, but cycling gets barely 1% of the transport budget.** The CEO of Transport Scotland has however said that TS is “committed” to delivery of CAPS.

Cycle training is the key area. A Training Strategy and Delivery Group is being set up. Now, two-thirds of schools get training, but only a half of these include on-road training – not good enough. In Grampian this is 75%, shows it can be done. Cycle-Friendly School Award. E Lothian – tackle fears of mothers. Poster with message to drivers – "give me space'.

Cycle-Friendly Community Fund offers up to £5K for interventions. An example – CycleStreets.net will get funding to extend its range of towns covered. A Cycle Forum of delivery bodies is being set up – mainly Local Authorities.

Q/A session:

Gary Cummins – cycling brings jobs – bike shops grew from 4 to 13, some with cafes and other facilities, in London borough.

Peter Hayman – how will cycling levels/modal share be monitored? What progress on a Scotland-wide forum for cycling organisations? Answer (IA) – Ian Findlay of Paths for All is progressing this.

David Lindsey, Aberdeen – Grampian police have pulled out of training, so how will it be done? IA – up to Local Authority, CS can advise, but no power to enforce.

Tom McClelland (N Ireland) wants privatisation of speed enforcement.

Roger Geffen, CTC, paid tribute to what Philip Darnton has achieved as CEO of CE.

John Lauder (Sustrans)

Summary of 'good news' stories: **Pedal for Scotland** has increased participation rates every year for 10 years. **CEO of TS** has said he would be funding cycling. The **E Dumbartonshire Group** has raised cycling to school to 8%. **Use of the NCN** is up by 19%, and use for short trips (eg to work) has increased. **Bike Club** has come to Scotland. **Glasgow has its own CAP, as does Edinburgh**. Glasgow had a 7% increase in cycling levels in 2009. **Commonwealth Games** promises a 'legacy'. **Sustrans I-Bike** focuses (Edinburgh and Perth) on the transition from primary to secondary – why do so many drop out of cycling, esp girls? **Scottish Planning Policy** is strong on sustainability, esp their 'Designing Streets' document, and Local Authorities will be obliged to follow these policies.

Afternoon Workshop: The Segregation-Integration Debate post Copenhagen [no notes on other workshops]

Roger Geffen (CTC Right-to-Ride). Why is he sceptical of segregation, if it works in practice in parts of Europe like Denmark and Netherlands? CTC doesn't reject it outright but supports the Government's 'hierarchy of solutions': Traffic reduction and speed reduction; re-allocation of road space, junction re-design and other infrastructure; and segregation last – though it's appropriate in some circumstances, eg inter-urban dual carriageway.

Problems of segregation in town – junctions more dangerous, need 270' vision instead of 90'; cyclist/pedestrian conflict.

Success stories: Copenhagen, New York, Bogota.

Main issue is two legal framework differences – 1 driver liability, and 2 drivers give way to peds/cyclists when turning, even if have green light. Different legal framework leads to different driver behaviour. Needs lot of political will to change this in UK – possible strategy for future. Boris suggests allow cyclists to turn L at red light but this leads to cycle/ped conflict.

Q/A:

Kim H – electric cars (the future?) can't be heard, so good chance to make them give way at junctions.

IM – Scotland to have chance to set own speed limits soon;

Dave H – railway analogy – segregate slow and fast trains;

John C – how will 'family' cyclists progress to ordinary roads – concern they'll be confined to 'ghetto';

Tony G – segregation has to be supported by reallocation of road space. Favours more zebra crossings;

Jim C – off-road problem at night is on-coming headlights.

Final (wrap-up) session

Andre Curtis – CN News is to become e-news, sent to all campaigners. CN conferences will henceforth be once a year not twice; next is Sheffield, next autumn. In spring there could be seminars and/or workshops, depending on funding. Campaign groups can identify with CN.

Roger Geffen spoke of more collaboration between CN and CTC, and introduced Phil Bignall, new Right-to-Ride Co-ordinator.