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# Cheltenham Cyclist

**January 2001**



**CHELtenham**

**CYCLE**

**CAMPAIGN**

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contractors are blasé about cyclists and their needs.



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## Cyclists Blocked at Road works

During the past year Cheltenham Cyclist has complained to Borough Traffic Engineer Peter Godwin that routes for cyclists are being regularly blocked by contractors working on Cheltenham's roads

Instances have included the single lane traffic lights on Leckhampton hill giving insufficient time for uphill cyclists without an alternative provision being made, the blocking of the route joining St. George's place with Henrietta Street by Transco's contractors. A worse example occurred more recently with a blocking of the cycle link between Wellington and Clarence Place. Peter Godwin indicated that this scheme was approved by the police on safety grounds. This raises the question of whether the police have a sufficient awareness of the cyclist's needs in these situations. Another current example is at the Kingsditch end of Princess Elizabeth Way where the footway and cycle track have been taken over as part of the carriageway. There is an alternative provision for pedestrians, although when Cheltenham cyclist checked this was very poorly signed. For the cyclist no provision has been made, but worse, a cyclist coming out of PC world, accustomed to an immediate right turn onto the cycle track, finds him or herself head on to oncoming traffic.

However contractors' plant, blocking the cycle track at the rear of the Midland Bank near Gordon's Lamp, was moved soon after our complaint to Peter Godwin.

What emerges from these oversights is that contractors are blasé about cyclists and their needs. Far too often a cycle lane is seen as a convenient dumping spot for equipment and materials. Obviously there is a need for road works, and space needs to be taken temporarily but the cyclist is entitled to expect the same detours and protection afforded to other road users. Peter Godwin says that it is not possible to check each work site, but he has promised to remind contractors of the need to consider cyclists.

Interestingly The Department of Transport has recently published a guide on catering for cyclists' at road works. Cheltenham Cyclist has enquired whether the borough council intends to adopt this.

We await an answer.



Accidents Happen



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special skills  
needed for cycle  
planning



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## Thank you

Thank you to all those who helped to make the CCN conference such a success, back in April. Particular thanks go to those who provided bed and breakfast for some of the delegates.



## Martin Morley

Martin Morley has left the engineering division of the Borough Council's Environmental Services Directorate to take up a new appointment with Worcestershire Council on a project for design of trunk roads. During his last three years in Cheltenham, which followed an earlier stint - Martin joked that his colleagues have expect a return of his leaving gift if he returns a second again. During his time with CBC Martin was a key player in many of the town's cycling provisions and presented transport plans at the forums and meetings attended by Cheltenham Cycle Campaign. Martin was also a main contact for the cycle campaigns correspond with the council. In the latest discussions with the Campaign Martin referred to the special skills needed for cycle planning when there are according to the circumstances cases or on road cycling, on road with lanes. Off road tracks and tracks shared with pedestrians. It's much more straight forward planning for pedestrians or motorists he said. Cheltenham Cyclist hopes that any replacement for Martin shares his sympathy and understanding of the cycling issues. Meanwhile Cheltenham Cyclist wishes him well in his new job.




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Minimum standards  
have become the norm



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# In search of higher standards.

Cycle facilities and other measures to boost cycling are being introduced in Britain as never before. Government has confirmed its commitment to triple cycle use by 2010 and most local authorities across the country have some sort of pro-cycling policy. But whilst the quantity of cycling infrastructure is ever increasing, the average quality of what is provided remains abysmally low. Many highway authorities still put most of their cycling budget into moving cyclists onto footways and other shared-use paths, which are problematic enough for people on foot, let alone someone moving five times faster.

As the limitations of this approach become apparent, so narrow cycle lanes are becoming a la mode, giving cyclists less space than ever before, as traffic rushes by on its new bike-free allocation of tarmac, passing faster and closer because its way ahead is now clear. Minimum standards have become the norm and the DETR/IHT guidelines - the closest there is to decent objective standards for cycling - are too often dismissed as 'pie in the sky' in a compact urban environment.

Feedback suggests that an increasing number of cyclists are becoming disgruntled about the deterioration in the cycling environment. Roads that were tolerable, if not exactly pleasant, before cycle schemes were introduced have become much less acceptable with narrow cycle lanes added. There is also evidence of increased aggression from drivers, who expect cyclists to keep out of their way if any separate facility is provided. None of this is a good incentive to attract people out of their cars onto bikes.

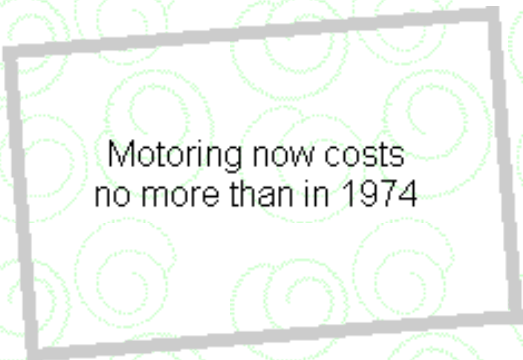
Some local authorities acknowledge that cycle schemes are often criticised, even when they have been 'approved' by the local cycling group. Many campaign groups don't like much of what they get, but feel reluctant to complain too loudly lest they get nothing at all. Alas, not rocking the boat has a poor track record of gaining meaningful improvements.

What is your reaction to this. Write to Cheltenham Cyclist and let us know.

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**TO CONTACT US:**



Motoring now costs  
no more than in 1974




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## Transport and climate change

Road traffic is the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide emissions: if future extreme weather and other effects of climate change are to be averted, changing the way we travel is essential.

Britain needs this more than most. As a result of past transport policies, this country is the most car-dependent in Europe. People here do more car mileage, per head per year, than in other European countries, even though car ownership here is lower than in many others.

Alternative fuels and more fuel-efficient vehicles are important, but they are not the whole answer. The effects of traffic growth are expected to out-weigh any advantages brought by new technology. Cutting our dependence on car travel, and on road freight, is the only way to significantly reduce the effects of greenhouse gas emissions. Cutting traffic would also improve people's health and their local environment, reduce road danger and reduce pressure on the countryside for new roads.

\* Since the fuel tax escalator has been in place, traffic growth has slowed, while use of alternatives to cars - rail, urban bus, bicycles and motorcycles - has grown. Road congestion is also a factor in slowing traffic growth. A recent study from the AA concluded that higher fuel taxes reduce the amount of fuel used by motorists.

\* Even with recent rises, motoring costs are the same in real terms as in 1974. Over the same period, bus fares have risen by 87 per cent and rail fares by 53 per cent in real terms.

\* If the wider costs of motoring - environmental damage, health impacts of traffic, road casualties, etc - are taken into account, the cost of motor traffic to the country as a whole is estimated at £42bn. Fuel tax revenue is around £23bn. Taxation of road freight has been estimated to cover only 69 per cent of its full costs.

\* Cutting fuel duty would not help motorists: it would simply increase traffic leading to renewed road congestion. Building new roads will simply shift the congestion to other places.

- Road hauliers would not be helped by cuts in fuel duty either: most contracts with big freight users like supermarkets require hauliers to reduce their rates if fuel or vehicle taxes are reduced. Cutting fuel duty for the road haulage industry would also undermine the Government's target to boost rail-freight by 80 per cent over the next ten years.



Extracted from a briefing by Transport 2000

Caption describing  
picture or graphic.

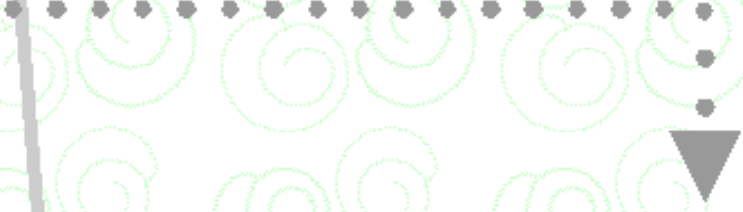
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## **Cheltenham Cycles**

**OPEN : TUESDAY- SATURDAY 9am-6pm**  
**61, Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham, GL52 2NE**  
**TEL: 01242 255414**

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**TO CONTACT US:**



An important aim of the project is that training carried out to its requirements will offer a standard of quality assurance

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## National Cyclist Training Project gets under way

The CTC is developing a national programme of cycle training for teenagers and adults. The project, to run over the next two years, will research existing cyclist training schemes world-wide, and then go on to create a 'best of best' scheme for launch in 2002. The project, which is funded jointly by the Government and a charitable trust, will focus on cycling as a means of transport, but there will be links to other schemes, existing or proposed, concerned with cycle sport, touring and mountain biking.

The training programme will comprise a regime of training and regulation for instructors, a curriculum for students, publicity materials, and information for all concerned. A modular approach is to be adopted, permitting a certain amount of mix-and-match to suit the specific requirements of students. Module topics are likely to include basic bike handling skills, riding in traffic, assertive cycling, bike mechanics, equipment selection, route choice, luggage carrying, commuting issues, use of public transport, cycle facilities and much else. Later modules will probably deal with more advanced skills such as riding on higher speed roads.

An important aim of the project is that training carried out to its requirements will offer a standard of quality assurance and that it will be publicly recognisable as such. It is expected that it will become the sole standard for cycling training in the UK and through this will help to boost the status and popularity of cycling across the board. CCC member John Franklin is a member of the project reference group, which has a broad membership with representatives from Government departments and many other agencies.

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The life of a cyclist seems to be worth less than a drivers convenience."



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## Cyclist's Life only worth £200

A court has ruled that a driver responsible for the death of a cyclist should receive minimum punishment. The CTC has called for a change in the law.

The CTC has described the sentence handed out to a driver found responsible for a cyclist's death "outrageous and insulting". The organisation has called for radical action to change the law so that punishments more closely reflect the severity of crimes.

The demand follows the death of 22 year old cyclist Peter Williams who was killed in January after a driver hit him with her car's wing mirror. He fell underneath the wheels of another car. The driver admitted driving without due care and attention but was fined just £200. She was not barred from driving despite reaching the 12 penalty point limit. Chairman of the bench in Cheltenham, Phillip Judge, said a driving ban would prevent her taking her children the 2 miles to school and therefore cause too much hardship.

Stuart Reid, CTC Campaigns and Policy Manager said "We are utterly disgusted with this decision and by Phillip Judge's priorities. The life of a cyclist seems to be worth less than a drivers convenience."

"It is presumably because the roads are full of dangerous drivers who are not restrained by the law that the children of this driver are not allowed to cycle the short distance to their school."

## More commuters may opt for cycling

Asked "What mode of transport would you opt for if congestion charging came in?" 28% of the commuting motorists questioned said they would choose a bike, according to a recent survey by the RAC Foundation



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## Join Cheltenham Cycle Campaign



CHEL TENHAM

CYCLE

CAMPAIGN

You can make a difference by joining Cheltenham Cycle Campaign. We aim to improve conditions for cyclists, and to make the Cycle Campaign a more effective organisation. The more supporters we have the better. Individuals can join and local organisations are welcome to affiliate.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

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Please send cheques to our Treasurer:

Mr A Halls, 14 Durham Close, Warden Hill, Cheltenham, GL51 5DF

For General enquiries contact the Secretary at:

63 Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0JG

## Recent Publications

### RoadPeace 'Safety First' pamphlet

This pamphlet highlights the dangers faced by vulnerable road users and calls for improved road safety measures for children, the disabled, pedestrians and cyclists. Free, but send sae to:

PO Box 2579, London NW10 3PW; Help line 020 8964 1021 Website

[www.RoadPeace.org.uk](http://www.RoadPeace.org.uk) Fax 020 8838 5103



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Cheltenham Cycle Campaign is part of the Cycle Campaign Network.



The federation of cycle campaign clubs

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