

CYCLE CHESTERFIELD



NEWSLETTER

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www.cyclechesterfield.org

affiliated to Cycling UK and Cyclenation

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Editorial

Slight deviation on the numbering format for this issue. Some of you may have noticed I made an error when numbering a past issue so this allows us to catch up. New details on Breeze rides in this issue and looking forward to the Cycle Festival. See you in the saddle! **Jason**

If you have any contributions, articles, or feedback for the newsletter, all of which will be gratefully received, please email me via; newsletter@cyclechesterfield.org

Email update

Our secretary sends out an email update roughly every month, if for some reason you don't receive this into your 'inbox' and would like to please contact the secretary at this address.

secretary@cyclechesterfield.org

Other local campaigning groups.

Derby Cycling Group

Derbycyclinggroup.org.uk

Cycle Sheffield

Cyclesheffield.org.uk

Ride Sheffield

www.ridesheffield.org.uk

Pedals (Nottingham)

Pedals.org.uk



Cover image – 2024 is go for cycling.

Monthly Meetings

Cycle Chesterfield Meetings

These are held using Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month from 7.30pm. The next face to face meeting is at the Chesterfield Community Centre (Tontine Road, for the last time) in the Brimington room, on March 12th. Then May's face to face is on the 14th in the Chesterfield Library meeting room, accessed through the cafe. Similarly, the September meeting. All other meetings are online apart from November AGM which is also at Library. Please note we normally have August off and a December social rather than a meeting

Cycle Map

Work continues on the new Chesterfield Cycle Map.



Newsletter Delivery

If you would prefer your newsletter emailed out to you as opposed to being delivered by hand or posted please let us know.

Please also ensure you confirm the email address that you want to be used.



Secretary's Update

Our February online meeting included an 'EGM' to alter our constitution. The previous Campaign constitution hadn't been updated for many years and the name change made a revision necessary. The revised version is available on our website.

For the last few years we have held our face to face meetings at the Chesterfield Community Centre where we paid a very modest fee. Derbyshire County Council have decided to close the centre down so we will hold our final face to face meeting there in March.

After March we will continue a mix of online and face to face meetings which will now be in one of the Chesterfield library meeting rooms.

Our secretary is working with Four Point Mapping to update the current Chesterfield Cycle Map. A few months ago members were asked to submit any changes they were aware of since the last publication date. These have been submitted to Four Point Mapping who will compile a draft (and a second draft if needed) before we go to publication. The revised map will be launched just prior to the cycling festival which you can read about the plans for later in this newsletter.

Local Matters

The east west route continues to make steady progress with the Chatsworth Road section nearing completion. Derbyshire County Council tell us that there will be rubber kerbs with wands separating the cycle route from the vehicle lane.

The traffic lights on Crow Lane (under the railway station) now have separate cycle lights. They detect a cyclist in the advance stop box and give cyclists a head start before the vehicle lights go green. If no cyclist present the cycle light and vehicle light change to green at the same time.

A member has reported vans parking on the shared route near the Sheepbridge business park. It has been reported to Derbyshire County Council who have said they will try to identify who it is. When the route first opened Dalton Roofing were parking vans and cars on the shared path but after being warned by Derbyshire County Council they mended their ways!

After a discussion at a previous meeting we have decided not to have a stall at the May Day event. For many years this has been a fixture in our calendar but the last couple of years have seen a marked decline in the public visiting our stall.

Planning

Ground has now been broken and the diversion and new bridge over the canal in Staveley work started. We have recently been sent revised plans for cycle routes alongside the extension of the canal. Sadly a 160 degree tight turn at the bottom of the slope coming from the new bridge has been introduced rather than a less tight radius curve. We are in discussion with the Canal Trust to hopefully get that changed back.

Another housing development on the Avenue site which appears to have footpath links to the north - south route through this site but we've asked for them to be widened and surfaced for cycles too.

Alistair



Travels with my trailer – one year on!

As regular readers of this quarterly publication may recall, 2023 was the year in which I intended to reduce my car use by investing in a bike trailer. This was part of an ongoing commitment to try to reduce my carbon impact and also for the challenge of having a new method of transport around town.

So, one year on, has my trailer become a redundant piece of equipment gathering dust and rust?

Well, far from it although, as I write, it is off the road and in need of a little bit of maintenance relating to a bulging tyre. On a warmer, drier day than today, I will be fixing my wheel and getting it back into service.

In the spirit of research, I have been keeping a list of my trailer's usage over the last 12 months. I can report that I have made 18 recorded cycle trips around Chesterfield with my trailer in tow.

The length of these trips has been between 1 to 6 miles (so probably saving an estimated 50 – 60 polluting car miles around town overall in 2023) and have taken place throughout the year, not just in the summer. My outings have been for a limited range of reasons: food shopping (usually at the local Lidl supermarket which has a decent bike rack with plenty of space for the trailer too), dropping off unwanted household stuff at charity shops, as a litter-picking vehicle and for transporting bulky items around for community project. These have included homemade draught excluders, gardening supplies and for moving a wooden Christmas tree. This tree transport caused quite a stir amongst watchers at the bus stops on Low Pavements and plenty of double takes from passing drivers because that particular road trip was conducted in convoy with another bike trailer user. If this had been Holland, I don't expect that anyone would've batted an eyelid but this was clearly a novel and intriguing sight within Chesterfield. Unfortunately, I forgot to take a photo!

Getting confident to hook up and use the trailer took me a few weeks and has not been without challenges. Most notably I've had to adapt to driving and manoeuvring an "articulated" vehicle and also to judge the distance between bollards on narrow entrances to some of our green spaces. The metal edges and tyres have therefore received a number of bumps and scuffs against low bollards so the trailer is no longer looking so pristine. The waterproof cover is also looking a bit shabby due to the muddy state of the cycle paths over the winter months.

And because my bike does not have a stand, how do you stop your bike falling over while you are hitching up or loading the trailer unless there is a handy wall, hedge or post to prop it against? This was a particular challenge during the

group litter picking session. We are now using a discarded supermarket trolley in preference to the bike trailer.

I am still not fully confident about parking up my bike with the trailer attached anywhere in the town centre as it is such a long item to try to lock to a cycle stand. Otherwise, I'd need to unhitch the trailer and carry an additional lock or use a much longer chain. On the other hand, I am not sure most bike thieves would know how to unhitch the trailer quickly although I haven't given anyone the opportunity to try so far.

I've also had to judge how much weight to reasonably carry, especially if transporting a load of supermarket shopping. Toilet rolls and cereal are fine but lots of tins of beans and potatoes starts to make themselves known. As soon as there is a slight uphill gradient, then you really can feel the pull from the load behind you. That's great exercise for working the leg muscles! The bike instruction booklet advises that it should not be used to carry more than 40kg or to travel at above 10mph. That feels quite slow to me but given the number of potholes then it is probably sound advice to make sure that the trailer doesn't bouncing around too much.

I've tried to stick to using cycle paths wherever possible but found that whenever I have needed to use the road, then most car drivers tend to give a wider berth than they do for a cyclist alone. I also try to give parked cars a wider berth in case the trailer drifts off to left or right over bumps. Of course, there has been the odd impatient or irritated driver who thinks that a bike with a trailer is the ultimate encroachment on their road space but generally it's been a positive experience so far.

Once my trailer tyre is mended, I will be looking at making even more local trailer trips in 2024. I probably ought to use it more for supermarket shopping as it is easier than walking home uphill with all those tins of beans ... and my leg muscles are definitely feeling the benefit!

Kathy Farr



Cycle Festival: June 2024

It feels like we have endured a prolonged period of wet and windy weather this winter in Chesterfield. As spring approaches, it is good to have something to look forward to in anticipation of better weather, especially if it involves fresh air and the exploration of Chesterfield and the surrounding area by bike.

Following our successful inaugural Cycling Festival last year we have decided to host another similar event this June to coincide with National Bike Week. National Bike Week's primary purpose is to celebrate and promote the benefits of cycling for everyone. It is a time when groups, organisations and individuals throughout the country, plan, support and get involved in events and activities to encourage cycling. Here in Chesterfield, we as a group want to encourage new, returning and existing riders and wheelers to get out on their bikes and to think about cycling for daily routine activities such as shopping or other errands, as well as for commuting and for leisure. We are keen to raise awareness of local cycle paths and cycle lanes and to demonstrate some of the possibilities for travelling by bike around Chesterfield.

Last year we ran a week of local rides and a small number of social events including a very popular film night at the Brampton Brewery. Over 100 people joined us for the rides programme which was blessed with amazing sunny weather

This year, we are planning a new and exciting programme of bike themed events. The full programme will be published shortly (keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more details) but for tasters we are looking to include:

- Sat 8th June - a family fun day in Holmebrook Valley Park. This will include a picnic and a variety of cycle related activities for all the family.
- Weds 12th June - an evening ride to the Chesterfield BMX track at Hollingwood to coincide with Chesterfield BMX club's training night. Anyone that wants to cycle the track (under supervision) will get the chance to do so.
- Thurs 13th June - an evening with Emily Chappell at the Chesterfield library lecture theatre. Emily is founder of the Adventure Syndicate, an advocate for cycling and a winner of the Transcontinental race and she will be talking about her journey into cycling.

We will also be guiding a number of local rides in the evenings during the week and during the daytime at weekends, including rides using the new East West route (hopefully finished by then), and another social evening at Brampton Brewery. Inclusive Pedals will also be showcasing their various projects to make cycling accessible to all.

We hope that as many of our members as possible, along with new and returning cyclists will be able to join us in the programme of events during the Festival week.

We will also be looking for volunteers who may be able to help us during the Festival week. This could be assisting with rides, or helping with organisational and administrative jobs, including on the 8th June (Holmebrook Valley Park Fun Day) or 13th June (Library Lecture Theatre visiting speaker). If you feel you are able to offer some help then please drop a quick message to Martin Farr at treasurer@cyclechesterfield.org

Martin



Cycle Chesterfield Merchandise

It's probably a bit cold to show off the new merchandise at the moment but I'm looking forward to seeing more people around Chesterfield in the warmer weather wearing items of clothing that promote cycling and Cycle Chesterfield in and around the town.

The first order for t shirts and polo shirts had a smaller logo on one side of the chest. The consensus was for the purchase of ethical T shirts. We would anticipate that if we bulk purchase again (5+ items) the cost per item would be:

Ethical T shirt £12.60

Standard T shirt £8.50

Standard polo shirt £12

If you are interested in owning a Cycle Chesterfield T shirt or polo shirt or to give as a gift for someone special then please send your expression of interest to Martin at treasurer@cyclechesterfield.org. A range of colours and sizes are available.

Cycle Chesterfield also have small badges available free for members and supporters. Have you got yours? **Martin.**



Basic Bike Check

ABC Quick Check

A is for Air

B is for Brakes

C is for Cranks and Chain

Quick is for Quick releases

Check is for Check it over



Inclusive Pedals Activities



Cycling without Age: Regular rides have started from 'Woodlands' care home near Holme Hall shops taking residents, staff, and family members to Holmebrook Valley Park. Volunteer pilots Chris and Angela are running the project on behalf of Inclusive Pedals.

The Triobike will be available in the Queen's Park when the adapted taster sessions are running and at Queen's Park Dr Bike workshops. Family members can bring someone with limited mobility for a ride. You can just turn up but also book a 30 minute slot to be sure of availability via www.inclusivepedals.org.uk/cycling-without-age.html.

Adapted Cycling in Queen's Park monthly taster sessions are running again this year on the first Friday of the month. The sessions are happening until October from 1.00 pm until 3.00 pm. These need several helpers to get the fleet of trikes and quads from the storage containers over to the cricket pitch track.



Could you help run any of these events? Volunteer training will be supplied. Get in touch via www.inclusivepedals.org.uk.

Travels in Marrakech

The piece is mainly about Pikala a community interest bike rental, tour, maintenance, and training organisation started by a Dutch woman in 2015/16.

While preparing the itinerary for a short break in January to Marrakech, to get some winter sun, it was quite an eye opener as we stumbled across Pikala Bikes.



Pikala Bikes was created by Cantal Bakker in 2015/16 to educate young and unemployed Moroccans in tourism by training them to become bicycle tour guides, that provides them with an income, they also have a program to train bicycle mechanics.

Old bicycles are recycled from Holland to Marrakech and refurbished to use in the social bicycle project. Over the years this has evolved and companies are now sponsoring the project and donating bicycles and funds for purchasing additional resources. They pride themselves on their Eco-Tourism and promote the project as a quest to reduce air pollution and reliance on fossil fuels, and also encourage wellbeing of the individual through exercise.

There are options for bike rental or several different tours. For the novice or less confident cyclist a leisurely trip to the Palmerais Desert & Oasis to get away from the hustle of the city traffic and massive volume of pedestrians.

Our choice was the 3-hour city tour, the guide takes you around the not so touristy areas, as well as the popular sites, of Marrakech that may be missed if only sightseeing by foot.

We signed in and collected our bikes at 09:15hrs and set off with our guide Helina around 09:30hrs, at this time of year it is 'fresh' and jackets were needed until the muscles warmed up and sun rose a little higher.

First stop to the North of the Medina, the Mausoleum of Sidi Bel Abbes Sebti a 12th century saint renowned for his generosity feeding the poor during famine and crisis, he was considered one of the seven valiant saints of Marrakech. The site is still to this day a safe haven for the blind to congregate and socialise. On the same side is the only remaining water fountain built during the 12th century, by the then king, it was one of four across the old city. Ice was transported, daily, from the Atlas Mountains to these baths for the consumption of the water by the city's inhabitants.

Next a traditional baker's shop where the locals bring their prepared dough and the baker fires it, the ovens are not solely for bread and the baker will cook any foods for a nominal fee. The oven house itself had been there for over a century and this was evident by the inch thick layer of soot on the ceiling and walls.

Next, we travelled down the East side of the old town through the Jewish Quarter, past Palace of Badi and the current Royal Palace around the Southern end of the medina and back up to the Mosque of the Koutoubia where we took a break to view what was in the 12th century the tallest tower in Africa.

As we meandered through the busy streets of everyday Marrakech, far from the manic sales tactics of the tourist medina streets, I have to say that at no point did I feel in any danger no matter what the locals throw at us. Do pedestrians give way to cyclist? Sometimes. Do scooters give way to cyclist? Sometimes. Does everyone give way to delivery lorries? Not always. Does it matter what colour the traffic light is? No. However, you look at the highway code of Marrakech (I'm not quite sure there is one) it all seems to work one way or another.

A short walk from Pikala Bike is the Pikala Café where as part of our tour package we were introduced to an alcohol-free Mojito which definitely made your mouth fizz after three hours(ish) in the saddle. The café also has a varied menu to suit all tastes including Vegan and Vegetarian at very reasonable prices, so we stayed for lunch and continued chatting with the tour group reminiscing about the morning's activity, getting to know each other a little better and exchanging photos.

Tony Ford

Brompton Traveller

Sadly no travels with my Brompton this quarter worth reporting but I was asked to give a presentation at a regional Modeshift meeting that was held in Chesterfield a few days ago which I was the only person to arrive by Brompton or any bicycle. Several delegates had arrived by train though.

As well as describing what Cycle Chesterfield does I was asked to lead a walk from the Market Hall (where the meeting took place) to the railway station. So that was relatively easy to start off with negatives and finish on a positive!

I started off in New Square where it seems very few people realise there should be a cycle route alongside the old Dents building forming a connection from West Bars to Soresby St. This has always been ignored by the Borough Council despite appearing on the County Councils cycle map.

On to West Bars/New Beetwell St to look at the disjointed segregated path, which was once ridiculed in a national newspaper, then on towards the Queen's Park bridge stopping to look at Barbara Hepworth's sculpture before discussing the railings being raised to finally allow legal cycling over the bridge.

We then walked to the station along the station link, pausing to describe the long running saga to get a crossing over Park Road. We walked along there at about 3.00pm on a Friday and saw at least a dozen cyclists which prompted many to say how well used the path was!

Whilst in the meeting there was a discussion of Modeshift's 'Travelwise week' (16th to 22nd September). This is aimed at schools and workplaces. There are also the following initiatives;

Sustrans - ride to school week, usually the last week in September.

Cycling UK - Bike Week in June.

Derbyshire County Council - Travel Smart weeks in May and October.

I couldn't help thinking wouldn't it be better to combine into one week rather than fragment - or maybe not, maybe better to have lots of different events!

I also gave a talk to the Spire Cycling Club about my Brompton trips and they made a donation to Cycle Chesterfield.

Looking forward to better weather!

Alastair Meikle

Regular Local Cycling Events

Dr Bike Facebook - ChesterfieldDrBike or www.inclusivepedals.org.uk

1st Saturday of the month March to October 9.30am until 1.00pm. Queen's Park north car park (look for the gazebo near the miniature railway crossing). October to March 10.30 until 12.30pm. Checks, adjustments, and repairs. Also, in Langer Field pavilion on 1st Wed on the month 4.00pm until 6.00pm (but check for details). There is no charge for parts or labour, donations always welcome!



Inclusive Pedals are running a new community cycle club women only rides with the support of Cycling UK. The rides will be led by their director Sharon and Cycling Without Age volunteer Bex. See social media for details and www.inclusivepedals.org.uk.

Friday Night Ride Facebook - ChesterfieldFNR

First Friday of the month May until season end, usually with a theme. Leave from the town hall steps 6.30pm and finish around 8.00pm. **Rides rely on volunteers to organise them – so get in touch if you want to lead one or have an idea for a ride route/ destination.** When confirmed, rides will be advertised on the Cycle Chesterfield social media and Facebook page 'ChesterfieldFNR'.

Spire Cycling Club www.chesterfieldspirecyclingclub.co.uk.

Inclusive Pedals www.inclusivepedals.org.uk

Amongst other activities adapted cycling taster sessions on the 1st Friday of the month March to October between 1.00pm and 3.00pm in the Queen's Park using fleet of trikes. 2 seaters, wheelchair carrying trike and hand cycles.

Breeze rides: <https://letsride.co.uk/rides/breeze-around-clumber-park>. 'Join us for a gentle off road ride around the beautiful Clumber Park. Each month we will take a different route and explore different areas of the park. There are woodland trails, heathland and cycle tracks of various surfaces. Some of these become very muddy in wet weather so off road tyres are a must between October and March. Most of our routes will be off road and traffic free. There will be an occasional road crossing or short section to get to the next trail. There are some hills but we keep these to a minimum. First-timers welcome! The rides are always on the first Saturday of the month and from Saturday 2 March 10.10 am through to Saturday 7th December 2024. Women only.

Cycle Chesterfield Rides – organised on an ad hoc basis with a theme. Keep an eye on social media for details.

Support Cycle Chesterfield

Meetings are currently usually being held on the second Tuesday of each month from 7.30pm. Check social media. All welcome to attend.

To report road faults, telephone Derbyshire County Council on 0845 605 8058

Please consider joining Cycle Chesterfield online at

www.cyclechesterfield.org

or 'manually' with this form:

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Membership Form

Full Name Tel

.....

Address

.....

Email

.....

Membership Type (please tick)

Adult, £5[] Family, £10*[]

Unwaged, £2.50[] Under 18. £1 []

Optional donations welcome [£]

* Family membership includes up to 2 adults and all children under 18 living at the same address. Please give names and ages of all children below.

*Please send this form together with a cheque payable to: 'Cycle Chesterfield' Membership Secretary, C/O 4 Inkerman Cottages, Ashgate, Chesterfield S40 4BP
NB. These details will be stored electronically.*