



working for cycling

# CYCLETALK

Produced by CTC Scotland

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## EDITORIAL

Add YOUR email address to our mailing list NOW.

As I have said in the last few issues of Cycle Talk – we have been using our reserves for some time to fund production of Cycle Talk. We have no source of income, yet believe that we should communicate with each other. So far the CTCScotland web site has been more of a reference point than provider of real-time information. It costs us almost nothing (<£100 p.a.) to have an up-to-date web site, but the real cost of Cycle Talk is about £1700 a year. CTC's Cycle is designed to appeal not only to members, but also to the general public and is not suitable for local groups (whether DAs or 'Regions') to use for their localised news and information.

Get your name on our list now and you will be notified when an 'issue' of Cycle Talk has been posted on the web, and I promise that when we cease production of the printed copy the web will be upgraded to have more real-time news and information. Email to [editor@CTCScotland.org.uk](mailto:editor@CTCScotland.org.uk) with Subject "Cycle Talk Notice".

For the first time for a while, I have had to write only a few words for this issue – my appeal for contributions has borne fruit. Thanks to those who contributed: Peter Hawkins, Peter Hayman, Dave Holladay, Gerard Vlaar, Cycling Scotland and others.

## Bike Breakfasts - time to call Jamie Oliver?

Edinburgh put on (at least) two Bike Breakfasts during Bike Week. The City Council one was addressed by the cycle-friendly Convener of Transport, Cllr Andrew Burns, and the draw for the competition prize was made by the Lord Provost Cllr Lesley Hinds, both of whom made short speeches. The weather was fine, for a change, and the odd MSP was spotted lurking among the crowds.



But the food! Oh dear - not the sort of thing for health-conscious cyclists. Bacon rolls, greasy sausage, overcooked scrambled egg! One shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth perhaps, but I took the precaution of having my usual healthy muesli and baked beans with home-made bread and marmalade before I left home!



The second Breakfast was at Edinburgh Park, a vast office and business complex on the outskirts of the city, which employs 10,000 people. The attraction here was Chris Hoy, who was timed doing the equivalent of one kilometre on a static frame and then challenged anyone else to have a go. He did it in 53 secs, the nearest challenger took 64, and looked like he'd have

to take the rest of the day off work afterwards.

And the food? Last year it was brilliant - fruit juices, yoghurts, wholemeal bread, a smorgasbord of meats and cheeses - real Scandinavian stuff. This year - oh dear - more greasy rolls, and they didn't appear till 8.45, by which time many had had to leave for work. [Editor's addendum: The promised coffee never appeared and we had iced water and iced orange on a slightly damp and chilly morning outside on the grass.]

However, **Lothian DA's Pot Luck Supper** on the Friday more than made up for this. Here was the opportunity for the display and consumption of a real gourmet feast, and the venue was quite inspired too - a sports club in Newington, where we could buy drinks at the bar, sit outside on the verandah and watch games of tennis.

The events of the Week were rounded off by a ride to Athelstaneford in East Lothian - a chance to work off the effects of the Supper - on a glorious sunny day. We hired the Village Hall for a couple of hours, to serve tea and coffee. There was loads of space to sit outside on the grass, and we enjoyed the unusual experience of going inside to cool off! [Photo on page 2]

This was a Bike Week to remember!

## How to get to the non cycle-users... Do CycleFests work?

For several years both Edinburgh and Glasgow have had a day in June, supported by the Councils, aimed at promotion of cycle use. A lot of people have attended these, and a lot of work has been put into them by both professionals and volunteers. For a variety of reasons, neither held these this year. Prompted by Ian Maxwell, a new idea is being tried in Edinburgh this year. Instead of a one-off event organised by cycling organisations, we are going along to several existing community-type festivals to offer a cycling presence.

Advantages:

- we have an audience who are not coming to a 'cycling event', so have more chance of reaching the people we really want to talk to
- we don't have to do all the organising of getting a park, providing the facilities (tea-tents, toilets, signage etc.) – sometimes we don't even have to do any of it

Disadvantage:

- it does involve several weekends in the year

This disadvantage is partly solved by having a stall which is manned by people from several organisations, and as long as they know what the various organisations have to offer, they can talk knowledgeably with the enquiring public.

One week after each event, an easy ride is offered which is advertised at the event (so far 6, 14, & 15 miles).

A name has been adopted which is not specific on any one organisation – it is "TryCycling in Edinburgh" and we are operating (literally) under the banner of the Bike Station who bring along a selection of interesting and unusual bikes for people to try out. Have a look at the web site [www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk).

We have already had 2 events – at the Meadows Festival on June 4-5th, and TreeFest on June 11-12th, and have 2 more to go – on Fringe Sunday in August and finally the Edinburgh Mela on Sept 3-4th.

How long is a beginners' ride? There are reports of some Bike Week events advertising 45 mile rides as 'suitable for beginners'! I hope that none of these were in Scotland. We do need to get more people into cycling, but they do need nursing in the early stages.

## PEDAL for SCOTLAND: Edinburgh to Glasgow 2005

This year Pedal for Scotland is the official participation ride of The Tour of Britain bike race so riders can enjoy the excitement of crossing the Start/Finish line of a major sporting event but at a far more enjoyable pace! The route covers 50 miles from Murrayfield in Edinburgh to George Square in Glasgow with regular food stops along the way, as well as live music at the popular Pasta Party in Linlithgow.

Transport between Glasgow and Edinburgh is available for both the start and the finish but spaces are limited so book early.

Riders of all ages and abilities have completed the route in previous years and Events Officer Michael Addiscott is keen to maintain the varied backgrounds of the field. "We get families, club cyclists, couples, work teams and individuals looking for a personal challenge. The event has raised more than a quarter of a million pounds for children's charities over the last seven years. We've had riders from as young as six to more than eighty years old completing the route under their own power."

More information and on-line entry is available from [www.pedalforScotland.org](http://www.pedalforScotland.org) or by calling the entry line (0141) 229 5359



## CTC Scotland

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## Web Sites

CTC Scotland: [www.ctcscotland.org.uk](http://www.ctcscotland.org.uk)  
Cycling Scotland: [www.cyclingscotland.org](http://www.cyclingscotland.org)

## Bikes and Public Transport

### Bus

Hitrans has been working hard to deliver bike access to buses on the mainland. They have assisted Tim Dearman's existing service with an upgrade from using a rear tail-lift 'care-bus' to a modern low-floor vehicle and trailer with capacity for 11 solos and one tandem. But in addition a group of services based around Aviemore will get bike racks, and are of the same type of bus as used on Hadrian's Wall AD122 service - which carries 2 bikes on external racks, and has space for a further 2 bikes inside.

The Islands however remain a cyclists' heaven as Eilean Siar have a default condition for all contracted services (ie all bus services in the Western Isles) that bikes will be carried unless there are good reasons not to - like the morning and afternoon schools services. To this we gain a cross-Skye service going west from Portree. Work is going on with Rapsons, Citylink and Orkney Ferries to get formal approval of bike carriage on coach services, the last noted running twice daily in high summer between Inverness and John o Groats, and in year's past the coach had a hold wide enough for an average length of tandem (the 10.00 departure is not busy as the main users of the ferry are either day trippers or those travelling to or from the Orkney Islands who tend to use the 07.00 Inverness outbound and the 18.00 return from JoG.

We are working hard to get First Group to restore bike carriage on some key Borders and Central Scotland routes (20 years ago all SMT rural buses carried up to 4 bikes on a 49 seat bus!). Some are getting SE money for Kick Start schemes, where an improved frequency or other feature of the service is funded for the 2-3 years it takes to build up the passenger numbers attracted by the enhanced service and make the improvement self funding. One key route is the 62 Edinburgh-Peebles-Galashiels (and another the 95 Rail-Link Edinburgh-Galashiels-Carlisle). The 62 is set to gear up from hourly to half-hourly frequency, and it goes past the entrance to Glentress and close to the linked Innerleithen circuit. An immediate opportunity - using the low floor buses occasionally shared with the route 95 could carry bikes inside to test the market, but we believe there is a major potential here for the service bus to carry bikes, as Glentress currently is generating around 1 million trips per year, of which most are made by private car, yet 85% of the visitors come from Edinburgh and many use the City Car Club for their cars. A service only for Glentress is unlikely to be viable, but combined with the local bus service both existing passengers and cyclists benefit.

### Train

Scotrail's new (and new-ish) 170's. The latest deliveries of Class 170 trains for Scotrail have 2 areas for bike carriage in the end coaches. The same trains on one Anglia routes carry tandems, in the original bike space. The converted trains were initially rather rough looking with untrimmed carpet, and the original vestibule panels make it difficult to get wide 'bars' in. But there is a clear 2.0m from the seat back to vestibule screen, allowing most bikes to fit easily. The new trains are equipped with the expensive and not always convenient Calyx units and are very easy to use as the vestibule screen.

Scotrail has a commitment, and target - the commitment is to have a cycle forum operational by the end of the year, organised through their advisor John French, as yet CTC HQ has heard nothing and no-one has reported contact through RTR Scotland. The target is a catalogue of station improvements set out in the franchise bid, to be in place by October 17th 2005, one of which is cycle parking at every station, which fortunately was not taken to a literal conclusion (no cycle parking is planned for Altnabreac)

The cycle reservations system also appears to be over-generous in handing out spaces, but equally confused over the 2/4 bike Class 170. No news yet on fixing this.

## BMA helmet call risks Britain's health



Cycling Scotland, like other cycling organisations, is responding to this and currently has an article on its web site. Also there you can find a downloadable policy on helmets - look at [www.cyclingscotland.org](http://www.cyclingscotland.org) for these. There's not space here to repeat what they are saying, but look at it, as it provides a summary of useful statistics and conclusions as well as a good bibliography. The document is commendably concise.

## Monies for Cycling

Through the Aberdeen Cycling Forum, we don't only hear bad news, but also good news. Within the next year £50 000 was voted for cycling (from the Safer Streets Budget) and another £50 000 is forthcoming soon from a special fund in NESTRANS (North East Transport authority).

However, that is nothing compared with the couple of million coming our way from the Scottish Executive and Sustrans. Their "Integrated Transport" fund will pay for a cycle route from the Formartine and Buchan Way at Dyce Station to the City Centre, probably involving a new cycle/pedestrian bridge across the Don.

## Glasgow News

The Scottish Minister Patricia Ferguson made some impressive statements at the launch of the Tour of Britain, in Glasgow City Chambers, of how important cycling was as a key part of the Scottish Parliament's transport plans. Right words - wrong actions.

An active GoBike member in East Renfrewshire was at the charity walk/run and cycle on the new GSO (Glasgow Southern Orbital) on the Sunday before it was opened to motor traffic. He said an amazing 3,000 cyclists of all sorts turned up, despite a very early start! They are out there and will get on their bikes given half an excuse.

The contractors have had lots of queries from the public asking why there wasn't a cycle track included in the road. The reply was that it would have been easy - the land was there and the road building equipment was there. The GSO cuts across country in a way which would have been useful for cyclists. There are no equivalent back road alternatives. The cycling demand is there - but the infrastructure spend is strictly for motor traffic.

At the GSO Public Local Inquiry the Reporter recommended that a parallel cycle lane should be included with the road. But the Scottish Minister for Transport at the time, Sarah Boyack, overruled the Reporter on grounds of cost, and made the GSO into a 'Special road' banning cyclists, even though it does have a metre wide hard shoulder. She is now chairing a parliamentary committee bemoaning global warming, wringing their hands about what to do.

As with the M74 extension (now renamed 'completion') it is clear that the executive are happy to overrule the Inquiry system if the findings don't suit them.

Glasgow Council publications also confidently include the EERR (East End Regeneration Route) which will blast across and divide the less than prosperous communities of East Glasgow even though planning permission has not yet been granted. No cycle provision is included, other than 'alternative routes'. The EERR would finally see the discredited plan of the 1960s to join up a motorway box round the city come to fruition. This is being done in the name of local development but in reality just moves large amounts of traffic across town and is no more likely to stand up to scrutiny than the M74 extension plans did.

### Where is the drive to meet traffic reduction obligations or 'to make cycling a key part in future transport plans'?

Even when new developments come they get managed in a way which disrupts or threatens Glasgow's cycling successes. The well-used Sustrans NCR 75 Loch Lomond path on the traffic free, elevated, ex rail embankment, was suddenly dug up, without any consultation that we are aware of with cycling groups. Eventually there should be a path along the riverside but for now cyclists have to mix it at street level with traffic, construction work and pedestrians.

The very popular cycle path beside the Clyde, between Glasgow and Victoria bridges, is also under threat from riverside development. Again quoted as almost fait accompli, although not yet with planning permission, a row of high rise blocks is proposed over this stretch and on to a part-filled-in Clyde. The plans show a promenade 'Boardwalk' which looks unlikely to match what is there now for cyclists. Strangely, where the current excellent cycleway passes under the suspension bridge the banking is cut right back, which will sever the path. The developers have now dropped earlier suggestions for a continuation of the path under Victoria bridge, which would have given a welcome continuity towards Glasgow Green.

Cycling Scotland who took over the running of Glasgow Cyclefest from the Scottish Cycle Development Project decided not to run it this year.

Meanwhile against the odds more and more brave cycling souls are venturing on Glasgow roads. The GCC Sustainable Transport Team (ex Cycle Unit) are investigating how to get cyclists south out along the A77 to join up with East Renfrewshire cycle lanes. Jonathan Plant, the new team leader, met with GoBike and wants local cycle activist to be involved in the next round of city centre traffic management planning. A welcome invitation.

### Editorial Comment

This is all very worrying. There seems to be no political will to reduce motor traffic or provide for cycling and walking. The 3000 cyclists don't seem to be able to effect much. The campaigning is left to a few in GoBike and CTC. One of the strengths in Edinburgh is that Spokes has about 1000 supporters and CTC has about 500 members living in Edinburgh (there is some but not much overlap) who DO lobby their Councillors and make a noise. As a result, although we don't always get all that we want (!) there is usually support and consideration given to our proposals. More cycle-users are needed to speak out.



the 'Lothians Day Out'