

First ScotRail and cycle-users

In the last issue there was reference to the meetings set up between a consultant engaged by First ScotRail and cycling groups. The Edinburgh one still has not happened! Mistakenly I attributed the setting up of the Aberdeen one to Grampian DA – I have been told that it was the Aberdeen Cycle Forum which did it, though that obviously contains CTC members.

David Lindsey (RtR Rep for Aberdeen City) writes about what the Forum has achieved in a very short time:

We have been in existence for nearly three years now and believe we are making an impact on the urban cycling scene in and around Aberdeen.

We are consulted by the Council on most transport matters affecting cycling, well before firm plans are drawn up (unlike the formal statutory way in which CTC RTR are consulted). We produced a cycling map of Aberdeen akin to that marketed by Spokes in Edinburgh, within a year of being set up; it is available free to the public and is now in its second edition.

We have also recently been heavily involved in the proposed re-routing of NCR 1 through Aberdeen City, trying to achieve a compromise between having to traverse a busy city-centre and providing as scenic a route as possible (and no cobbled streets!). CTC Grampian is well represented on the Forum:

Each meeting usually has at least 3 DA committee members attending, and many of the Forum members are CTC 'lay' members.

Cycle Hoops - for jumping through?

A press release issued as this was being written stated that **"As part of their major investment plan to improve station facilities, as well as the overall journey experience for customers, First ScotRail has invested over £200,000 in installing cycle hoops at 178 stations across Scotland."**

I wrote a note expressing appreciation, but with a caveat, saying – "I may be sceptical, but I do hope that cyclists or a cycle representative was consulted. I have seen so many devices intended to provide for cycle parking which are virtually unusable because of the design or the location (too close to a wall, not high enough to support a vehicle, in a position where a lock cannot be used, too close together.... the list goes on), that until I actually see the result I'll have reservations."

Has anyone used the cycle stands at Holyrood (located suitable far enough away from the building so that the Semtex in the tubes will only damage the waiting No.36 bus). They are very pretty, but don't actually support the cycle without scratching the paint. And a lot of people have not recognised that they are cycle stands!



at a Dublin tram stop

CTC Scotland

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"Regional Transport Partnerships" – what's it got to do with us?

The splitting of Scotland into 32 District/City Councils removed the two tiers of administrative structure and brought local government closer to people, but in some aspects, especially transport, was a step backwards. While local transport within a community is important, transport between communities both for passengers and freight is vital. Hence the formation of informal groupings – Sestran, Westrans, Hitrans, Nestrans. These have consisted principally of representatives of the Councils in each area getting together to improve cross-boundary services, and also the main transport operators in the area. With the Transport Act and the formation of Transport Scotland these bodies (plus the new ones formed for the areas which had not had the informal organisations) now have teeth – they can spend money and make decisions. A consequence of this is the formation of Boards for each body.

The relevance of all this to us as cyclists is the question of how the views of (non-motorised) users and campaigning bodies can be represented formally on the new Boards. Each Local Authority will have places on the board proportional to its population, there will also be appointed representatives of transport operators and business, and a very few for others. This will include such as Health Authorities, and probably on most boards, one place for everybody else. The system is that candidates apply (early February is the latest date), the shadow boards recommend and the Executive appoints.

The people will be selected for what they can offer and not because they represent an organisation. So we can not say "There should be a cyclist on the Westrans Board". What we can say is "We recommend X for his/her knowledge of the issues facing cyclists/pram-pushers/pedestrians/disabled in transport in the West of Scotland".

Roger Humphry (who has given a presentation to the Hitrans shadow board) writes to us, saying:

Note that the nominations are for persons not organisations. Therefore the trick is to choose the right person who can allow the selection process to satisfy more than just the "cycling tick box".

I recommend that we should be looking for nominees whose expertise lies in walking and cycling so that the top 2 modes in the hierarchy outlined in SPP17 are caught by that one nominee. Also if that person were able to demonstrate some expertise in one or more of economic development, social inclusion or health then there is a better chance of that nominee being chosen.

Finally, in the Hitrans area at least, it is very unlikely there will be space for a cyclist/walker rep to get on the board, so it is also worth lobbying for observer status and also to have some stated mechanism of engagement with walkers and cyclists written into the new LTS.

*Here's a New
 Year Puzzle for
 you.*

*No trick
 photography
 involved.*

*Can you work it
 out?*



An honoured cyclist

Congratulations to Brian Curtis who was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours for "services to cycling in Scotland". This

covers a range of activities over a long period of time, including working with the local DA, CTC Scotland and on the National Council as Councillor for Scotland. He was a founder and Chairman of the Scottish Cycling Development Project, and moved over with the new organisation to be Chairman of Cycling Scotland. In addition he worked with MSPs to set up the Cross Party Group on Cycling. And he still has time to lead CTC tours!

See Brian's reaction on page 2...

Web Sites

CTC Scotland: www.ctcscotland.org.uk
 Cycling Scotland: www.cyclingscotland.org



Bookings open from February

Get a brochure & booking form

- read/download from www.ctcscotland.org.uk/br2006
- phone 0870 873 0061 (NOT a premium rate call) and ask for them to be posted to you

Helpers / Volunteers

- helpers to guide/lead rides still required
- helpers to assist around the site (e.g. welcoming arrivals, setting up furniture for social events - i.e. occasional duties)
- major post still open - Camp Site Manager - for this we offer free registration for one person plus a free pitch

.. Amazed!

That was my initial reaction when I received the letter from the Prime Minister's office informing me that the Prime Minister "had in mind to include me on the list that he was about to submit to the Queen for inclusion on the New Year's Honours List". That was at the end of November and I was sworn to secrecy. I was very pleased but at the same time still absolutely shocked that such an honour should be coming my way. I thought about my input to various cycling related activities and organisations, my 6 years as the ctc councillor for Scotland, Ireland and all overseas members, my time as chair of the SCDP and my current service as chair of Cycling Scotland. In all of this work I am in constant touch with others who give freely of their time and I am very much aware that this award is partly shared with the whole army of volunteers who work tirelessly for cycling. I am grateful to all those who have helped and supported me in my efforts.

It is a humbling experience because I am aware that there are areas that, just like at school, I "could have done better". However I am pleased that Cycling has been recognised and I look forward to riding into Buckingham Palace or Holyrood Palace later in the year to receive my medal.

Brian Curtis MBE

The Arthur's Seat Challenge

invites cyclists to time their cycle ride on the uphill road from St. Margaret's Loch to Dunsapie Loch on Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, and submit this time online at www.arthursseatchallenge.co.uk. The sponsors of the website donate a minimum of £2 to the Marie Curie Hospice, Edinburgh for each time logged on the site. The initial target of twenty-five summer challengers was met some time ago. This charity fundraising is unusual because challengers can cycle the route when it best suits them and they don't have to raise any money themselves.

The website www.arthursseatchallenge.co.uk also offers challengers a chance to compute their power output for the climb, leave messages, pick up training advice and submit photographs. Current site sponsors include Ormiston House Apartment and Laid Back Recumbent Tours. New sponsors are being sought to continue the challenge and raise more money for Marie Curie Hospice. Fiona Bushby, Community Fundraising Manager for the Hospice said today, "This is such a novel way of fundraising for the Marie Curie Hospice with the added bonus of helping all those who take part to become a little fitter. I would encourage everyone to have a go to help us raise much needed funds for our patients at the Hospice".

For more information, contact Tom Orr on 07761 617340 or info@arthursseatchallenge.co.uk

It's a format that may be adaptable to a straightforward cycling challenge in other areas. Any spin-offs - please tell us about them.

3rd GRAMPIAN RALLY

MARYCULTER, ABERDEEN FRI 26 MAY – WED 31 MAY 2006

It will take our usual popular format of (approx) 20, 40, 60 mile led runs on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, together with social activities each evening, culminating in a Buffet Meal & Ceilidh on the last night.

The main contact person for information and bookings is:

Cindy Blackmore; cindy.blackmore1@btinternet.com 01224-484891

Cycling in the Great Glen

Last July Loch Ness Express wrote saying:

We have just started up a 36-passenger ferry running twice daily from Inverness to Fort Augustus with a request stop at Foyers. We carry bicycles FREE OF CHARGE and can carry quite a large number.

This ran during the summer of 2005, I've had no reports of its success, but the web site indicates it's May-December, so it looks as if it will run this year. I thought you may be interested (cyclists are usually interested in anything with a free element!). Single journey (adult) is £13, and if you have a Highland Travel Pass it covers this journey.



Photo Competition

Not a great success – only 3 entries! We had planned to judge these at the AGM. We are still open to receive interesting and inspiring photos of cycling which we can use in advertising.

Out of date already...

This goes to the printer early in January, the AGM is towards the end, you receive this at the end. So the list of contacts may be incorrect. However, contact the names here and they'll pass you on if necessary.

We will certainly have a new Treasurer, as Nick Haworth – who has looked after the books for the last few years – is leaving for a job on the Welsh Borders. We wish him well.

CTC Scotland Contacts

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