

MINUTES OF THE GREAT YARMOUTH CYCLE FORUM
Nelson Room, Town Hall, Great Yarmouth
6.30pm Wednesday 9 June, 2011

Present:

Claire Blamey (CB)	Norfolk Museums
Barbara Brett (BB)	Gorleston resident & cyclist
Dean Foden (DF)	Filby resident & cyclist
Jo Foden (JF)	Chair, Filby resident & cyclist
Stephen Shepherd (SGS)	Vice Chair, GYBC
Graham Smith (GS)	Great Yarmouth resident & cyclist
Cllr Mike Taylor (MT)	Great Yarmouth BC Councillor and cyclist
Anthony Wright (AW)	Sustrans

Apologies for Absence

Tom Andrews
Emma Kinsey NCC
Nigel Seago NCC
Philip Schramm NCC
Russell Ward

Minutes from the Great Yarmouth Cycle Forum held on 3 March 2011

That the minutes to be amended to record BB's apologies for absence.

The Great Yarmouth Strategic Cycle Network

Copies of the latest Great Yarmouth Strategic Cycle Network maps were circulated to members. The maps showed various proposed routes – Short Term, Medium Term, Long Term, Aspirational Rural Links and Rural Priority Links. SGS explained that Emma Kinsey had so far received responses from Sustrans and Great Yarmouth Borough Council on the proposals and these maps took into account those comments. However, members felt that the Aspirational Link shown along Gapton Hall Road and Pasteur Road already existed and could be removed, but the section from Gapton Hall Road to Belton should remain. DF queried the Rural Priority Link shown along the northern edge of Breydon Water. AW explained that Sustrans, along with Norfolk Trails, had pushed for this to be added and that it was an aspirational route through to Whittlingham. DF wondered if it should then be shown as an Aspirational Link, but AW felt it was an important long distance link for anyone living in Great Yarmouth or Acle and it should remain a priority. Members agreed that the Aspirational Link from Caister-on-Sea to Mautby was also important, but felt that the no.1 priority link at the moment was Warren Road. There was also a little confusion as to the meaning of short, medium and long term – e.g. what was the difference between Long Term and Aspirational?

MT sought confirmation that when the St Georges scheme was completed the links from the town centre to the park and the library would be signposted. SGS confirmed that NCC were in the process of carrying out the legal Orders to convert the footways to cycle ways and that works to sign the route would commence once building work on the chapel had been completed. MT also mentioned the Third River Crossing, shown on the map, but believed this had been put back due to the downturn in the Outer Harbour's usage. AW said he had asked for the Third River Crossing to be added to

the map. Some members believed that a ferry service should be reintroduced. The proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge from South Quay to Southtown (a continuation of the St Georges – library link) was also discussed. SGS to establish whether this bridge still features in the latest Waterfront Area Action Plan.

Scheme Updates

Unfortunately, there were no representatives from NCC to update members on current schemes.

- **Warren Road**

AW understood that the scheme had been shelved but that NCC were still pursuing the legal case so that when monies are made available the works can take place. JF mentioned Councillor Mike Butcher and his offer of getting the route built by voluntary groups. AW was meeting with NCC in a few days time and would forward details when he had them.

- **Vauxhall Bridge**

AW believed that the money was now available for Phase 1, with contributions coming from Fairshares, Railway Heritage and ASDA. They were currently waiting for consent from the port authority to carry out the works, which he thought would start sometime in September. He added there was still some work to do regarding land ownership issues, but he had been assured by Peter Warner, Head of Planning and Development, that these would be resolved.

- **St Georges and Bridge Road to Victoria Road Cycleway & Gorleston Bridge Road to Victoria Road Cycleway**

CB noted that not many cyclists used the route from St Georges along Yarmouth Way, but they did use the section near the 'totem pole' at the library.

Bike-It Officer Update

AW explained that he couldn't offer any more information regarding the future of the Bike-It officer post except to add that Sustrans were investigating the possibility of securing funding from car parking revenue. Currently there was only funding until the end of July after which time the scheme would end. He said a Bike-It officer costs £60k a year. Due to spending cuts local authorities throughout the country were reviewing their spending and deciding on whether to continue funding Bike-It officers. He felt, personally, that Bike-It officers should have been able to give Bikeability training and offer schools a complete package. He added that British Cycling go into schools and promote sports cycling and that there were other organisations offering similar, cheaper services.

AW confirmed that Cycling England, like many quangos, had ceased to exist and that the Department for Transport had stepped in this financial year and had given Sustrans £11m to continue with Safe Routes to Schools. AW added that this worked out at only £60k per highway authority. It was also uncertain what level of funding they would receive for 2012-13. He had secured funding for two Safe Routes to School schemes in the region this year, but neither were in Great Yarmouth.

There was a general discussion amongst members regarding the perceived increase in cycling in recent months and this was thought to be due to the rise in fuel prices.

Rather than build special facilities it was argued that the existing highway network was available to all cyclists, however, it was accepted that cycling on busy roads for the first time can be intimidating.

Maintenance Issues

JF read out an email from Nigel Seago, updating members on maintenance issues.

- The potholes on Drudge Road, Walpole Road and Lawn Avenue/Caister Road had been addressed (BB added the repairs on Drudge Road were failing already).
- Anglian Water would be returning to make good their temporary works on North Quay.
- Nigel added that they continue to compile details of the red areas of surface dressing around the town with the view to getting them refreshed at some point, but these were not considered a priority and it would depend on budgets.
- Nigel wasn't clear of the issues with the footbridge linking Suffolk Road noted in the previous minutes, but felt that it could be a behavioural problem. CB had witnessed a bike being hit by a vehicle here and it was recognised that pedestrians and cyclists don't use the bridge but climb over the Armco barrier and cross the three lanes of traffic. Members didn't believe that there was anything Nigel could do to improve this situation.

JF wanted to express thanks to Nigel for repairing the worst of the potholes through Filby on the A1064.

CB said a dip had appeared on the Gapton Hall Road cycle path near to Val Cole wine merchants. She added the path was also overgrown with brambles.

GS mentioned the 'molehills' on the track near Tesco's car park in Cobholm had been repaired.

BB thought the new advanced stop boxes near Gorleston Library were a great improvement, but felt that turning right was still fraught as cars were very quick away from traffic lights. AW suggested that tweaking the timing of the lights by just 5 seconds could make all the difference for cyclists.

MT asked if anyone had used the new Toucan crossing near the Beacon Park/Links Road/A12 roundabout. No one had used it but some had witnessed its effect on slowing down traffic. AW pointed out that statistics are gathered on its usage. SGS mentioned that the Borough Council had been consulted by the Highways Agency on the pedestrian crossing point at Harfreys Roundabout. Both he and AW had responded suggesting the installation of a Toucan Crossing, such as those used at Beacon Park and Gapton Hall roundabouts. CB added the traffic lights at the Gapton Hall roundabout were now better, but that they took a long time to change for cyclists and pedestrians. AW said that the timings would have been set according to the amount of cyclists and pedestrians that use the crossing.

Any Other Business and Items for the next Great Yarmouth Cycle Forum

The previous Scheme Updates to be discussed again at the next meeting.

Date and Frequency of Next Meeting

As the number of new cycle schemes and initiatives in the borough had decreased SGS suggested the frequency of meetings be reduced to reflect this. MT agreed, but with the proviso that additional meetings could be held as and when required. GS noted that the meeting day had been changed to Thursdays to better suit members. It was agreed to try an earlier starting time of 6.00pm for the next meeting, to have meetings every 4 months and hold extraordinary meetings if required.

The next meeting would be on Thursday 13 October at 6.00pm.