

MINUTES OF THE GREAT YARMOUTH CYCLE FORUM
Assembly Room, Town Hall, Great Yarmouth
6.30pm Wednesday 24 November, 2010

Present:

Claire Blamey (CB)	Norfolk Museums
Paul Donnachie (PD)	Norfolk County Council
Dean Foden (DF)	Filby resident & cyclist
Jo Foden (JF)	Chair, Filby resident & cyclist
Norman Harlow (NH)	Great Yarmouth Cycling Club
Kevin House (KH)	Sustrans
Nigel Seago (NS)	Norfolk County Council
Stephen Shepherd (SGS)	Vice Chair, GYBC
Graham Smith (GS)	Great Yarmouth resident & cyclist
Anthony Wright (AW)	Sustrans

Apologies for Absence

Tom Andrews
Penny Bailey
Barbara Brett
Lynn Hills
Emma Kinsey
Spencer McCormack

Minutes from the Great Yarmouth Cycle Forum held on 18 August 2010

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Scheme Updates

• **Vauxhall Bridge**

PD explained that a survey of the bridge had been carried out which revealed that it was not in good shape. A recent meeting of the Reconnecting Great Yarmouth group had decided that securing the pedestrian/cycle link was the main priority, and opening it up to vehicular access was now a long term aspiration. One possible solution was refurbishing the bridge and running the pedestrian/cycle link through one of the spans, but they were waiting for detailed costings which were thought to be around £1m. There was Fairshares funding of £300k available until the end of March, so they were now looking for alternative sources of funding for the shortfall. There was a meeting of the Reconnecting Great Yarmouth transport strategy group in December and PD hoped to be able to report back to the Forum at the next meeting. JF reported that Tom Andrews had asked if the report was looking at opening up the bridge to road traffic or just concentrating on the pedestrian/cycle link. PD confirmed it was to determine the condition of the whole bridge, what life was left in it and what options were available, such as refurbishment or partial demolition. The Reconnecting Great Yarmouth group were looking to retain the bridge if at all possible, and members were reminded that it was a Grade II listed building. AW pointed out that Sustrans/Railway Paths had bought the bridge to safeguard the pedestrian/cycle link and any plans to open it up to vehicular traffic would require an agreement between them and NCC, GYBC and

fundamentals. He added that their bridge engineer felt that the pedestrian/cycle link had 50 years life left in it, so there was no immediate worry of losing the route.

- **Outer Harbour Improved Walking and Cycling Links**

PD explained that this scheme had been deferred this current next year, and they had been hoping to get developer contributions. Unfortunately, that opportunity had evaporated and the developer contributions would not be forthcoming at the present time. PD added that Norfolk County Council had a £155m funding hole to plug, and in the wake of the comprehensive spending review they were waiting to get their funding settlement. Once they know how much the funding settlement is, and how that is to be distributed across the County Council, they will know how much they have got for Highways. However, they were expecting a much diminished improvements budget, and possibly even a reduced maintenance budget. Once this was known they would be able to make a definite decision on the scheme. Members felt that in the present circumstances the Outer Harbour was generating little traffic so there was less demand for the scheme.

- **St Georges**

PD had spoken to David Wardale who advised him that the scheme was in the second week of an update consultation on both cycle links, as the longer link to the library was not part of the original scheme. They were planning to erect notices mid December that would run until the end of January, with the works (mainly erecting signs) following in February. Lining issues around the chapel would be picked up then.

- **Warren Road**

PD explained that they had put up Section 205 notices and planned to follow with Section 228 notices to adopt after the works had been carried out in January. Unfortunately, they had received 8 objections from local residents, including the occupants of Cliff Park Cottages. He reminded members that when they had attempted to start works back in May a vehicle had blockaded a 30 metre stretch of private land at Cliff Park Cottages. The land was not required for the scheme, but in order to avoid any future blockades, and allow access for future maintenance, they had decided to adopt the section and hence the further Section 205 notice. However, the objectors were now challenging the legal approach taken. NCC had sought advice from their legal counsel who have said the nature of the objections are unlikely to succeed in the magistrate's court and that NCC's legal approach is sound. Unfortunately, the objections meant that the scheme would not start this financial year. Therefore, NCC would have to wait for the funding settlement and then review the situation next year before progressing on this scheme. Funding will be tight and PD added letters in the Great Yarmouth Mercury have the recurring theme of why is the County Council spending money on this scheme in the current economic climate? AW added that NCC could apply to Sustrans for a 40% grant of the capital cost as this was a schools link, but that they would only agree to a scheme once all the legal processes, planning conditions and their own funding were in place. DF added this was a priority scheme, but PD said in the wake of the comprehensive spending review the County would have to reconsider what its priorities are, and he couldn't guarantee the scheme would get funding next financial year. He also added that the County had been eager to deliver this scheme but had been strongly resisted at every turn, even though around 56 additional school children would use it. JF offered thanks to PD on behalf of the Forum for all the work he had done on the scheme so far.

- **Gorleston Bridge Road to Victoria Road Cycleway**

PD explained that NCC were looking to convert the Bridge Road to Victoria Road cycleway from shared use to a segregated facility. This was at the request of a cyclist and had been supported by the school, the local County Councillor and the Cycle Forum. There had, however, been objections to the proposal, namely from Sustrans. AW explained that he and the regional director had both objected as they did not agree on the segregation. He added that the path varied from 2.5 metres to occasionally 3.0 metres and if it was to be segregated it should be a minimum of 3.8 metres wide. He added the existing segregated section from Bridge Road was totally inadequate. CB asked why the request had come about, and PD explained that a local cyclist claimed that there was often conflict with pedestrians and this caused arguments. KH pointed out that there is now a high number of children using this route to cycle to Cliff Park Schools. There was some debate about pedestrians and cyclists not staying on the correct side of segregated tracks, and the fact that a line can encourage cyclists to ride faster. PD asked what the Forum's view on the proposal was as members had originally been supportive of it, along with Cliff Park schools. JF concluded that the Forum was not convinced by the benefits of the white line (but hadn't ruled it out), but also supported KH's suggestion of educating youngsters on how to use the cycleway at school assemblies, and suggested consideration be given to the installation of more cycle symbols along the route.

Light controlled crossroads at High Street / Baker Street / Church Lane / Lowestoft Road, Gorleston

PD explained that there was a signal improvement scheme being carried out on the light controlled crossroads at High Street/Baker Street/Church Lane/Lowestoft Road in January 2011. NCC were now planning to include advanced stop lines at this junction, but first they would have to carry out some modelling to check that this wouldn't have any adverse affect on traffic, plus they needed the additional funding of £8,000 that it would cost to construct.

Maintenance Issues and Update

NS updated members on the maintenance issues raised at the last meeting.

- **Traffic signals junction at Beccles Road/Shrublands Way**

These signals don't belong to NCC but are the Highways Agency's and are managed by Atkins. NS explained the Highways Agency wanted more information about the problem before sending someone out to investigate.

NS to forward Highways Agency details and CB to contact them directly.

- **Market Place / Priory Plain Inductive Loops**

The stop line from the Market Place to Priory Plain is only designed to work with buses, taxis and the road train; however, it may work if a cycle is placed directly over the loop. The loops in the advanced stop boxes from the Market Place to Northgate Street should detect cyclists.

- **Light controlled crossroads at High Street / Baker Street / Church Lane / Lowestoft Road, Gorleston**

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- **A1064 through Filby**

NS admitted this wasn't the best road surface, but pointed out that it was regularly inspected and maintained. However, he added that it was programmed for resurfacing which was currently scheduled for 2013/14.

- **Red Surfacing on Southtown Road**

NS explained the red surfacing used on the cycle lane adjacent to the petrol filling station on Southtown Road was the result of an Accident Investigation study by NCC's Casualty Reduction Team. He added it was not a surfacing that they would generally employ. AW pointed out that green is normally used on cycle lanes, but because it has been used throughout Norfolk it was decided to continue to use red, but only in critical places.

NS also mentioned that they would pick up the sunken stop tap cover on Station Road, Ormesby highlighted by Tom Andrews, and there is also a plan to carry out works to resolve the flooding issue around the crossing at the Caister Road/Jellicoe Road junction.

CB praised the County Council's online facility for reporting potholes, which generated very quick repairs.

GS referred to small mounds in the surface of the shared use path around the perimeter of Tesco's, Cobholm - he added these had been marked with yellow spray paint as if someone was aware of the problem. NS didn't think this was a NCC path, especially as they don't use yellow paint. However, if GS did feel that NCC were responsible for the maintenance he would arrange for someone to investigate.

Promoting the Existing Cycle Network – Spencer McCormack to discuss possible events

Unfortunately, Spencer McCormack was unable to attend the Forum so this item was deferred to the next meeting.

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

KH explained he was the Sustrans Bike It Officer for Great Yarmouth, a project to encourage children, and consequently their parents, to cycle to school and their workplace. Originally jointly funded by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and NCC, unfortunately, NCC have pulled the funding leaving the PCT to support the scheme until March 2011, when they will be looking for extra investment. He explained that he worked with 14 schools and attends regular assemblies promoting anything to do with cycling, such as safe cycling in the dark, discussions on health and environmental consequences etc. He had helped the schools get new storage through Sustrans 80% funding. He has also worked in partnership with the Great Yarmouth Cycling Club when they hold Dr Bike sessions when he and NH go into schools and repair up to 50 bikes a day, replacing brake cables, checking gears etc. and generally making the bikes safe. He also organises bike breakfasts and competitions and was looking to open 'shops' in every school selling locks, helmets and lights at very discounted prices.

He had also started holding coffee mornings for parents where he teaches them how to carry out simple repairs to bikes. Neil Turner and NH run an after school club at Cliff Park School and KH runs one at Hillside for cycle sport and he was hoping to train more for Go-Ride (<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/go-ride>).

Some of the key achievements of Bike It over the last 18 months were:

- Doubled the cycling to schools in Great Yarmouth (quadrupled it in some schools)
- Set up Bikeability training with cycling professional Simon Edwards.
- Homefield Primary School (who had a real problem with cars) ran a 'bike week' where kids cycled to school or rode a bike for a whole week.
- Edward Worledge Primary School held a 'Bike to the Beach' ride where Bikeability trained pupils cycled on-road to Gorleston beach and back.
- Holding two inter-school tournaments – one in July to choose which teams raced at the Tour of Britain, and one on the 23 November 2011.

KH mentioned that Great Yarmouth Cycling Club have bought 12 road bikes which are taken to the Great Yarmouth Stadium every Saturday. He has promoted this at school assemblies and it has proved very popular with 25 kids racing at the most recent meeting.

KH stressed that the partnerships formed between the Great Yarmouth Cycling Club, Simon Edwards, the schools and himself had been invaluable and it would be a shame to stop it now. AW added that Sustrans recognised the value of getting kids involved in cycle sport and were keen for the scheme to continue and were looking for more funders. He added there were people at their headquarters in Bristol working on this as the March deadline was for all Bike It schemes across the country. PD said the Bike It scheme complimented the work that the NCC School Travel Plan Officers had been doing, which although was now no longer funded, had left the schools with ownership of their School Travel Plans. PD asked if this was a county-wide scheme – AW explained that Thetford also had Bike It, but they would like to expand the scheme across Norfolk and also into Suffolk. KH added that they had just struck a new deal with the Great Yarmouth and Waveney PCT to do some events, like Dr Bike, in some schools in Lowestoft, and he was looking for suggestions as to which schools to approach.

KH also mentioned the great work Great Yarmouth Cycling Club had been doing. Membership had gone up tenfold in a year to nearly 100 members and they had just put together a club development plan which looks at what the club has achieved over the last year and the plans for the future – any suggestions on how to push the club forward would be welcome. KH to arrange for a copy of the development plan to be forwarded to SGS for circulation to members.

JF thanked KH for his presentation, and suggested that AW update the Forum of the funding situation at the next meeting.

As this was PD's last meeting JF thanked him on behalf of members for all his hard work for the Forum.

Date for Next Meeting

3 March 2011