

E-mail from Helen Gundry, plus link to the web info.....

A discussion-point link for the Local Access Forum perhaps?

It is interesting because it makes the point that cycling needs to be fast to be an acceptable greener alternative form of transport for actually going places, and this is relevant if we want to encourage more people to arrive in the National Park by bicycle, so promoting health and low-carbon footprint and reducing the growing numbers of cars that cause pollution and congestion in the National Park. The Local Access Forum (and Ryedale Cycle Forum) might take positive steps to avoid conflict if we look to create infrastructure, where possible, where cycles, pedestrians and horse riders can still be safely away from motor vehicles but not necessarily together.

On shared use paths in town areas, tarmac is expected because of heavy use. In other areas, for example where we have busy roads near villages, perhaps a path with a wide strip of tarmac for cyclists and mobility vehicles, alongside a wide strip of softer surface for horses and walkers? I think it is important to look at every actual section of a route with shared use in mind and decide what surfaces are needed, rather than a "blanket approach" to a whole route, which is very likely going to cause problems. The point is to get the design right, and the signs right, rather than different user groups blaming each other.

Please find Ryedale Cycle Forum summary at the end of this link document

Information below copied from weblink.....

<http://www.aviewfromthecyclepath.com/2014/11/shared-use-paths-create-conflict-and.html>

Sunday, 23 November 2014

Shared Use Paths create conflict and cause complaints about "speed"

Many countries build combined infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians. Wherever these shared-use (aka multi-use) paths exist, there are complaints due to the conflicts which occur. Many of the complaints are from pedestrians who find the speed of cyclists unacceptable on paths which they use for walking. This is a wholly avoidable problem.

The cyclists in the video above demonstrate well how most take extraordinary care around pedestrians. Every cyclist in the video has his or her journey made inconvenient by the presence of the pedestrians but they all slow down, even slowing so far as slowing to walking pace to climb an incline, a situation where cyclists naturally would like to keep their momentum as it requires less effort to climb without braking first.

What you see in the video is quite typical behaviour for cyclists anywhere in the world when they encounter pedestrians, but taking care in this way isn't enough to stop there being complaints. Cyclists are still likely to be regarded as a problem because their behaviour is different to that of pedestrians. Cyclists appear to invade personal space around pedestrians, to "squeeze past", to wobble and to swerve in and out. Even when taking care, their behaviour seems aggressive and unpredictable to many pedestrians. Complaints about excessive speed of cyclists on shared paths are often a result of perception by pedestrians rather than being due to cyclists riding past pedestrians at genuinely high speeds.



A short distance away from the location in the video there is separate infrastructure for pedestrians, but unfortunately not yet for cyclists.

A few metres away from the bridge there are roads much like those in many countries on which motor vehicles routinely and legally travel at considerably higher speed than any cyclists in the video. Pedestrians rarely complain about excessive speed of motor vehicles on roads like this because those vehicles are driven on infrastructure segregated from pedestrians. Unless drivers leave the road and drive on the pavement (sidewalk), there is no invasion of pedestrian space and no close passing. Conflict between pedestrians and motorists is reduced by separating them.



Pedestrian zone in [the centre of Assen](#) with a "road" for cyclists. A language which everyone understands. This design reduces conflict and complaints

All countries seem to understand how to build roads to cope with the speeds of motor vehicles and also how to build separate infrastructure for pedestrians to reduce conflict. The benefit of giving different and incompatible modes of transport their own space and not expecting them to share are understood widely. Why is there a blind spot when it comes to cycling infrastructure ? The aim is the same. Cyclists are neither car drivers nor pedestrians and should not be treated as if they were identical to either of these other two groups.



The only place with "sharing" in Assen city centre is a central square. It's a destination not a through route. And its size .

The requirements for cycling infrastructure are not even particularly difficult to meet. Even the fastest of cyclists make their journeys at a fraction of the speed which can be reached by a car and the much lower mass combined with that speed presents a fraction of the danger of motor vehicles. **Cycle-paths** do not need to be so **wide** as roads for cars and infrastructure such as **bridges** and **tunnels** do not need to cater for such large vehicles or large weights as equivalent infrastructure for motor vehicles.

Where conflict between cyclists and pedestrians occurs, it is almost always due to cyclists being forced to use infrastructure which is not designed for them at all.

Infrastructure on which cyclists and pedestrians are expected to share equally does not properly take the requirements of either group of users into account and creates conflict situations.

The Jeremy Vine incident

A spokesman for The Royal Parks told us:

- there is no legal speed limit for cyclists in Hyde Park
- the path Jeremy was on is a small narrow one shared with pedestrians
- the pertinent legislation is: The Royal Parks and Other Open Spaces Regulations 1997, Section 3, sub section (1) which states anyone commits an offence when they intentionally or recklessly interfere with the safety, comfort or convenience of any person using a Park in accordance with these regulations.
- that's the same as the Met Police told us
- and a criminal offence occurs when someone **intentionally or recklessly interferes with the safety ...** of any person.
- royal parks are not a prosecuting authority
- the police are the prosecuting authority
- the same rules apply for all park users including joggers for example
- there is a 5mph limit for vehicles using that path - that's where the mention of a 5mph limit for cyclists comes from
- we ask cyclists to adhere to the 5mph limit - even though it is not a legal limit
- we accept signage could be improved
- a police operation like yesterday is an occasional thing
- no one is available for interview

A Royal Parks spokesman suggested
later that the speed limit perhaps
should not be applied to bikes

An incident this week in London gave a good example of what happens where there is a pretense that pedestrian infrastructure can also be used by bicycle. Radio presenter Jeremy Vine was [stopped by police for speeding](#) when cycling. How did he come to be stopped? He was exceeding a speed limit of just 5 mph (8 km/h) on a path through a London park. The police saw this as a high enough priority that police officers were in the park to stop errant cyclists.

Despite considerably hype from the city, London is still a [very difficult and dangerous place](#) for cycling. Paths within parks in the city are well used by cyclists because they offer a rare opportunity for cyclists to make part of their journeys away from traffic. They also can offer relatively direct routes. Extremely low speeds might be acceptable for some cyclists making recreational trips but anyone trying to get somewhere at a speed competitive with other modes of transport needs to travel at more than jogging pace. 5 mph is much slower than a normal cycling speed. Almost anyone on a bicycle will exceed that speed without trying. It's clear that such a limit makes no sense for cyclists.

There followed [some debate](#) about whether or not the law applies in this specific case, but that's not really the point. Whether or not it's legal to cycle here at above 5 mph, there's still a problem: Infrastructure in parks in London which supposedly allows cycling is not good enough to make for safe and convenient journeys at normal cycling speeds. The shared nature of paths like this is itself a very large part of the reason why there is conflict. Police were present to stop cyclists in this park because there have been complaints in the past due to previous conflicts. Trying to impose an extremely low speed limit on one of the slowest means of transport is not a solution to the problem. What needs to happen is that proper consideration is made of why conflict occurs and action taken to improve infrastructure to the point that the conflict is reduced. In a city there will almost always be too many pedestrians and cyclists to allow them to share paths without conflict. Shared-use paths don't make sense in crowded cities.

Blaming victims of bad design

The idea that "speeding cyclists" are a problem which needs addressing is not new. Low speed limits to control cyclists are also remarkably common. Glasgow, for instance, [wanted a 5 mph limit](#) like that in London "to ensure other parks users' safety" while allowing motor vehicles to travel at twice the speed. San Francisco discussed [a 10 mph limit](#) for cyclists crossing the Golden Gate bridge (the speed limit for motorists is higher of course), Sydney has [a 10 km/h "advisory" speed limit](#) over a bridge. Christchurch is [planning for 15 km/h](#) on "major cycleways".



Yes, the Sydney Morning Herald [actually sent a reporter](#) to check whether any cyclists crossing this bridge might perhaps exceed a 10 km/h advisory speed limit. Are drivers anywhere in Sydney expected to go so slowly? If not, then why cyclists? (and yes, it's *that* Sydney. [The one where drivers apparently hate cyclists](#))

The [video](#) from Sydney is worth watching. Note first that the bridge really is very wide. It could easily allow for normal cycling speeds if only there was a separate area marked for cyclists to reduce conflict (this should preferably look like a road as in the Assen photo above to reduce confusion). Also note that the fastest cyclist was travelling at just 23 km/h. 23 km/h is not fast at all for a regular cyclist. It's well within the range of normal speeds for cycling, a speed which in my experience is exceeded by many Dutch people on [standard town bikes](#) when going shopping. Participants on one of our [study tours](#) earlier this year may remember following a young student in Groningen who was applying her make-up while cycling at a consistent 27 km/h on a normal upright Dutch bike. I don't actually believe that speeds above 10 km/h are considered to be high speeds in Sydney except when the people under observation are cyclists. Perhaps Sydney residents can tell me whether there is any place at all within the city where drivers of cars are expected to observe a 10 km/h speed limit on one of their main through routes.

Ignoring the real danger

Each year, there are [more than 1.2 million deaths](#) across the world due to crashes involving motor vehicles and tens of millions more people are injured. Cyclists and pedestrians are often the victims of such crashes. There are no similar figures for deaths and injuries due to cyclists because the scale of the problem is infinitesimally smaller. Despite this, it is cyclists who are emphasized as a risk. You may wonder where these attitudes come from. What type of organisations would support such a notion as that cyclists go "too fast" and cause danger when it's so clear that morgues and hospitals the world are full of the victims of motor vehicle crashes, not of bicycle crashes.

A code of conduct for cyclists (Sustrans 22/11/2014)

Cyclists tend to be the fastest movers on these paths, but the paths aren't suitable for high speeds so it's important to keep cycling speed under control. Remember that they are for sharing, not for speeding. If you wish to travel quickly, train for fitness or record personal best times, this is better done on quiet roads.

Following this code of conduct will ensure that everyone can benefit from shared paths:

- Give way to pedestrians and wheelchair users;
- Take care around horse-riders, leaving them plenty of room, especially when approaching from behind;
- Be courteous and patient with pedestrians and other path users who are moving more slowly than you – shared paths are for sharing, not speeding;
- Cycle at a sensible speed and do not use the paths for recording times with challenge apps or for fitness training;
- Slow down when space is limited or if you cannot see clearly ahead;
- Be particularly careful at junctions, bends, entrances onto the path, or any other 'blind spots' where people (including children) could appear in front of you without warning;
- Keep to your side of any dividing line;
- Carry a bell and use it, or an audible greeting, to avoid surprising people or horses;
- However, don't assume people can see or hear you – remember that many people are hard of hearing or visually impaired;
- In dull and dark weather make sure you have lights so you can be seen.

Tips for other path users

- Keep your dog under control;
- Keep to your side of any dividing line.

Note: nearly all 'tips' aimed at cyclists are an attempt to compensate for low quality infrastructure.

A code of conduct for cyclists consisting almost entirely of asking the users of paths to compensate for the problems caused by [low quality design](#) of those very same paths.

Sustrans. For 'cycling' but against cyclists ?

[Sustrans](#) is a British organisation which claims to be interested in "enabling people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys" and which is behind the UK's "National Cycle Network". Unfortunately, in a scramble to be able to claim to have a large quantity of cycling facilities they long ago forgot about [the importance of quality](#) and as a result they are now in the position of defending inadequately designed shared-use paths which make up a significant proportion of their network. Many people, including myself, have [criticised the inept designs](#) of infrastructure which Sustrans still approves of, pointing out that they create conflict and danger. Sustrans' reaction to conflicts caused by the design of their infrastructure has been to publish a "[code of conduct](#)" for cyclists.

In their code of conduct, Sustrans point out themselves that their paths "aren't suitable for high speeds" and suggest that "if you wish to travel quickly [...] this is better done on quiet roads". For all their claims about having provided a network of cycling infrastructure, they're actually admitting that this network is not suitable for cycling. All the emphasis is on cyclists being told to modify their behaviour except for just one clause each regarding dog walkers and pedestrians. When not telling cyclists to go elsewhere than to ride on the cycling infrastructure, Sustrans tell them to "slow down", "be patient" or use a "sensible speed" in order to work around the needs of other path users.

But what is a "sensible speed" for cycling ? That rather depends on one's perspective. If Sustrans were genuinely building routes for "SUSTainable TRANSport" then these routes would be usable at normal cycling speeds. If Sustrans' National Cycle Network already truly met "[the highest possible standards](#)" then there would be no complaints, no

reasons for Sustrans to tell cyclists to go elsewhere and no reason to impose limits.

Cyclist speeds cannot compete with motor vehicle speeds. The speed of cyclists is [naturally limited by the limited power available from a human body](#). The highest speeds achieved by cyclists are comparable with the lowest speed limits imposed on motor vehicles. Countries which have no difficulty in building an extensive network of roads on which motor vehicles travel at 50-120 km/h shouldn't have any difficulty at all in building cycle-paths which can cope with cycling speeds which on the flat are seldom consistently above 30 km/h and peak speeds [rarely above](#) 50 km/h.

It's an absurdity for cycling infrastructure to be designed such that it is unable to cope with the relatively modest speeds which even fit cyclists achieve on their everyday journeys.



A photo [chosen by Sustrans](#) to illustrate their National Cycling Network shows why there are problems with it. The cyclist has to ride on the wrong side of a narrow path facing any oncoming cyclists because the path is narrow and full of pedestrians. Any path with that many pedestrians on it is not a [cycle-path](#). This pattern of usage on such a narrow path guarantees that conflict will occur.

Sack-cloth and ashes

Sadly, Sustrans representatives have been [repeatedly vocal](#) about cyclists being "a menace that needs taming".

You might wonder how other cycling organisations in the UK reacted to an organisation which puts such a point of view and publishes a code of conduct which puts emphasis firmly on their members, fellow cyclists, as being a cause of trouble rather than pointing out that planners had done an inadequate job. Surprisingly, the answer is that many other organisations joined in. British Cycling gave [its support](#) and CTC [endorsed](#) the Sustrans code of conduct.

What's more, spokespeople from CTC and Sustrans [got together](#) to ask other cyclists to pick on an "anti-social minority", requesting that people "take action by pointing the finger" at other riders. It seems they'd all rather encourage a minor form of vigilantism and create an [out-group](#) of cyclists to blame instead of addressing head-on the problem of inadequate infrastructure which causes the conflicts to occur. It's hardly a secret that Sustrans' shared use paths are inadequate as even the photos chosen by Sustrans to illustrate their network actually demonstrate the problems with it.

With friends like this...

2016 update: Roger Geffen of Cycling UK (new name for CTC) replied to this blog post concerned about the "take action by pointing the finger" quote above. This suggestion was made by Sustrans' then chief executive. See his comment and my reply to him below.

Dutch cycling infrastructure
is now 43 years and 270 days
ahead of the UK

On the 4th of March 2013, London's cycling commissioner Andrew Gilligan claimed that 'it took 40 years to turn Amsterdam into Amsterdam'. In reality, progress was fast in The Netherlands & could also be so in London. The gap will continue to grow until there is genuine change in policy and funding so that London starts to catch up. The clock is ticking. [Embed this](#)

A meandering network

There's nothing wrong with building a network of meandering walking routes for people to enjoy by foot. But call it what it is. That's not how you create a network of convenient cycling routes which provide a [realistic alternative](#) to driving a car to make journeys. There's something very wrong indeed with pretending to have created cycling infrastructure or indeed an entire cycling network if actually cyclists are only welcome to use this network at a pace which makes cycling inconvenient.

If your cycling infrastructure can't cope with the speed of bicycles then it's simply not of high enough quality. A bridge which divides instead of connecting is not a success.



Racing cyclists, children, pensioners, we all need the same efficient grid of go-everywhere infrastructure.

What's really required

To encourage people to cycle, cycling must be [fast](#). It is important that cycling journeys are made [efficient](#) and safe as otherwise cycling does not compete with other modes of transport. The Sustrans representative draws false equivalences with the Netherlands and Denmark as being places where people cycle slower, but it's simply not true. No-one has time to waste on inadequate infrastructure which slows them down. There is no

demographic group in this country or any other which wants their journeys to take longer than they have to and no excuse whatsoever for [building infrastructure which has that result](#).

Infrastructure which requires cyclists and pedestrians to use the same paths can be acceptable where there will be almost no usage by one of the groups but it will always lead to conflicts in any place where numbers of users are high, especially when there are large numbers of pedestrians. [Normal Dutch practice](#) is to build cycle-paths without separate pedestrian paths between towns where distances are relatively large and there will be few pedestrians, but paths inside villages and towns should almost always have separate paths for pedestrians. This avoids the need to build a separate pedestrian path in places where there will be little if any conflict due to the low numbers of users, but also avoids conflict where we know there will be many users.

The first video was made [in Norway a few weeks back](#) but the problems demonstrated by it are common to anywhere that cyclists and pedestrians are forced to mix.

Sadly, the main Dutch campaigning organisation has also fallen into the trap of [campaigning against cyclists](#) rather than concentrating on where real danger comes from.

By [David Hembrow](#) 

Quick summary of Ryedale Cycle Forum for NYMNPA, Local Access Forum 12 December 2016

The Ryedale Cycle Forum brings together all those involved in the development and promotion of cycling in Ryedale and meets on a quarterly basis at RDC. Part of our mission is to promote existing cycle routes and work towards establishing new routes within the district. We want to enable travel to and from existing and potential employment sites for people without cars (e.g. Youth); contribute to wider recreational and tourism needs for people of all ages; help to tackle the problems of atmospheric pollution and associated danger to health; help to reduce traffic congestion; enable people to be more active and healthy. On the forum's website [Getryedalecycling.com](#), you can find our terms of reference and previous minutes.

Ryedale Cycle Forum includes Sustrans, Cycle Touring Club UK's regional groups, Ryedale District Council, Howardian Hills AONB, The National Park Authority (Karl Gerhardsen or Catriona Mclees attend), Cycle Shops, NYCC Highways, local cyclists, Parish & Town Councils, The Forestry Commission, Kirkbymoorside Environment Group, and anyone else with an interest in cycling.

Although NYCC have a cycling strategy, their system for deciding on how funds should be spent is a points system, which takes into account factors such as RTA fatalities and traffic

volume. New cycle infrastructure hardly ever gets to the top of their list. Furthermore, the transport planning for new developments very rarely provides for cyclists. Meanwhile, our roads get busier and busier, and most people are too nervous to cycle for day to day trips, especially with children. MMILs (middle aged men in lycra) are only a small proportion of the Ryedale population and visitors. The Cycle Forum is arranging and fundraising for design and local consultation work, so that "shovel ready" routes are ready for suitable capital funding programs.

If sufficient safe routes are created so that most able-bodied residents and visitors feel safe to cycle, we could make a huge difference to pollution levels, health levels, affordable travel, young people's independence, cycle safety, traffic congestion, parking problems, and the attractiveness to visitors.

The Sustrans definition for the National Cycle Network is useful. It says "routes should be suitable for a nervous adult cyclist, a family with young children, or a sensible unaccompanied 12 year old".

In Ryedale we have towns, villages and lots of farm land. For some short sections of route it is possible to work together with horse riders, walkers and people with prams or mobility vehicles, in order to achieve a good shared path that is free of motor vehicles. However, to be an efficient and attractive way of getting "from a to b", cycling needs to be quite fast, so it is often better to provide some separation.

We have recently enlisted the help of MP Kevin Hollinrake with the following:-

1. Ryedale District Council currently holds nearly 1 million pounds in section 106 funds, to be spent on local recreation and leisure. An application process is coming; we need help to direct funds to car-free routes.
2. A pedestrian and cyclist bridge at the Railway station, spanning the river and the railway, would give residents of Malton and Norton, and visitors, a safer and healthier alternative to using the level crossing and County Bridge. This has been suggested to RDC and First Group Trains, and would also help mitigate the increased pressure on the level crossing and traffic congestion that more trains will bring. Increasing train services is a great way to move people around our region, so we need to help people get to and from the railway station. Discussions are underway with the parties concerned.
3. A cycle route network is needed from Hull and York, through Malton, Norton and on to the other Market Towns and the National Park. Ryedale Cycle Forum are looking at the whole area, with Parish and Town Councils, for the best routes to join up our Ryedale communities. MP is acting as "cycling champion", by mentioning cycling infrastructure in discussions with key people on the health, green, social welfare, tourism, LEP and economic development agendas.

Helen Gundry 30.11.16