

FRIAR GATE GOODS YARD DEVELOPMENT

By TONY ROELICH

DCG has been asked by Clowes Developments to provide input to the sustainable transport element of their planning application for the redevelopment of the Friar Gate Goods Yard. Part of this development will bring the iconic Midland Railway warehouse building back to life. Our interest of course is to ensure that cyclists have good quality, safe access to and around the site. We want the houses which are built there to have good cycle links with the city, and to cater for cycle parking and storage as well as for cars. We want good access from all surrounding areas to the associated retail development with quality cycle routes through the site and plentiful good quality cycle parking for employees and customers.

Usually we only see planning applications once they have been submitted, and usually they omit facilities for cyclists; by this stage it is difficult to get really good cycle facilities added to the plans. We are hopeful therefore that Clowes Developments are serious about creating proper sustainable travel opportunities having asked us to contribute so early in the planning process. We hope that as a consequence we will get better integrated cycle facilities for this area.

Our initial response is posted on the DCG website, on the campaigns forum. We are also trying to organise a cycle ride with the developers in the locality to illustrate the local travel opportunities we would like them to integrate into their plans and issues we would like them to tackle. Anyone who wishes to add further comments please put an entry on the forum, e-mail campaigns@derbycyclinggroup.org.uk or write to the Campaigns Co-ordinator at our Soundbites' address.

Annual General Meeting

Please mark your diaries for this year's AGM which will be held at 7pm on Tuesday, 10th May at the Friends Meeting House on St Helen's Street in Derby. All members are welcome to attend, ask questions or make suggestions for the committee who will be reporting on activities in 2010. Guest speaker is Matt Easter, Sustrans East Midlands Regional Director. He will speak on Sustrans in the East Midlands and the

future for sustainable transport in the region. Hope to see you there!

DID YOU KNOW?

By LES SIMS

- The bicycle developed from the Velocipede, a sort of hobby horse patented in England in 1818 by Denis Johnson of London.
- Early cyclists were known as velocipedians or velocipedestrians.
- Count Leo Tolstoy, author of "War and Peace", was given a bicycle by the Moscow Society of Velocipede Lovers for his 67th birthday in 1895. He promptly set about learning to ride it and knocked down the only other person in the large hall that he was practising in.
- The first pedal bicycle was invented in 1839 by Kirkpatrick Macmillan of Dumfries. Macmillan was fined five shillings in 1842 for injuring a girl who ran in front of his bike as he cycled from Dumfries to Edinburgh.
- In 1888, the bicycle was officially defined as a carriage, giving it full rights to use British roads.
- In 2001, Javier Zapata of Columbia cycled up the 1,200 stairs of the Parque Tower in Venezuela.
- From 1888 until 1930, the law said that cyclists must ring their bell non-stop whilst cycling.
- A bicycle is stolen in the UK every 72 seconds.

CYCLING IN DERBYSHIRE

By LES SIMS

Most people know how to ride a bike, and most people own a bike, but a large number do not ride their bikes,

having lost the confidence to ride on our increasingly congested roads. Many years ago, very few people owned cars, the streets were not congested, and the bicycle was the



Enjoy the trails

preferred means of transport for most ordinary folk.

Cycling is cheap. It is healthy, and for short journeys, often quicker than other forms of transport. Above all it is fun. On a bike you are at one with the environment, closer to nature, and keeping your body in good working order.

The bicycle is a simple but extremely efficient machine, some would even say that it is man's best invention. Certainly a bicycle requires little expenditure on maintenance and most cyclists are capable of doing this themselves. There is no comparison with the cost of running a motor car with the ever-increasing cost of fuel, insurance, servicing, depreciation and road tax. Bicycles are much improved in recent years. They are now lighter and, in real terms, probably cheaper than ever before. Tyres, brakes and lights have improved out of all recognition. So what are you waiting for? Many potential cyclists would like to cycle more, but how to keep away from the traffic is a problem for them.

Well, there is an answer to that as well. Our local authorities, together with the national charity Sustrans have been hard at work over many years to provide cyclists with safe traffic free routes on dedicated paths and on quiet roads. Here in Derby, just as the city was once the centre of the rail network, it is becoming the centre of a cycling revolution. Several redundant railway lines in South Derbyshire have already been converted into multi-user paths and we see increasing numbers of people using them, not only for cycling, but for walking, exercising their dogs and for horse riding. In addition many minor roads throughout the City are signed as cycle routes, and it is possible to cycle across the City quite safely and without getting involved in traffic jams and without any parking problems on arrival at your destination.

It may surprise some people to hear that you can cycle from Derby Market Place to the other side of Breadsall Hilltop without riding along a road. There are some roads to cross but most have Toucan crossings, including (would you believe?) the Pentagon Island, a bottle neck for traffic and an apparent nightmare for cyclists. Not so - there are marked cycle lanes on shared paths until you reach Racecourse Park where an off-road path leads to the Paddock Pub where another Toucan crossing takes you across the A608 road onto the Breadsall Greenway. This is another stretch of the old Great Northern Railway which once ran all the way to Ilkeston. When funding permits the whole route will become a multi-user path and it will then be possible to cycle all the way to Ilkeston on the traffic free path.

There are several other such paths leading out of Derby and many are constituent parts of the National Cycle Network which covers 12,500 miles over the whole country. Most routes are linked to railway stations such that bikes can be transported by train from one city or town to another. Bikes are carried free on trains hereabouts but there are limitations on numbers since trains generally do not have adequate capacity for them. However, many cyclists have folding bikes, another field where modern technology has improved the breed immeasurably, and these machines may be carried as hand luggage.

Known locally as the Riverside Path and being Route 6 of the National Cycle Network, a scenic path follows the River Derwent eastwards from Bass' Recreation Ground towards Alvaston Park. At this point it splits with one leg keeping to the river bank as far as Elvaston Castle and Borrowwash, whilst the other leg takes us through Alvaston and Shelton Lock to the Trent and Mersey Canal at Swarkestone. We can cycle along the canal towpath for just over a mile and then access yet another redundant railway path which crosses the River Trent and onwards into Leicestershire having passed close by Kings Newton and Melbourne. The Derbyshire/Leicestershire border is at Wilson, but the path goes on even further crossing the A42 trunk road on a high level bridge and eventually, with some quiet road sections, into Loughborough and onwards into Leicester. A point of interest on this route is Cloud Quarry, probably the biggest hole in the ground that most of us have ever seen. This path has one of the longest off-road sections, being about 13 miles long.

Another favourite route for cyclists is the Mickleover Greenway which runs for over five miles between Mickleover and Egginton. This is Route 54 of the NCN, linked back into Derby via Mackworth and southwards via Etwall all the way into Burton-upon-Trent and on towards Lichfield.

Route 54 is co-incident as far as Etwall with NCN Route 68, the Pennine Cycleway, which goes all the way (a distance of 350 miles) to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Not a ride for the faint-hearted, as it gets rather hilly towards Ashbourne where it joins the Tissington Trail and from there runs along the spine of the Pennines. Already several parties of keen cyclists have completed this ride, taking about ten days to do it.

A recent addition to our local routes is the ride from Derby to Uttoxeter, following the Dove Valley through Hilton, Marston-on-Dove, Hatton, Scropton, Sudbury and Doveridge. From Derby you follow NCN Route 54 to Egginton where the Dove Valley Route is numbered 549. From here the route is on quiet lanes running parallel to the A50 trunk road where all the motor vehicles have gone to. A nice flat ride and you can always catch a train back to Derby from Uttoxeter station if you don't wish to cycle both ways.

So, what are you waiting for? Get that bike out of the garage, pump up the tyres, check the brakes and get riding. Ride through our lovely Derbyshire scenery, take some photographs and stop for a cup of tea and a cake at one of the many little cabs and pubs that you will find on the way. No need to go further afield. Its all here! On your doorstep.

ONLINE
By IAN DENT

Please visit the DCG website for up to date information on the Group's activities. In particular, try the "Discuss" forum where you can see the latest situation with the various campaigns we're involved with as well as get information on forthcoming events. Your contribution (either on new events or comments on our approach to existing campaigns) is really welcomed.

If you are on Facebook you are encouraged to join the Derby Cycling Group Facebook Group. Login to your account and then search for "Derby Cycling Group". You should find the group information and there should be a "Join" icon at the top of the page - click on that and you're joined!

DERBY CYCLISTS TOURING CLUB

By IAN ALEXANDER

Here's an intriguing cycle facility in North Wales! I took this photo in April last year, whilst using this Sustrans route

around the coast of North Wales and which, apart from this short stretch, was an excellent way of getting from Chester to Llandudno with lots of great coastal views. My ride



Excellent Design!

began in Derby on Sunday, and incorporated overnight stops in Chester, Llanwrst in the Conway Valley, Barmouth and Llangollen before returning to Derby on the Friday. Not a raindrop in sight either!

Although Derby Cyclists Touring Club are predominately a road riding club, cycle tracks are often used as they can provide a good traffic free way of getting from A to B. Our weekly Sunday and Thursday rides, which start in the centre of Derby and visit many varied destinations in Derbyshire and adjacent counties, often begin on one of the many Sustrans trails. Other group members have toured Bhutan, Scotland and France last year. A diverse group but we all have the same common aims and that is enjoyment of cycling in the countryside, keeping fit, and enjoyment of some good cafe stops in pleasant company. Why not come and join us? We will be running some shorter rides during the summer months. Check us out on www.derbyctc.uk.org, or contact me on 01332 752384.

COMPETITION

Answer the questions correctly, email your entry to membership@derbycyclinggroup.org.uk and the first correct entries pulled from the hat at the AGM on the 10th May will receive a prize. Note that the winners will have to be at the AGM to qualify - if not present the draw will be made again.

According to the Guinness Book of Records when was the largest parade of bicycles ever recorded?

1. 1801
2. 1901
3. 2001

What's the longest bicycle ever recorded?

1. 24.1m
2. 28.1m
3. 32.1m

The prizes will be sets of Torch high beamer cycle lights and Magnum coil cable locks. Good luck!

Forthcoming events

A couple of rides organised by the Derby Sustrans Rangers are coming up in June. These provide an excellent opportunity for you (and any friends or family who perhaps don't cycle often) to join a mass ride on off-road cycle paths and to then enjoy a BBQ in picturesque surrounding. These are scheduled for:

- Saturday 4th June Derby Market Place to Breadsall station.
- Sunday 12th June Mickleover to Etwall Swimming Pool

11am start for both rides. All are welcome but children must be accompanied. Free to attend (pay for what you eat).

DCG COMMITTEE

The DCG committee is keen for any members interested in becoming more involved in the group to join the committee, either as one of the vacant committee positions (chair or minutes secretary), or as a general "without portfolio" member. All are welcome to attend the monthly meetings at the Brunswick PH (first Tuesdays of the month, 7:30pm, upstairs).

SIGN OF THE TIMES

By IAN ALEXANDER

Bit worried about this sign. It appears those going to Spondon should head into the bushes! If you take a few steps

back, it all makes sense; it's a sign recently installed on Raynesway at the junction of the access to the Riverside path, as part of the nearly completed Derby Commercial



Where is Spondon?

Park access in which DCG have been actively involved. A considerable number of directional signs have been installed in the last couple of years in the city, particularly as part of Sustrans Route 66, and in my locality (Alvaston) I've found them to be very useful as, despite being in possession of the Derby Cycle Route map, I wasn't aware of the back street route these signs direct you along until now.

This picture shows some more completely unnecessary signs which have been on Raynesway for some years advising

cyclists to dismount for every access road that crosses the cycle path, in this case for the access to Alvaston and Boulton Cricket Club car park which isn't used a great deal! A



Totally unnecessary

good example of how money can easily be wasted. Signing, or a lack of it, is one of the reasons frequently given as a discouragement to those who'd like to cycle more, although a map and an exploration of the area is hard to beat as preparation for a regular commute. What do you think about directional signage? Is it something you'd like more of, or would you prefer the money to be spent elsewhere?

QUALITY STREETS

By TONY ROELICH

If you'd rather live on a safer, more neighbourly street, spend a minute on the Quality Streets website (<http://www.quality-streets.org.uk/>), and send an automatic email to your local councillor asking for more 20mph zones and a more liveable street.

Sustrans, the charity who have built the National Cycle Network have a new campaign to get as many people as they can to e-mail their councillors and MPs to ask for streets which are focused on people and community, rather than a place associated with noise, speed, pollution and danger.

DCG hope that as many members as possible would like to join this campaign; you simply go online and access the website. You enter your details, and the e-mail address of your own local councillor magically appears above a draft letter asking for better streets. You can send the draft letter, you can amend it, or you can delete it and create your own. Then click on Submit to send it on its way. If you do not have a computer, you can access the website from your local library.

WHAT'S NEW WITH MEMBERSHIP

By MARK CROSSLEY

- January 2011: A new format for the member's newsletter.
- March 2011: All new members and those who renew this year will receive a new plastic membership card instead of the old paper version.

If those who are due to renew in 2012 or later and want to have our new membership card earlier to show off to your friends the cost is one pound. Please let membership know if this is what you want to do.

Derby Ghost Walk Social Tuesday April 19th

Friargate Ghost Walk. Secure bike parking is available. Arrive 6.45pm for a 7pm start. Includes a candlelit supper afterwards and chance to have a drink in the private bar at the gaol, expect to finish about 10.30pm. Cost is £21 (or £18 for concessions), and you MUST book in advance. Any general enquiries contact Ian Alexander on 01332 752384. Anything specific about the walk, and to book see details below;

Derby Gaol
50 Friargate
Derby
Telephone 08000 277928

<http://www.derbyghostwalks.com/>

The wisdom of Sir Digby Jones

"Cycling to work is an important issue for business; the more who do it, the more our communities will support it. Healthy and green, cycling is worthy of the support of every business in the land."