



Local news

Bike Week – Go Bike helped organise several events including *Five Miles to Fabulous*, an introductory ride for women; the *Carte Blanche* ride from Pollok Park to Holmwood House; and we had a stall at the Cycle Fair in George Square. Go Bike again helped marshal the Parks and Ride circuit of the south side parks. A slightly shorter evening ride attracted twice as many females as males. Go Bike also compiled a set of four suggested cycle routes around Glasgow, which can be downloaded from the web site.

Pollok Park Family Fun Day – Go Bike had a well-manned stand, which was kept busy all day. Many people asked us about cycle training for children, which reveals a clear gap in current provision. Cycling Scotland plan to address it.

Pedal for Scotland – Glasgow to Edinburgh on Sunday 14 September 2008. Details and entry form at <www.pedalforscotland.org>. Douglas Bingham has offered to assemble a Go Bike team; contact him at <drb61@binghamdonaldson.net> urgently if you would like to join.

CTC Glasgow – The local group of the CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club) now has a web site at <www.ctcglasgow.org.uk>. They have started a series of summer evening rides, plus refreshments, in addition to their rides on the third Sunday of the month.

Go Bike AGM (advance notice) – This will be held at 7:30pm on Wednesday 26 November.

Local routes and facilities

Easterhouse – Go Bike has persuaded Transport Scotland to back down on plans to make a path in Easterhouse for pedestrians only. The path, which passes beneath Wardie Road and connects to Swordale Place, running alongside the M8 motorway, was to be redetermined for the use of those on foot only. The order has now been reissued, after Go Bike objected, to allow pedal cycles too. The path features in Glasgow City Council's Core Path Plan and also in Go Bike's 'Monkland Cycleway' proposal (see web site) for a Glasgow to Coatbridge cycle route largely on minor roads through the East End of Glasgow and the remains of the Monkland Canal.

Port Dundas – Glasgow City Council's Development and Regeneration Services is looking at a Go Bike suggestion to upgrade and connect up paths at Port Dundas (at the end of the Glasgow Branch of the Forth and Clyde Canal) with Sighthill Park, where there are already two cycle routes. We have suggested in particular that some shallow and poorly maintained steps be replaced by a properly made up ramped path at the point where the canal basin and park meet, with path surfaces elsewhere upgraded to encourage cycling. The link forms a by-pass to the city centre for cyclists going between the canal and points east.

Bridgeton Cross – It looks likely that Go Bike's request to for a contraflow cycle lane on the one-way section of James Street at Bridgeton Cross will be incorporated into Glasgow City Council's plans for cycle routes connected to the Commonwealth Games. A route is planned for James Street and into London Road, starting from Glasgow Green. The bus gate will also be modified to permit cycling through it. Details are awaited.

Cardonald to Darnley cycle route – Go Bike has asked Glasgow City Council's Land and Environmental Services (LES) to look into providing a controlled crossing where the Cardonald to Darnley cycle route (formerly the Newton Mearns Commuter Cycle Route) crosses the main road into the Silverburn Shopping Centre. Cyclists currently have to dodge relentless traffic coming off the M77 motorway into the shopping centre car park with only a central traffic island for help. LES is looking into either a Toucan or Zebra Crossing. Another nearby crossing of a car park road on the same cycle route has been reported for not having any dropped kerbs, even though one side of the crossing has tactile paving slabs!

Speirs Wharf – Redevelopment plans for the Speirs Wharf area would see a zigzag ramp down from the Forth and Clyde Canal to Garscube Road, if they come to fruition. Plans to fill in the underpass under Dobbies Loan have been abandoned and now the underpass will be upgraded. A cycle route now connects the underpass to Cowcaddens where it joins with the Colleges Cycle Route. The footbridge across Garscube Road, connecting to Braid Square, will also be retained. Go Bike has emphasised the importance of this footbridge for cyclists coming from the North Woodside Road area to the city centre.

Monkland Canal – The towpath on the western section of the Monkland Canal has been upgraded between Blair Road and Drumpellier Lawns Estate. This means there is now a proper cycle route between Coatbridge town centre and Drumpellier Lawns, with a connection to Drumpellier Country Park. Go Bike has asked for a connecting path and a crossing across the A752 to link Drumpellier Lawns to Manse Road, Bargeddie, from where minor roads link into Glasgow. Go Bike has also contacted British Waterways over the issue of access control gates on the eastern section of the Monkland Canal, between Sikeside and Calderbank. Similar gates on the Forth and Clyde Canal have been modified to allow easier access by cyclists and others.

Airdrie to Bathgate cycle path – this is expected to close east of Blackridge in August 2008, with the western section closing by late October 2008. The path is being closed for the building of the Airdrie to Bathgate rail link. A new cycle path will be built alongside the railway.

National and international news

Congratulations to *Spokes* on reaching 100 issues – this is the bulletin of the Lothian Cycle Campaign, which has now been published for over 30 years. Well done! They print over 12 000 copies, which is also impressive, and deliver many by bicycle.

As an indication of their success, they counted city-bound vehicles on Lothian Road in the morning rush hour and found that 1 in 5 vehicles was a bicycle. There was a similar number of buses and commercial vehicles, the remainder being cars – three-quarters with only a single occupant. (From www.spokes.org.uk)

Funding for cycling falls in Scotland – Spokes has analysed the Scottish Government's spending plans for transport and estimates that funds for cycling will fall significantly this year to about 34% of the total transport budget. The overall sum for cycling is about £17M; for comparison the abolition of tolls on the Forth Bridge costs £23M. (From www.spokes.org.uk)

Cycling Scotland's *National Assessment of Cycling Provision* – The 2008 assessment was released in May and follows a previous assessment in 2005. It demonstrates that almost every aspect of local authority cycling policy has advanced since 2005, with an overall improvement of 8%. It is a lengthy document and can be downloaded from <www.cyclingscotland.org>. Note that it assesses cycling *policy*, not the facilities themselves. Among local areas, West Dunbartonshire was cited as one of the most improved local authorities.

The aim is to guide future development of policy, both within local authorities and the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS). Interestingly, one of the aspects that has *not* improved is Cycle Skills Development, which confirms our local experience.

This year's Cycling Scotland conference is taken over by a CAPS stakeholders' workshop. Places are free but limited – see <www.holyrood.com/CAPS> to register.

Routes 2 Ride – Sustrans has set up a community web site at <www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland>, where you can search for routes and submit your own.

10% investment in walking and cycling needed now to tackle UK obesity crisis – an extensive consortium of organisations led by the Association of Directors of Public Health are calling on electoral candidates across the country to invest 10% of transport budgets in cycling and walking initiatives if elected, to help fight the UK's obesity crisis. The 70 organisations (another 13 have signed up since the initial press release) are also calling for:

- A 20mph speed limit to be made the norm in residential areas
- A coherent high quality network of cycle routes that link everyday destinations
- Improved driver training and better enforced traffic laws
- Ambitious official targets to be set for increases in walking and cycling

Details, including a list of supporting organisations, at <www.adsph.org.uk/news.php>.

CTC calls for 20 mph limit to be the default in built-up areas – Signs for 30 mph (or higher) speed limits should be confined to wider and busier roads. This proposal would encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport, with benefits for our own health and that of our towns, cities and the environment. (From www.ctc.org.uk)

Washington, DC introduces bicycle-sharing programme – A new public-private venture called SmartBike DC will make 120 bicycles available at 10 spots in central locations in the city. Rental is free to those who pay a \$40 membership fee. John Davies was in Washington during July and didn't notice the scheme but there are only 10 locations at present. He saw plenty of cyclists despite temperatures of over 35°C and similarly high humidity. (From www.ccn.org.uk)

Cycle rides 2008

Regular, easy-paced rides are held on the first Sunday of each month, starting at 1000 from the north end of Bell's Bridge in Glasgow. The extra rides have different arrangements. Please bring a note of the Go Bike phone number 07932 460093 with you in case of problems.

Sunday 7 September 2008 – Glasgow to Balloch

Via NCN 7 cycle path all the way to Balloch. Return by train from Balloch with option to continue to Helensburgh.

Saturday 20–Sunday 21 September 2008 – Pitlochry to Inverness

The second of the two weekend rides covering the NCN route 7 from Glasgow to Inverness. During this trip we will complete the northern section of the route from Pitlochry to Inverness. Please contact Douglas Bingham by email to enquiries08@gocscotland.org.uk or phone 0141 632 8707, mobile/text 07717 576248. A van may be hired to transport the bikes so that more people can participate.

- *Saturday*: catch a train to Pitlochry then cycle through the pass of Killiecrankie to Blair Atholl and Dalwhinnie, then onto Newtonmore staying Saturday night at the Strathspey Mountain Hostel.
- *Sunday*: continue northwards via Aviemore, Tomatin, Balloch and Culloden arriving in the highland capital late afternoon to catch a train back to Glasgow.

Sunday 5 October 2008 – Glasgow to Greenock

Glasgow to Greenock along NCN 75, stopping at Kilmacolm for pub lunch. At Greenock the QE2 ocean liner is due in.

Sunday 2 November 2008 – The Monkland Canal

Leaving Glasgow through Tollcross Park and Baillieston, to head for the far end of the Monkland Canal at Calderbank before following it towards Glasgow. Lunch at Drumpellier Country Park.

Sunday 7 December 2008 – Glasgow to Eaglesham and Auldhouse

Out of Glasgow via Rouken Glen Park, Waterfoot and the Hole ford, returning to Glasgow via the Cathkin Braes. Pub lunch at Auldhouse.

Suggestions for future rides are always welcome!

Meetings

The next Go Bike meeting will be at 1930 on Wednesday 27 August 2008 in the Friends' Meeting House, Elmbank Street, Charing Cross, Glasgow. Directions can be found on the web site. Future meetings will be held on the last Wednesday of alternate months until the AGM on 26 November. Suggestions for topics to discuss or for speakers to invite would be welcome.

The current committee of Go Bike is Peter Hayman (Convenor), John Davies (Vice Convenor) and Andy Preece (Treasurer).

Could members please pay their annual subscriptions if they have not done so already? The renewal date is on your address label. Membership is by donation. Please use the form below or make a donation on a ride.

Cycling leaflets

Go Bike has supplies of various free leaflets from Glasgow City Council and others. If you would like a selection please send a C5 stamped, addressed envelope to the address below. Leaflets include the Loch Lomond cycle route, Clyde Coast routes, Paisley and Cumbernauld cycle routes, and the Critical Mass ride.

Yahoo group

Sign up to the Go Bike News email group to keep in touch with cycling news, views and events. You are unlikely to be deluged with messages! For more information see www.gobike.org.

Contact us

Go Bike Strathclyde Cycle Campaign
PO Box 15175
Glasgow
G4 9LP

Phone: 07932 460093
Email: campaigns@gobike.org
Web: www.gobike.org

Join *Go Bike*

Membership of Go Bike is by donation, which covers the cost of campaigning, newsletters, meetings and the web site. Please send your donations to the above address.

Name.....

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Email..... Phone.....

I enclose a membership donation of £.....