

Worthing Cycle Forum (WCF)

a group of enthusiastic local people, who are campaigning to make cycling a safe, convenient and attractive option for all.

Spring 2015 Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of this periodic newsletter, which has been introduced so that we can keep you informed now that we no longer plan to have regular monthly meetings following a recent decision to only call a meeting when we have something important or meaningful to discuss. Since the last meeting on 15th January, chronicled below is a roundup of various things that have kept us busy in recent weeks :-

- **Schools Project** : back in September 2014 Gavin Ross – together with colleagues in the fire service and WCF members- put together a presentation for all year 11 pupils at St. Andrews School designed to help develop road awareness and the skills of safer cycling. All those pupils who had cycled to school that day had sets of both front & back ‘wrap-on’ lights and blue ‘tyre valve’ lights fitted by local PCSO’s. As a result of the great success of this trial event, a successful application was made to the Worthing CLC for £1k Community Initiative (CIF) funding to help enable us to roll out this project to three other local secondary schools during 2015.
Subsequently, an approach was received from the Day Group – a large haulage company, with a local depot in Shoreham Harbour, keen to help school pupils to be aware of the dangers of cycling near LGV vehicles – offering to provide a large lorry to demonstrate the driver’s ‘blind spots’ when cyclists try to pass on the inside, which Gavin was delighted to accept.. This was followed up with a £500 pledge to further support the project.
- **Proposed Seafront Cycle Path (NCN2) extension and widening** : whilst there is in place developers S.106 funding for the short section from George V Avenue to Sea Place, after long delays, WBC – as land owners - have now decided to pass the scheme to WSCC to progress. However, Sustrans and WCF are also pressing for NCN2 to be extended to Sea Lane Café Goring but this scheme will require WSCC to find the necessary funding. Whilst Sustrans and WCF will continue to press WSCC on this matter, there is opposition to the Sea Lane café proposal by some Goring residents and councillors which our strategy task group - that includes local Sustrans volunteer co-ordinator John Coote and WBC Cllr. Mary Lermite – is seeking to overcome. John is also working with the neighbouring Five Villages forum to progress NCN2 beyond Goring Crossways to Littlehampton.
- **Harrison Road (restricted) Public Byway** : this links the various Broadwater trading estates in Southdownview Road with those in Dominion Way. After being unlawfully blocked for several years, the legal status of the byway was upheld by the Planning Inspectorate in late 2013 and subsequently – after pressure from both local workers wishing to use it to access their places of work and WCF, who had started to clear part of it – WSCC Public Rights of Way team (PROW) finally brought in contractors to complete the clearance and the byway was reopened in August 2014. However, reports of the byway again being obstructed not only continued but have worsened to the extent that the East Worthing Independent Traders Association (EWITA) – together with individual workers and WCF – are now saying ‘enough is enough’ and are pressing local councillors to ensure that the necessary action is taken to remove those obstructions and ensure that the right to unfettered access along the full length of the byway is legally enforced.
- **A24 Cycle Path** : whilst there is a ‘long term’ aspiration to see a modern cycle path alongside the A24 to provide a much needed safe corridor for both leisure and commuting cyclists - which would also improve and open up access to the South Downs Way, SDNP and the quieter country roads north of Washington - we do know there is an old footway that ran from the top of Washington Bostal southwards to North End Findon, that has not been maintained for several decades and is buried beneath grass, scrub and other detritus. WCF are keen to uncover selected areas of the byway to demonstrate to WSCC that full clearance would allow the path to once again be used by cyclists and walkers in the interim. If you can spare a couple of hours to join a working party one evening or weekend in the spring before the grass growing season resumes, then please contact Stuart.
- **WCF Cycling leaflet** : whilst preparing to man a WCF stall at the recent Transition Town Worthing ‘seed exchange’ event, Paula & Colin Attle came up with a draft of a publicity leaflet to give interested visitors to the stall. This – with input from Mandy Buxton and the secretary - quickly evolved into an A4 double-sided ‘three-fold’ version with colour photographs that Paula herself then copied in small numbers as a ‘one off’.
Such was the level of interest that we are now putting together a more comprehensive version that will also include advice for new or returning cyclists who may be nervous or unsure of venturing onto our busy roads, a listing of local cycling businesses and more ! When the draft is completed, it will be circulated for comment before we then either decide on an affordable print run or perhaps seek sponsorship.

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- **Working with Worthing Borough, West Sussex County Councils and other agencies** : whilst we are all too familiar with how the continuing year on year reductions in central grant funding affects the ability of councils to maintain services let alone plan for capital expenditure such as cycling infrastructure, nonetheless it is important that WCF continues to build and maintain meaningful relationships with local councillors and try to keep them aware of the needs of the cycling community. To that end :-
 - a. **Daniel Humpheys, the new leader of WBC**, has responded positively to our request for a meeting
 - b. **we shall also be meeting with Lydia Schilbach**, the new WSCC principal communities officer for Worthing to discuss cycling issues in the town and beyond
 - c. **we have interacted with the Highways Agency's** contractor for the new A27 cycle path between Lancing Manor and Shoreham Airport to try to resolve several issues raised
 - d. **we continue to play an active role in the West Sussex Cycle Forum** – an umbrella group for all the forums in West Sussex that is the channel of communication with both senior highways officers and the cabinet member.

With highways undergoing a significant reorganisation under a new director who is also new to the area, we attended a recent ECSSC meeting where the panel of councillors were scrutinising the council's plans for progressing the West Sussex Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan. Many of the questions raised by the panel had been submitted by forum members, whilst John Rogers – in his role as vice-chair of the committee – tabled some very direct and pertinent questions, which officers will respond to in due course, so we now await the council's response with interest
 - e. **we have been working with WSCC** to identify suitable sites for new cycle stands around the town and then progress their installation with the contractor
 - f. Anthony Cartmell – who is also our webmaster – has kindly agreed to lead on the important issues arising from the Coast to Capital LEP's proposal for "sustainable transport" funding to be spent on revamping Montague Street !
- **WCF meeting on Tuesday 24th March :-**
 1. **Important vacancy;** with William Morris having moved out of the area we have a vacancy for either a new Chair or alternatively someone happy and able to simply chair our meetings. Please contact Stuart if you are interested.
 2. **the agenda** will not be finalised until a week prior to the meeting but is likely to include :-
 - a. **financial matters** :
 - i. as John Rogers, our treasurer, was unable to be at the AGM there will be an opportunity to raise any questions around the annual accounts with him
 - ii. John will also be presenting a budget to cover any expenditure likely to arise in respect of new projects, other than the schools project, such as any publicity requirements.
 - b. **street velodrome event** : although this is a WBC event in which WCF has no formal involvement, it is an opportunity to ask any questions of John Rogers who is part of the organising team. Some members have already volunteered to help at the actual event and we may wish to consider having a publicity stand if we can find volunteers to man it on both days ?
 - c. **collision statistics and other local road safety issues** : Ed Mitchell, a Worthing PCSO who leads locally as the road safety officer, is keen to meet with us and explore how we might work together. As this topic is probably something we would not wish to rush, discussions may be best left a 'single issue' meeting possibly in April. So, if you have an interest or would like to be involved, please do let Stuart know.
 - d. **WCF publicity leaflet** : final agreement on this matter

To contact WCF, please email the secretary, Stuart Elms, stuartelms@ntlworld.com

Visit our website at www.worthingcycleforum.org.uk

