

# The Coventry Cyclist

The Newsletter of **CYCLIC**,  
the Coventry Cycling  
Campaign

Summer 2004

We promote Cycling as good for everyone,  
and extremely good for the environment.

Anyone interested in cycling is welcome at  
our monthly meetings at the Council House,  
on the second Monday of the Month at  
7.30pm.

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## Dates for our diaries

**September 11, Saturday.**  
**Warwickshire and Coventry Historic**  
**Churches sponsored Bike Ride**  
**10 am – 6pm,**  
**This is your annual chance to see the**  
**splendid churches of our city and county,**  
**and raise a bit of money for them at the**  
**same time. Most of them are well worth a**  
**visit and some, like St Bartholomew Binley**  
**are precious indeed.**

More details from Chris and Lindsay  
Scaife, 01327 262711,

Or Brenda Stone 7644 3398

**The same day, Sept 11**

**Festival on the Fields, 1pm onwards.**

On Charterhouse Fields (off London Road)  
We are having a stall here, and need one or  
two volunteers to fly the flag for CYCLIC. Ring  
George if you can help, please.

**Saturday, Sept 25<sup>th</sup> 10 – 4pm**

**IN TOWN WITHOUT YOUR CAR DAY**

Is being arranged by Agenda 21.

We'll be there, in Broadgate, with our bikes.  
Please come even if only for 5 minutes

## Coventry Cycling Centre

**Congratulations to the Peace House which  
has launched its Cycling Centre.**

**The Centre aims to encourage more people  
to cycle more often.**

**It is a not-for-profit venture, and social  
enterprise.**

To start with, it will be open on Saturday  
mornings from 9.30 till 12.30, on the first and  
third Saturdays of the month, starting July 17<sup>th</sup>

They teach cycle maintenance and mend  
unwanted bikes, for sale to people who need  
them. They welcome volunteers and no doubt  
CYCLIC members will be pleased to  
encourage this worthwhile scheme in any way  
they can

Join the Coventry Cycling Centre for a  
Leisurely Bike Ride on the first and third  
Saturdays of the month. - July 17, August 7,  
August 21.....

Families welcome.

Start at Coventry Peace House, Stoney  
Stanton Road (between Red Lane and  
Ordnance Road) at 1.30pm

(When we have an information stand at the  
Godiva Festival or any event, as we did in  
June this year, people always ask us about  
"little rides". So here they are. Please  
advertise these Saturday trips, and get along  
there if you possibly can to encourage the  
beginners.)

For more information, ring 024 7666 3031  
e-mail info@covpeacehouse.org.uk  
**If you are a new cyclist**, or getting back to cycling after a break, do buy yourself some really good rainwear. You'll be surprised how seldom you need it.

The other recommended investment is a strong rack and capacious panniers.  
**Let the bike carry the load!**

Travelling by bike is so economical you can lash out on extras and still feel rich.

### Letter to the Editor

As an aging member of CYCLIC (80+), I do enjoy reading your newsletters, and fortunately still ride my two cycles.  
I'm sure cycling has helped to keep me as fit as I am at the moment, and is a means of transport I would recommend to anyone, in spite of the motor car. Enclosed is a cheque....

Keep up the good work!

Peter Heeley

That reminds me, the Editor, to remind **YOU** all that we do like to have a contribution now and again - **£5 a year** is a reasonable subscription we think, but more is acceptable!. Some people make offerings "in kind" Perhaps you could do a little more for CYCLIC? We need advertisers, sponsors, helpers at events...IDEAS, IDEAS, IDEAS!!

Please send cheques to our treasurer, Mrs Jackie Adams,  
176 Ansty Road,  
Coventry CV2 3EX,

Or bring your £££'s to the meeting, please

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**\*\*\*\*\* October 30 \*\*\*\*\***  
**at the Methodist Central Hall,**  
**Christian Aid Market Stalls.**  
**Pedal down there and bag a bargain**

### Schools Art Project.

Members who live in Stoke will have seen the traffic calming measures which are being put in to Shakespeare Street, Dane Road and other roads near to the schools. This work has taken a long time but is nearly finished now. The grand "launch" of the new cycle shelters, for which CYCLIC got a grant from Awards for All, will now have to be arranged in the new school year  
We look forward to seeing more children pedalling to school then.

**SUSTRANS** contributed large sums of money towards this scheme. They seem to be encouraging us in Coventry in more ways than one – in the Spring newsletter they promote the ride along the Canal towpath, "All sorts of amphibians and reptiles dip in and out of its waters, and bats live in its tunnels. The observant may spot kingfishers, white-clawed crayfish, dragonflies and herons,....even the odd otter or water vole". This part of National Route No 52, which will continue north to Nuneaton and the National Forest in Leicestershire, though the next section through Bedworth has yet to be built.

In Warwickshire, a new ramp has been built at Long Itchington on National Route 19 And work continues (in spite of difficulties ) between Birdingbury and Draycote.

### Obituary

#### John Adams

We shall very much miss our friend and Chairman who died while out cycling on May 1<sup>st</sup>. He was well known in several cycling organisations including VISTA (the Visually Impaired and Sighted Tandem Association) as well as the Air Cadets at Wyken who turned out in force to his funeral

May he rest in peace.

## Safer Cycling –

### Introduction to on-road Cycling

For children aged 10 years and over.  
Cost £15

Thursday Aug 19 – Friday 20 August, at  
Parkgate Primary School.

Monday 23 – Tuesday 24 August  
Wednesday 25 – Thurs 26 August, both  
at Foxford School and Community  
College

For further information and/or to book,  
a ring Tony Benn, Cycle Training co-  
ordinator, on 024 7683 2032.  
e-mail [tony.benn@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:tony.benn@coventry.gov.uk)

Cycling is clean, green,  
and helps you to keep the 6<sup>th</sup>  
commandment\*

Bob Watson writes:  
Traffic Free Routes in Brittany  
Part 2 - Canals.

As well as riding along old railways, we have followed another traffic free route – the Nantes to Brest Canal. It was built on the orders of Napoleon in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to allow supplies to be taken by a safe inland route when the British had blockaded the port. For over 200 miles it links canalised rivers with specially built canal sections, via the lovely old town of Pontivy - once known as Napoleonville. As in England, commercial barge traffic declined until the canal fell into disrepair.

In the 1930's a huge dam was built across the waterway near Mur de Bretagne, to create a lake (Guerledon) to provide water for a hydro-electric power station. This severed the waterway link but didn't prevent the use of the old towpath (Chemin de Halage) from being used by walkers and cyclists. We have cycled around the lake from the dam then followed the towpath 80 miles to Chateaulin, near Brest, where the canal, or

River Aulne as it now is, becomes a tidal estuary and the towpath finishes.

There is access to the path at every point where a road crosses the canal, and at many of these points there is a car park and picnic area, sometimes with toilets. During the week the path is very quiet, just an occasional walker or cyclist, but at the weekend it can be fairly busy and everyone you meet – even other English cyclists – shouts “Bonjour” or if you happen to be eating, “Bon Appetit”

The riding surface is good, and the path is wide enough to allow vehicles to drive along to the lock keepers' cottages although other vehicles are not allowed access. Where the canal passes a town the surface may be of tarmac or concrete, but there is always a wide grass margin between you and the water!

Although the canal has been disused for a long time it is now being revived. Many of the locks are back in working order, but there are few boats. The ones we saw were operated by very unskilled crews and we wondered which members would be the first to fall in the water.

We hoped they would obey the instructions fitted to the lock gates:

IL EST FORMELLEMENT INTERDITE  
DE LAISSER L'ECLUSE PLEINE  
DE LAISSER DESCENDRE LES CRICS SAN  
L'AIDE DE LA MANIVELLE

Parts of the canal have been drained and diggers are working with great skill to restore the water courses, which are much wider than ours, and pass through beautiful countryside. With the gradual increase in boat traffic there has been a suggestion that a lift or flight of locks should be built to bypass the dam at Guerledon and so restore the link between Nantes and Brest. The locks are all named and numbered, and many of the lovely old stone lock keepers cottages have been converted to “gites” or holiday cottages.

\*Deuteronomy Ch 5. V 17

NB Liz has moved !

**Tasty Bites**

Now at Sovereign Road  
Still selling

- World Famous doorstep sarnies
- Billy Bunter Pasties
- Filled Rolls
- French Sticks
- Hot Sandwiches
- Home Produced Pies, Sausage Rolls,
- Irish Soda Bread
- AND
- Mouth watering Cakes

*Just right for hungry cyclists*



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Have you been  
in the NEW  
Museum of Road  
Transport yet?

If not, do go soon.  
The bicycles are all in amongst the cars  
and other modes of transport, exactly  
where they should be, and the pioneers of  
bicycle manufacture and invention are  
celebrated.  
Congratulations to the people who re-  
arranged it all. I give them 10 out of 10

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“Cycle travel burns calories and gives a  
keyboard jockey the voluptuous appetite  
of a ditch digger. Riding a bike extends  
your life expectancy and gives you a few  
thrills while making your life easier.

A workout at the gym may offer faster  
improvement, but it costs money, and  
more importantly, time. And isn't gym just  
new name for torture? “

Quoted from Bikefix Portfolio

**CYCLIC**

Coventry Cycling Campaign

Our aims:

- to encourage cycling as an environment-friendly mode of travel,
- and as a leisure activity,
- and to make it safer and better.

For more details, visit our website:  
<http://www.coventrycyclist.org.uk/>  
Or ring George on 024 7645 2437  
e-mail -

GeorgeRiches@CoventryCyclist.org.uk  
or Brenda on 76 44 3398

To join us, please send your name and  
address ,  
Plus annual membership fee £5 (or what  
you can afford) to  
The Secretary, **9, Bromleigh Drive,**  
**Coventry, CV2 5LY**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Tel:..... e-mail.....

**DO THE WORLD A FAVOUR -  
GO BY BIKE**

