



Professional Sectors, Forums & Policies

■ Cycling Forum

The wheels on the bike go round and round...

David Hurdle FCILT, chair of the Institute's new Cycling Forum, reports on a fascinating Transport Planning Society event in Leicester.



In order to overcome limited visibility on this derestricted road, Leicestershire County Council has installed the first Cycle Activated Traffic Sign (CATS) crossing in the world. The crossing uses pressure pads to activate a sign with flashing amber lights and a 'SLOW DOWN' message for traffic approaching on the A453.

As a committee member of CILT's new Cycling Forum, I attended this event hosted by Leicester City Council and the University of Leicester. Over 50 delegates heard from four leading cycling advisers and advocates on the theme: *Where next for cycling investment?*

Lynn Sloman, Transport for Quality of Life/Cycling England, presented evidence of increased cycling from the first six Cycling Demonstration Towns (CDTs). All reported increased cycling, with good benefit:cost ratios of 2.6–3.5:1 achieved.

Stan Werbinski and Mark Smith, Derby City Council, one of the CDTs, stressed the importance of a passionate, proactive team ethos and a branding strategy. They outlined what they got wrong as well as right. They reported that 6% of pupils are now cycling or scooting to school, up from 0.5%; 2,000 cycle parking spaces have been installed at schools since 2006; and 2,000 pupils a year are now receiving cycle training.

Andy Salkeld, Leicester City Council, expanded upon the council's approach of: 'planning for people not for cars'. On cycling, the council's aim is straightforward: 'to get more people cycling, safely and more often.' Through strong branding, Ride Leicester promotes and supports a range of activities at festivals and events. Recent activities included secure bike parking, bike tryouts, BMX displays, rickshaw services and a mobile bike workshop.

Jo Ward, Sustrans, provided early findings from Nottingham's Ucycle project running from 2009 to 2011 for promoting cycling at the two universities and the regional teaching hospital. The aims are to increase cycling amongst staff and students, to share best practice and increase awareness of the benefits of cycling. After just one year, the proportion of hospital staff cycling to work is up from 10% to 24%.

TPS East Midlands Chair Jon Parker organised a well-attended, informative and inspiring event. This area of the country has much to shout about, although exemplary cycling activity for my county – Lincolnshire – was conspicuous by its absence. So, where next for cycling investment? The evidence is certainly building up, the case is surely made and there is plenty of enthusiasm. The good news is that increasing cycling aids health/fitness, the environment and carbon reduction; and, given low and uncertain local authority funding for maybe the next 10 years, is at least *relatively* cheap to do and lends itself to partners sharing costs. The third round of Local Transport Plans from April will reveal all.

Further information about CILT's Cycling Forum, contact: Sinead McLoughlin. Tel: 01536 740140.

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