



NEWS SHEET

Tring Cycling Campaign

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NORTHFIELD ROAD

There have been increasing complaints from cyclists about this road. For example Mick Pilkington, of Pitstone, said: "I commute to London from Tring Station each day and cycle to the station from home. The ride down Northfield Road is at best uncomfortable due to the poor condition of the road surface. More importantly it is dangerous because of the speed and close proximity of passing vehicles, the potential of collision being increased by the possibility of becoming unstable by hitting a pothole."

John Camp, a spokesman for Herts County Council (HCC), said: "These are not potholes but lateral gaps at the location of the expansion joints between the concrete slabs underneath the surfacing. **"Herts Highways is aware of the problem and do sympathise with cyclists because this does give a poor ride quality, but they are not actually classed as hazardous.** Of course we send out contractors to fill any 'break-outs' that could cause problems, but the only permanent solution would be to seal all the joints all the way along the road. This would be a major and expensive scheme, which we are not in a position to fund at the moment, so there are no plans in the pipeline yet - but like any other site in the county, it will be kept under continuous review."

We think that this statement is unsatisfactory, and so Nick Hollinghurst, a TCC member and Herts County Councillor, is advising HCC that this road needs urgent attention from the safety point of view. And Tring Cycling Campaign is looking into the feasibility of a petition to HCC which would allow us to present our case for its improvement in front of either the Council or its Transport Panel. You may expect to receive a request from us to sign such a petition in the near future.

HERTS HIGHWAYS

The last news-sheet mentioned that speed-humps in Grove Road which were too close to the kerb had been moved. It turns out the contractor had not followed the specifications, and so was persuaded to move them to their correct positions at no cost to Herts County Council

But why was it necessary for Tring cyclists to find this out and tell Herts County Council? Why was there no supervision to check the work had been done properly? This is just one instance of many similar failures in this area, most of which seem to be due to lack of supervision by Herts Highways.

Herts Highways was meant to be a three- part "strategic alliance" between the environment section of the Council, Consultants and Contractors. But the Council people do not visit sites, the consultants (Mouchel Parkman) call in other consultants, the contractors (Amey Lafarge) call in other contractors, and no-one seems to check on the final results.

It should be noted that in Norfolk the work done by the Mouchel/Amey partnership for the Highways Agency has been supervised by Atkins, and perhaps the same thing should happen in Herts.

NEW BIKE RACKS AT PENDLEY



We are pleased to see that these new cycle racks have been put in by Grass Roots at Pendley to serve both their head office and the Court Theatre (which they own).

The covered racks may have been their own initiative, but they may have been also partly due to our comments to them about the impossibility of parking bikes securely in this area, the only racks being two inadequate "wheel-benders" at the Court Theatre: one had been made impossible to use by the installation of a bench a few inches away from it, and the other was hanging off a wall and only attached by one loose screw.

Since these are well lit at night time, and also opposite the Station Road Cycle Path, we might expect they will be well used, especially when cyclists become aware of their existence.

At least these racks are clearly visible to both visitors and passers-by, but there are many instances of cycle parking in the Tring area which are hidden and which should be clearly signed so cyclists know they exist. What is the point of spending money on cycle racks if nobody knows they are there?

OUR MEETINGS

If you want minutes of past meetings, details of future meetings, or to join in or contribute to them then please contact John Boielle. The next is shown below.

AGM

Advance notice: We expect our AGM will take place at 8pm on Thursday March 6 in the High Street Baptist Church Hall, Tring.

The formal stuff will be short, and there will be a talk by Darren Divall, leader of the Cycle Aylesbury team which has enabled this Cycling Demonstration town to achieve Cycling England's target of tripling cycling in Aylesbury a year ahead of schedule. See

www.cycleaylesbury.co.uk

Further details about this meeting will be in our next news sheet, in mailings and on our website.

DACORUM CYCLING STRATEGY

The final draft of this important document has been sitting on the desks of Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) for many months. It is radically different from the first draft which can be seen on the DBC website.

We have been told by the DBC Head of Planning that its publication would provide guidance which allow DBC to claim "Planning Obligation" money for schemes identified in the Strategy. Because it was not published we know of several major developments where such money was available but was not directed towards cycling.

We therefore ask you to write to Brian Scott, Head of Street Care, Dacorum Borough Council, Civic Centre, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 1HH.

urging him to publish the strategy as soon as possible so that cycling in Dacorum may benefit.

Visit our website: www.tringcyclingcampaign.org.uk

Next meeting: Thursday January 17 at 8pm at 83 Dundale Road, Tring

We welcome any letters/articles/notices for the next issue.

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