

Luton and Dunstable Cycling Forum
Meeting held 14th January 2015, Kent Athletic Club, Luton

Attendance

Robin Cowan (Chair), Adam Bell, Steve Lakin, Trevor Brennan, Terry Colver, Barry Gregson, Richard Williams, Alister Barclay, David Woodroffe, John Pratt, Lisa Simpson

The Chair opened the meeting by first getting all present to make introductions.

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Mark Rivers, Doug Hook, Geoff Mercer, Peter Devine, Siobhan McSwiggan, Ben Garner and Rebecca Olds.

2) Minutes of last meeting

The Chair went through the minutes of the last meeting which had mainly looked at Busway issues. Steve confirmed that 3 new bus stops would be built at Chaul End, Blackburn Road & Jeansway and upgrading 5 access points (subject to consultation) with the balance to be spent on tarmacking the entire route and possibly installing some solar lights. Alister queried the link from Capron Road, and Steve confirmed there was work being done there at the moment and the path would be tarmaced back to Portland Ride.

David queried about signage linking onto the Busway, and Steve & Trevor confirmed that the intention was to look at improving signs.

The Chair queried when cyclists would be allowed to officially use Station Road, but Trevor advised that this was still to be signed off.

In respect of the Forum's Busway report, Trevor confirmed the email address it should be submitted to, whilst Steve mentioned the Forum should issue a press release welcoming the new funding.

3) Election 2015

The Chair pointed out that with the election in May, it was an ideal opportunity to get cycling on the local agenda, and suggested emailing the main political parties to meet up with the prospective candidates for councillors/MPs for a cycle ride which they could use as a photo opportunity. It was suggested it may be better to ask them what they intend to do to promote cycling. Adam mentioned that the LCC web site had some useful information about dealing with candidate and would look into this.

Steve mentioned councils have to sign up to the Cycling Delivery Plan, in order to then bid for any future funds which may become available, and the Chair pointed out that no Luton councillors and only 1 Central Beds Councillor had signed up to the CTC Space for Cyclists campaign, and Steve mentioned it would be worthwhile reminding candidates that 30% of the electorate have a bike.

4) Bike Mech Workshops

Adam confirmed that the sessions run in the pop up shop next the Hub had been incredibly popular with many people donating bikes and others just walking in off the street to work on bikes, but the problem was that Central Beds wanted the premises back at the end of January, and it would mean looking for funding in order to get other premises. Alister confirmed that 30 bikes had been renovated and taken away. Trevor mentioned Discovery Bikes in Stockwood Park run a similar project and Lisa confirmed they only open during the week so their premises could be suitable. Trevor also advised that the soon to be completed Travel Centre at Luton Station would have an area where a marquee could be placed if the Forum wanted to offer a general servicing for bikes. Steve said the Forum should make a request for alternative premises.

Luton and Dunstable Cycling Forum
Meeting held 14th January 2015, Kent Athletic Club, Luton

Bike Week 2015 & other cycling events

It wasn't possible to yet confirm when this year's Bike Week will be. Alister confirmed he had worked out a heart shaped ride around Luton & Dunstable which he wanted to run as a charity ride, perhaps with a £5 entry fee, and then people could raise money for a charity of their choice.

The Chair mentioned that St Albans runs an annual cycle ride with 2,000 entrants on several different distances, and bearing in mind the Luton Half marathon, there should be scope for running something here. However, both Alister & Lisa said it would be best to start small, and Steve mentioned there was still some LTSF monies which could be used.

5) Treasurer's report

John advised that there was no change in the finances although pointed out that Trevor still hadn't been paid for the T-shirts so a new cheque was provided for him.

6) Luton issues

Trevor confirmed that the LTSF funding ends on 31st March, and if it hasn't been used up by then, would have to be returned. It wouldn't be known until later in the year how much funding will be available for promoting cycling, but confirmed that Bikeability would continue until at least 2016. Lisa confirmed that there would be 6 more adult cycling sessions before 31st March, but it wouldn't be know yet if more sessions could be run after then.

Trevor confirmed the Luton Travel Centre should be finished by the end of February and then after fitting out should open sometime in April.

The Chair asked if the Forum could have have other things printed, or purchase other items with the leftover funds. Trevor said the Travel Luton gazebos would be available but said it would be better to make a request for funding to provide items.

The Chair mentioned that Luton Council currently have a consultation for the Sundown Park development and had included a request for funding to upgrade the path to Keech Hospice.

Barry asked if funding could be obtained for tracking devices to go into bikes. Adam advised he had previously looked at these, which would cost around £70 each.

7) Central Beds issues

Steve confirmed that the work mentioned earlier at Capron Road was to link in with the work done along Brewers Hill Road and the new zebra crossing there. A new refuge would be installed on the A5 by the council offices to enable people to cross from the Capron Road exit to then go up Brewers Hill Road.

On the Sewell Greenway, there would be 2 cuts on both sides to remove vegetation, with the first taking place in the next couple of weeks.

On the Busway at the White Lion Retail Park, 2 of the A-frame barriers would be removed and replaced with chicanes, and once they are in place, Steve requested feedback about whether or not this motorcyclists were using them, and that next year more signage would be installed.

The Chair mentioned that the contactors recently working on the Busway were very good, in stopping and moving out of the way when he cycled past.

Alister confirmed that Alvina had now left and Siobhan had taken over running the Hub.

Luton and Dunstable Cycling Forum
Meeting held 14th January 2015, Kent Athletic Club, Luton

8) Member's issues

Alistair said that as many people may not like attending a formal Forum meeting, he suggested a social meeting as a more informal gathering and suggested alternating between the Bricklayers Arms in High Town, and the Globe in Dunstable. It was agreed to meet 7pm 11th February at the Bricklayers Arms. Barry pointed out that pubs can be quite noisy but it was generally felt being mid-week, this should be less of a problem.

Lisa confirmed there would be an event in St. George's Square at the end of March as part of the end of the TravelLuton LTSF project and confirmed she would provide details in due course.

9) Any other business

The Chair confirmed that despite the rain, the Arriva Bus event had been successful.

Adam confirmed that the Forum had now run 31 rides with a total of 293 participants, although as many of those were regular riders, it wasn't possible to advise unique numbers.

The next meeting will be 6:30pm Wednesday 11th March at the Hub, Ashton Square, Dunstable