

Luton and Dunstable Cycling Forum
Meeting held 8th July 2015, Travel Choices Hub, Dunstable

Attendance

Robin Cowan (Chair), Adam Bell, John Pratt, Alister Barclay, Geoff Mercer

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Peter Woodruff, Ben Garner, Vivien Haestier, Cllr Mark Rivers, Trevor Brennan, Steve Lakin & Peter Devine .

2) Minutes of last meeting

The Chair went through the minutes of the last meeting which were agreed.

3) Charity Bike Ride

It agreed that generally the event had gone well, and that it should be run again next year from Dunstable Downs, with a provisional date of Sunday 26th June 2016. In view of the vandalism of the signs in Luton town centre (as these were put up early Saturday evening in full view of lots of people) these signs would be put up early on the actual day. One issue was highlighted in that some of the 20 mile participants started early whilst others started very late which caused issues, so that it was agreed to ensure riders started at correct time and to put in the notes that the marshals would be leaving their posts at set times.

Alister suggested it would be good to try and promote the idea of teams, as well as just having 1 charity and not have T-shirts so more could be raised for charity. Adam said he thought they'd have the 40 mile route purely on roads but keep the 20 mile route the same, although possibly take on board Ben's comment about running it the other way round. It wouldn't have worked to have 2 overlapping routes going in opposite directions this year, but if there was a different 40 mile route, then it could work.

Adam passed £150 to John in respect of the 10 on the day entrants (and also £40 as a donation for a bike from the Bike Mech workshops).

It was agreed that an amended logo should be worked out for next year to include Dunstable.

4) Jeansway

Adam expressed his concerns that Central Beds plans for a new bus stop at Jeansway showed that the path would be reduced from 3.2m to around 1.7m which would not be adequate and confirmed he had raised this issue with the council. It was thought that possibly by Sainsburys might be a better location for another stop.

5) Led rides & other issues

Adam confirmed that the Forum had now run 44 rides with over 470 participants.

The Chair confirmed that he had ridden round the new path past J10a, but felt there were some issues with signage as it wasn't clear if you had come from the Harpenden direction exactly how to get to Capability green as there were 2 routes, but it was a vast improvement on what had been there before the new junction was built.

The Chair circulated an email from Wimpey Construction regarding work on M1 bridges, and it was agreed that feedback would be given confirming that both were used by cyclists. Adam pointed out that with the new housing to be built on the former Vauxhall storage site, the bridleway running down to the M1 bridge would be required to be upgraded, meaning that more cyclists would be using it.

6) Treasurer's report

John confirmed there was no changes since the last meeting but would confirm the current figures for the next meeting.

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7) Luton issues

Adam queried if there was any further news about the proposed re-routing of NCN6 down Guildford Street, but Alister advised he wasn't aware of when or if this was to happen.

John mentioned the proposed re-location of Luton football club and that Power Court would be a much better location than by J10a, as it would be very convenient, and fans could easily get buses and trains.

The Chair confirmed he had been asked to help on the Luton Half Marathon which would be useful to see how they would alter things from last year.

There was no news on when the Travel Centre would open by Luton train station.

The Chair mentioned that on 19th July, Arriva would be running another of their "Swap with Me" events and that hopefully the weather would be better. Adam said he'd asked Siobhan to see if she could persuade the other bus companies to do something similar but she hadn't got a favourable response. Alister said he felt they just didn't have the budget to support that sort of event.

8) Central Beds issue

Alister confirmed that with the reduced funding there would be changes at the Hub, meaning some staff leaving and the Hub only being open 2 days during the week plus Saturdays, with 2 part time assistants plus Siobhan acting as Smarter Choices Coordinator. There would be 4 Bike It officers locally - Richard Noon would be based in Dunstable covering Luton, as he had got funding directly from schools for 4 days a week, and then helping in Dunstable for 1 day, whilst Derek would carry on in Dunstable as well as covering Leighton Buzzard, there would be a new Bike It officer in Bedford, whilst Alister would be the Bike It officer for Sandy & Biggleswade. In addition there would be another part time post mainly dealing with businesses. Adam confirmed that the Forum was very appreciative of the support given by all at the Hub.

9) Members issues

Adam confirmed that he was going to carry on running the Bike Mech workshops from the Hub.

The next Forum social evening was agreed to be on 12th August at the Cross Keys, Totternhoe

It was pointed out that Cycle to Work Day is Thursday 3rd September.

Meeting closed 8:10 and the next meeting to be Wednesday 9th September at Kent Athletic Club.