

**London Cycling Campaign Awards 2005**

**Here are Southwark Cyclists nominations.**

**They were unanimously agreed at their monthly meeting on 14 September 2005.**

The 4 awards are necessarily, and helpfully, all strikingly different. An eclectic mix of best practice.

- **Best Cycling Facility** has provided a simple and excellent new asphalt route linking two communities previously fractured by big roads and a railway line.
- **Best Community Cycling Initiative** produced 66,000 cycled miles one warm July night this past summer.
- **Best Cycling Initiative for Cycling or Young People** selected an unbiked primary school and got 60 bikes onto new racks there.
- **Best Cycling Media Initiative** puts cycling into people's bedrooms and bathrooms.

## **1. Best Cycling Facility: The Greendale Link**

Opened in the spring of 2005, this completely new 250 metre cycle and pedestrian path is the result of over a decade's campaigning by local cyclists.

The Greendale Link follows a long disused track through private local playing fields. It joins homes and shops in East Dulwich (including the new Sainsbury's superstore on Dog Kennel Hill) to an existing motor-traffic free route on LCN+ link 177 (route 23).

The Link also very usefully serves several local schools, Dulwich Community Hospital and both East Dulwich and North Dulwich stations. It is a few minutes ride from both Herne Hill Velodrome and the now mostly car-free Dulwich park.

The link was built, and partly funded, by Southwark Groundwork. The rest of the money was raised by the two local and very democratic Community Councils – Camberwell and Dulwich - using devolved Cleaner, Greener, Safer funds from Southwark Council.

### **Why?**

Because it's precisely such modest, affordable, motor-traffic free, community-linking, very local, very utilitarian, very user-friendly, perceptibly very safe, very thought-through, locally agreed and locally funded schemes like this that will get more people cycling to school, to the shops, to the station, to other cycle paths, to work, and to each other.

The exemplary new Greendale Link is already increasing local cycling and cycle awareness and can easily be copied all over London.

**Credit:** Southwark Council and Southwark Cyclists.

## **2. Best Community Cycling Initiative:**

### **The Dunwich Dynamo**

At around 9pm on the evening of 23 July 2005 about 550 cyclists left the Pub on the Park in Hackney on their bikes and simply rode 120 miles to Dunwich Beach in Suffolk.

All but a handful of them completed this the thirteenth Dunwich Dynamo.

This is not a commercial ride organised by professional fundraisers, it's a free-entry, turn-up-and-go event that was born out of the community and gets steadily bigger every year whilst staying true to its street-grubby urban roots.

Patrick Field of the London School of Cycling does the route sheets, the On Your Bike crew provide informal sweepers, some friends from Hackney put out heartening jamjar lanterns and do the food from midnight to 5am in a half-way oasis village hall, the Flora Cafe at Dunwich Beach trebles its staff for the day and gets them in 4 hours early for 5am ....and Southwark Cyclists organise coaches and two huge furniture vans back....for a whopping 350 riders and their bikes this year.

The ride's a legend and is for many the highlight of their bike year.

It's a barely organised challenge that's run for the bike community by the bike community. Of course people pay for their food and breakfast and coach-ride but it's free apart from that and disorganised by unpaid volunteers.

### **Why?**

Because the event sprang out of, and is sustained by, the London cycling community.

Every year it gives hundreds of cyclists the chance to stretch into an adventurous ride they would not dream of doing alone.

**Credit:** Patrick Field.

### **3. Best Cycling Initiative for Young People or Children:**

#### **Cycle Saturation**

It's easy. Find a willing school where there's very little cycling going on by either pupils, teachers or parents. Measure what's happening. Spend £20,000 and marinade, oops, soak the school in as much bike training and events as it can stand.

Measure the difference.

Southwark Cyclists put in a £20,000 bid to Rotherhithe Community Council for the Cycle Saturation project. The bid had several novel features:

- The school would be selected once the grant was won
- Southwark Cycists would use professional project managers to run the project and professional trainers too
- Professional measurement of the before and after amount of bike use

Once the grant was won, Southwark Cyclists wrote formally to the 9 primary schools in Rotherhithe inviting letters of interest. The invitation was very clear that the successful school would be one where little or no investment or work on cycling had been done; where the Head, the staff, the PTA and the pupils were keen to encourage cycling; and where pupils would be encouraged to cycle to school.

St John's Primary School, St Elmos Road, SE16 put in the almost prefect response. A very keen Head (Jacinta Coyne), a recent survey that showed that almost no pupils cycled to the school but that 84% were interested in so doing, the school had started work on a School Travel Plan, the motorised school run was creating daily congestion problems in local roads, and the school is in an area with a lot of good off-road cycle routes on the Rotherhithe peninsula and close to the Thames Path, Surrey Quays and Southwark Park.

A quick meeting with the Head confirmed the choice of school. Southwark Cyclists, the school, Sustainable Energy Action (project managers) and Cycle Training UK (the trainers) then agreed the April – July 2005 programme.

Cycle training was run by 2 instructors, for two days a week, for 8 weeks. A project launch event, a number of special events and rides and Bike Week etc events were organised too.

Out of the schools 190 pupils, 73 were trained successfully along with 5 adults. Bike parking for 60 bikes has being installed and the racks are now often full. From zero kids bikes in the playground to 60 within a summer.

The Cycle Saturation project is now being seen as a first step. It is being extended up to the end of 2005 and a Rotherhithe Schools Bike Club is being created. Two teaching assistants have now booked in for cycle instructor training.

Full survey will be carried out over the winter and next spring and summer to gauge the effect of the project.

## **Why?**

The concept is so simple. Take a community. Any community. Measure its cycling. Cycle Saturate it with easily available training, events, marketing and enthusiasm. Measure again. It's important to measure return for investment.

St John's School has now had visitors from local authorities etc all over London, and enquiries from much further afield, about the project.

The project provided children with whatever level of cycling they needed, and is a proven success whose formula will be used at many more schools and colleges in 2006.

**And also....**because by ensuring that the original bid covered funds for professional project management and that so that the volunteer of Southwark Cyclists were left free to carry on planning and delivering other projects.

**Credit:** Jacinta Coyne, St John's School.

#### **4. Best Cycling Media Initiative:**

##### **Resonance Radio 104.4: The Bike Show**

Jack Thurston is a London cyclist. His weekly show on Resonance radio is a fascinating mix of cycling, music, guests and whatever's topical. There have been specials on Bike Week, the Tour de France, the Dunwich Dynamo, Critical Mass and commuting.

The show simply sets out to be a regular radio column about cycling in all its many forms and the show, whilst broadcast very locally from Denmark Street, Soho, is now listened to as far away as Japan via the internet.

The Bike Show is a very welcome addition to London's bike culture that's building a loyal following and, yes, doing its own quirky bit to get people on bikes.

##### **Why?**

Because armchairs cyclists and wannabes should be catered for too. The show helps spread the word. Cycling needs better marketing. The show is just that.

**Credit:** Jack Thurston.

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3 October 2005