

CHESTER CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday 7th April 2021

Present (for some or all of the time): Simon Brown (SB), Craig Steeland (CS), John Holiday (JH), Roger Hones (RH), Eileen Morgan (EM), Stephen Perry (SP), Monica Robinson (MR) (Minutes), Nic Siddle (NS) (Chair), Ian Slater (IS), John Violet (JV), Arnold Wilkes (AW), Peter Williams (PW), Cathey Harrington (CH), Ashley McCraight (AM), Andy Evans (AE), Pierre Walthery (PWa), Steve Pemberton (SLP), Dave Smith (DS)

Apologies: Andrew Hamill (AH) Tom Smith (TS)

All welcomed Dave Smith to his first meeting.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting, held on 3rd March.** The meeting minutes were approved.

Action: CS to post on website.

2. **Matters Arising:** (taken at end of meeting)

Zoom Account – It had been agreed in principle that the Campaign should take out a subscription to the Zoom platform to facilitate future meetings or working groups. SB and CS reported back on their investigations – the annual fee is £119.50 but Zoom requires users to sign up with a credit or debit card and pay monthly. CS confirmed that regular payments via PayPal could be made but again a credit/debit card would need to be registered with PayPal. Further possibilities to be considered at a future meeting. EM confirmed that at present there was no room/space available at Storyhouse for face to face meetings on a Wednesday evening. Again this is something to be considered further.

Bike Week Activity (May 29th to June 5th) – due to lack of time, ideas for this week were deferred to the May meeting. PWa advised that plans for a critical mass cycle ride were being considered for end of May or June – CH suggested it might be good to coincide with Bike Week.

AE offered to step in and write letter to the editor for the month of April.

3. **Cycling Matters** – CH reported that the latest edition of Cycling Matters has been posted on Facebook, all CWaC councillors and Town and Parish councils in the locality, Chris Matheson, Chester Residents Assoc and Chester Sustainability forum. A separate mailing will be sent to CCC members in due course.
4. **Northgate Development** – SB and SP had met with Clare Huber to discuss the plans for cycle parking at the development. A plan of the site with proposals was shared on screen. In summary most stands will be located on the fringes of the actual development. SB had suggested that those situated at the lower level (close to the Princess St side of the new car park) should be bike bins or similar very secure stands for those wishing to park for longer periods/overnight etc. There will be two ranks of Sheffield stands on the Hunter St side down from Storyhouse.

Possibly 80 no will be located within the Car Park, but due to space constraints they are likely to be a double-decker option. There was some discussion about how easy they are to use and in particular the need to reserve certain spaces for those with adapted or particularly large bikes. EM pointed out that signage is key and very important to make provision that is accessible to all. DS felt that a combination of both double-decker and ground level would

be the best option. NS suggested that ideas of good examples of this type of stand be forwarded to SB/SP.

A few stands are proposed for the central quad area – due to space constraints, again, the design (involving a sunken slot in granite for the front wheel plus a metal arm to which the bike can be fixed) is not ideal although it should still be possible to attach a lock through the frame and front wheel. At each end of the row the stands would be wider spaced – signage should identify these larger spaces for adapted cycles/trikes etc. It was confirmed that it will be possible to cycle into the central space via Hunter St by Storyhouse. No confirmation that this will be possible through the new arcade (old library site) from Northgate St.

SB had shown Clare Huber a photo of the stands by Waitrose which are longer in length and more suitable for cargo bikes or other bikes with trailers etc. He also confirmed that all stands should be covered by CCTV. CH asked about the plan for a Cycle Hub but there is no information on that at present. It was estimated that there will be roughly 30 spaces outdoors and an unconfirmed number under cover (car park). SP confirmed that the existing stands in Northgate St will remain, despite JV pointing out that they were removed in the landscaping plans shown at the consultation stage, which is good news.

Action: SB/SP agreed to feedback our thoughts to Clare Huber (done)

- 5. A51 Crossing** – Brief discussion about whether a Puffin or Toucan crossing will be installed at Littleton Lane/Hare Lane junction. PW was concerned about the narrow footway as you come off the A51 and turn towards Littleton. RH confirmed that a Toucan should be in place for crossing from the Rugby Club towards the roundabout. CH felt that this should be an ATF issue for discussion – future policy etc.

Action: All encouraged to write to Highways and request the originally proposed Toucan crossing. Kieran Collins at engch@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk by 23 April 2021.

- 6. Campaign Membership** – IS reported on progress with the drive to increase membership which now stands at 159. As we are now in April membership lasts for an additional 3 months to Sept 2022. He is planning a push via social media and is working with Angus King and Tom Smith with that as well as reaching out to activists.
- 7. Planning Applications Update** – NS had sent a detailed update on applications prior to the meeting. NS reported on the recent planning approval for the Beechmoor Nurseries site which has no requirement for infrastructure improvements despite considerable interest in engagement from the Developers at initial stages. It is disappointing the way this has been rushed through without any consideration of active travel to and from the site. There are 16 electric charging points and adequate cycle parking but nothing in response to the many other issues raised.

Action: CH and AE agreed to draft a letter to both CWaC and the Developer highlighting these points. SP to write to the press.

- 8. Rough Road Surfaces** – AM had circulated an email to activists prior to the meeting specifically addressing the problem of the condition of roads in some areas and their safety for cyclists. He proposed that a joint venture between CCC and CNC could assess roads by the following criteria: i) so rough they are unsafe or ii) so badly degraded that it would deter

bikers or iii) not so bad to raise. Then update the map which he and NS prepared and shared with the ATF. At a future date, probably late June when hopefully a face to face meeting can be arranged, at least one member of Lydia Orford's team is invited to ride over the same section with one of the CCC/CNC members to discuss the appropriate action that is required. With the departure of Sean Traynor we need to make contact with his replacement as well as the decarbonising officer. It was noted that the Transport team at CWaC is currently depleted and under resourced. SP and AM would write on behalf of CCC and CNC with the hope of setting something up with officers. AM hopes to meet with Karen Shore prior to the next ATF meeting.

- 9. One City Plan** – NS noticed a for sale sign on the Lloyds Bank buildings in Charterhall Drive where a crucial permissive route through from Westminster Road to the Railway Station has been in operation for some time. He felt that the Campaign need to be alert to any possible changes to the existing permissions if a new Owner/Developer takes over the site.

Action: SP/NS write to Karen Shore, Cllr Beacham, local councillors in the East and Central wards highlighting the importance of securing this route and requesting they represent us in supporting our case. (now done)

- 10. School Transport** – IS referred to the recent activity at Christleton High and the correspondence forwarded by AE regarding the school policy on helmet wearing and possible 'licence' requirements for pupils. IS agreed to contact Sarah Collins the Road Safety Officer and draft a letter to the School on behalf of the Campaign highlighting key points of concern and supporting arguments made by AE and CH.

- 11. Northern Eye Books** – The Campaign received a request from Northern Eye Books for assistance with a book they are planning to publish about cycle routes around Chester and the Wirral. CS contacted the editor Tony Bowerman with an initial response noting that there did not seem to be much in the Chester area. There has been response so far, although Tony has spoken to AM and confirmed he does wish to include Chester more and is looking for ideas including places of interest that can be linked by cycle routes. We have been asked to keep this exchange of ideas confidential for the time being for copyright reasons.

Action: CS will summarise ideas from activists and send a comprehensive reply for consideration.

- 12. Inclusive Cycling Update** - EM reported that the access from Hoole Lane to Pentland Close is now much improved following removal of some barriers. She will follow up on an outstanding matter with the wooden gate.

Having raised problems of accessibility at Mouldsworth Station with Northern Rail, it is hoped through accessibility funding that work can be carried out to make adjustments to the way the gates open and to removing other barriers to accessibility. IS confirmed that Northern are quite receptive to bids for their accessibility fund and he has now submitted one for the above works. Since then EM has also been invited by Northern to help in other areas.

- 13. Sustainable Transport Task Force** – SP advised the meeting that there was due to be an open meeting of the task force on Thursday (8th) and anyone wishing to attend should contact Kristy Littler at CWaC. Boughton travel lanes, Upton Dean and City Centre all on

agenda. SP/JV/AE have been busy looking at the travel lanes in Boughton for this meeting. SP and JV also looking at the whole of Boughton corridor.

14. **AOB** - We discussed the SUP alongside the A51 between the hamburger roundabout and the railway bridge just before Christleton. It was re-surfaced (by CWAC) recently, following an accident where a Christleton High School pupil fell off their bike into the path of a lorry and suffered life-changing injuries, CH reported that she found the new surface to be bumpy and that she had heard the same from students at CHS.

Action: CH will circulate a draft to CCC members, and then send the final version to CWAC, Chris Matheson, relevant CWAC Councillors and Parish Councils. (Now completed).

15. **Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 5 May – Online**

Meeting closed at 21:40