

ChainLinks

The newsletter of the Cycling Advocates Network (NZ)

Mar/Apr 02



Why cycle on just two wheels?
See "Photo Gallery" for more details



Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN)
PO Box 6491, Wellesley St,
Auckland, New Zealand

Tel/Fax: 04-385-2557

Email: CAN@actrix.gen.nz
ChainLinks@can.org.nz
(newsletter)

WWW: <http://www.can.org.nz>

The views expressed in *ChainLinks* are not necessarily those of CAN

Letters

Dear *ChainLinks*,

I read with interest the letter from G J (Bill) Wright and wholeheartedly agree with the sentiments expressed. However, I was disappointed to read that he now wears a helmet due to the threat of a fine. I never wear a helmet in spite of receiving three Infringement Notices and have yet to pay a fine, having defeated them all, either in Court or through writing many letters and calling their bluff over the threat of Bailiffs. I have not been stopped for several years now and do believe the local constabulary have got the message and have found better things to do. If one believes the law is not justified then one should not obey the law.

Happy Biking, with or without a helmet. 🚲

Richard Oddy

Dear *ChainLinks*,

Well I've just got to get it off my chest.

First; I believe that cycling on a road is NOT intrinsically dangerous, but that a variety of hazards means that the cyclist has to keep his/her wits about him/her all the time.

Over the last few years a rapidly increasing problem has risen its ugly head, and I wonder if CAN can and/or should do something about it physically, or maybe stir certain authorities into action.

I refer to the stupidity of some overseas visitors/cyclists.

Take yesterday for an example. Bear in mind that I ride a mere 1/2 km to work before 8am and home after 6.30pm; in between time I have limited opportunities to observe cyclist road behaviour.

Yesterday was a "Doozie"

Incident 1:

Mum and Dad on two fully laden touring bikes rode down the hill at speed, straight through a "STOP" sign and turned left onto S.H.1 into a line of traffic where the road is relatively narrow. Now that was bad enough; but; their two kids(about 8 & 10)

followed about 50 metres behind and did the same stupid thing. Talk about adults setting a good example. I estimate that in excess of 90% of cyclists do NOT stop at this intersection.

Incident 2:

Two foreign tourist riding cycles provided by a local Backpackers were observed riding (No helmets) skylarking around the streets in the main commercial areas.

Incident 3:

A father (Unhelmeted, not even carrying one on his bike) towing a trailer with an infant (unhelmeted, and unsecured) was followed by the mother (also no helmet), decided to ride along the footpaths in the main shopping area. They rode quite quickly and at some inconvenience and danger to Christmas shopping pedestrians.

And if that was not enough they rode blindly across a pedestrian crossing in the face of oncoming traffic which had to make emergency stops or take avoiding action.

Incident 4:

An overseas cyclist with no helmet was riding down the wrong side of the street into oncoming traffic. At a "STOP" sign he rode straight through at speed, turning right onto S.H.1 on the wrong side of the road and cycled between the on coming traffic and the parked vehicles on the side of the road.

Even with the limited opportunities that I get to observe road behaviour I do see at least one such incident every day during the summer season.

The 10 persons observed yesterday were all Fatal Accidents striving valiantly to happen as soon as possible.

I believe that there should be a very clear, concise brochure handed to every tourist who arrives with a bicycle, and likewise to every tourist picking up a bicycle at a bike-shop, rental bike, or backpackers free bike.

Then the Police should follow up with a concerted effort to try to curb this sort of cycling. When local kids see tourists getting away with this behaviour they tend to follow the bad examples set.

In Victoria, Australia, the police enforce their rules with vigour, as some of my friends who attempted to ride helmetless on deserted (no car for an hour) roads found to their dismay.

While I am aware that the cyclists I see are only the tip of the problem Iceberg; I am also aware that the majority (or I hope so) of our visiting cycling brothers and sisters will be safe and sensible, law abiding riders.

Peter Bugler. J.P., Picton

[How to help tourists adapt to different traffic rules is a long standing problem in many countries. Of course here in NZ we make it harder; how do you explain to an overseas bicyclist that they must wear a helmet here so they can be less safe than back home without a helmet? Not a great way to advertise your country L Ed.]

Osteoporosis

Will cycling weaken your bones? Chartered physiotherapist Lawrence Baker, who treats patients suffering with osteoporosis, has some answers

Osteoporosis means literally “porous bones.” Our bones are made up internally of a 'honeycomb' type construction which is normally structurally very strong. In osteoporosis this honeycomb becomes more porous with bigger gaps or holes causing the bone structure to become very fragile and susceptible to fractures. In effect the bone loses its density.

One in three women and one in twelve men in the UK will have osteoporosis over the age of 50, and it is estimated that three million people in the UK suffer from osteoporosis. Each year there are 70,000 hip, 50,000 wrist, and 40,000 spinal fractures attributable to this disease. The cost to the government and the NHS is over £1.7 billion each year or £5,000,000 each day!

We are all potentially at risk from osteoporosis because of the bone loss that occurs as we get older, particularly as we are living longer as a population, but there many additional factors.

Contributory factors

The following are factors for women:

- a lack of oestrogen caused by -
- early menopause (before age 45)
- early hysterectomy (before age 45), particularly when both ovaries are removed (oophrectomy)
- missing periods for six months or more (excluding pregnancy) as a result of over-exercising or over-dieting

And for men:

- low levels of the male hormone, testosterone (hypogonadism)

Both men and women can be more susceptible due to:

- long term use of high dose steroids in tablet form for conditions such as arthritis or asthma
- close family history of osteoporosis (mother or father), particularly if your mother suffered a hip fracture by this condition.
- other medical problems such as Cushing’s syndrome and liver and thyroid problems
- malabsorption problems (coeliac disease, Crohn’s disease, gastric surgery)

- long term immobility
- heavy drinking
- smoking

Osteoporosis is a “silent disease” for many people, the first sign being an easily broken bone, often in the wrist or spine after a minor incident. A normal x-ray cannot reliably measure bone density and usually a special scan called a bone densitometry scan is required.

Treatment and prevention

The majority of women suffering from this disease are treated by hormone replacement therapy (HRT), and men with testosterone replacement therapy. Also bisphosphonates, which are non-hormonal drugs, and calcium and vitamin D supplements particularly in older people.

Your genes influence the potential height and strength of your skeleton but lifestyle factors can influence the amount of bone you invest in your bone “bank” during your youth and how much you save in later life.

Healthy bones need a well balanced diet incorporating minerals and vitamins from different food groups. You especially need to ensure that your diet is rich in calcium. The best sources of calcium are milk and dairy products such as cheese and yogurt. Non-dairy sources are green leafy vegetables, baked beans, bony fish and dried fruit.

Exercise

Like muscles and other parts of the body, bones suffer if they are not used. They need regular weight bearing activity and exercise that exerts a loading impact and stretches and contracts the muscles, stimulating the bone to become more stronger and dense. Good bone building exercises include running, skipping, aerobics, tennis, even brisk walking. Try to exercise in any of these ways for at least 20 minutes, three times per week.

This is where cycling falls short. Cycling is possibly one of the best exercises for improving cardiovascular fitness, strengthening lower leg muscles and providing a great many health benefits. But increasing bone mass density it does not do. The reason for this is that because, like swimming and rowing, there is no direct foot to ground impact; cycling is a 'smooth' exercise with no impact to the bones. Certainly the rhythmic contraction of the leg muscles pulling on the bones one would think would stimulate the bones to strengthen, but research proves otherwise. And cycling is not a weight-bearing activity.

I have encountered a good many cyclists and swimmers over my years in clinical practice who ask my advice on whether they should give up their beloved sport once diagnosed with osteoporosis. Happily the situation is no, but I advise them to reduce the amount of time they spend on cycling

by about a third, and instead spend that time on brisk walking or running, circuit training including skipping and any of the other above mentioned activities.

Cycling to the exclusion of all else is possibly one of the worst exercises an osteoporosis sufferer could do. Not only the above mentioned lack of impact, but also posturally the crouched forwards position of cycling will contribute to extra strain on an osteoporotic spine. Research has shown that our spines get strengthened by extending backwards – lying face down on the floor and lifting up head and shoulders and legs together, for instance – and relatively weakened by flexing forwards as in the racing cyclists posture.

So there you have it: cycling in itself does not cause osteoporosis. But if you have any of the risk factors mentioned you need to adopt other forms of exercise as well. The extra variety in your exercising life will make you enjoy your cycling all the more! ☺

*Reproduced with kind permission of Cycle magazine
from the Dec 2000/Jan 2001 issue*

Editorial

I have to admit that reading Richard Oddy's letter makes me a bit angry. I'm not angry at Richard, nor at what he writes, but at the fact that he needed to write it. In turn that doesn't make me angry at Bill Wright, I fully understand why he felt he needed to give up the fight. I'm angry that bicyclists are persecuted *by law*, and that we do nothing about it.

I'll tell you a story. Many years ago an old lady who I didn't know and have never met wrote to me for help. She lived in a small rural town and her only means of transport was her bicycle. With the coming of the law she had tried a helmet, but she found she got headaches – as some people do. After talking with her doctor, he filled in an application for exemption for her and she sent it off to the LTSA. Unfortunately for her the application arrived after the “get tough” stance of the LTSA and it was rejected on some technicality and she was told that would have to be addressed first. No problem, off she went to her doctor, only to find he had left and she now had a new doctor...

That this lady had to go through this palaver in the first place is bad enough, but it gets worse. Her new doctor has no sympathy for her “either wear a helmet or don't ride” was the response and a refusal to fill in the form. In desperation at the choice of headaches or no transport she turned to me.

I wrote to her doctor explaining the situation and asked if she would help her. Her doctor replied bluntly “it is better is she doesn't ride if she can't wear a helmet, I will not help”. Now this statement is against ALL medical advice, the health benefits of cycling far outweigh the risks, so even if a

helmet is advisable it is better to ride without than not at all. Add to that the social difficulties that denying this lady her only transport would cause, and the doctor's stance is totally unjustifiable. But then, we can't really blame the doctor, however bright they might be they had been lied to by experts – those in Government and its quangos who had carefully manipulated the message (it's called "being economical with the truth" in governmental circles; you don't lie, you just create a false impression by withholding relevant facts – but to me it's lying by another name) so the doctor was misinformed and persuaded to give out medical advice which was bad for her patient.

I tried her local MP, a National Party person – the party in power and the party that had introduced compulsory bicyclist abuse – and he was blunt as well, roughly translated "get stuffed". The Minister didn't offer any help either, surprise, surprise...

I still sometimes wonder whether I should had tried the Courts, but she didn't have the money and nor did I. What became of her? I don't know. If she gave up cycling she is probably dead, with the lack of exercise, mobility and social contact that would have resulted. What I can say is the Government doesn't care, and they don't care about Bill either, or the thousands of kids who ride to school.

In some ways its all right for the Richard Oddy's and Nigel Perry's of this country – I for example have been waved through a checkpoint that was stopping unhelmeted cyclists, and wonder what the Officers said to those they had stopped as I sailed past with the wind in my hair, I just be tit wasn't "he knows the truth, persecuting him it too much trouble, but you I can make squirm."

I'm sorry, but the few will not always be able to fight this alone. So who will care about the old ladies, the Bills and the kids of New Zealand? Will it be CAN? 🚲

Nigel Perry, Editor

Bike Week Around The Country

Health Sponsorship Council

Bike Wise Week is behind us for another year. About 250 people from around the country volunteered to run events ranging from cycle skills days to family fun days and obstacle courses.

Bike to Work Day took place in 32 centres – a huge increase on the seven that ran it last year. The weather was a bit variable on the day but it didn't stop 7,000 people biking to work (and that's only the ones we know about) – a huge effort!

For the first time national sponsors supported Bike to Work Day. Kellogg's, Mother Earth and Starbucks contributed product. This helped considerably

in the organisation of Bike to Work Day breakfasts and provided a tasty, nutritional start to the day.

Also a first this year was the Bike Wise Business Battle. Piloted in Wellington (with a couple of entries from outside the region), the Battle was an innovative challenge to see which company could convince the greatest number of employees to bike to work.

There were five categories, with each winner awarded a sumptuous morning tea. Three of the categories related to the size of the companies competing – the winner of each was the company with the greatest percentage of its staff biking to work for a week. The other two categories were for companies whose employees biked the greatest distance to work, and for companies with the greatest average distance travelled, on the condition that a senior manager was part of the team.

The winners were:

- Greatest percentage (5-19 employees): Department of Labour – Labour Market
- Policy Group, 55%
- Greatest percentage (20-39 employees): Tonkin & Taylor LTD, 55%
- Greatest percentage (40+ employees): Hamilton City Council, 32.5%
- Greatest distance: AMP Financial Services, 1474 km
- Power team: Bank of New Zealand Service Delivery, 126km/person

The plan is to go national with “The Battle” next year.

Overall, Bike Wise Week was a huge success, meeting the goal of increasing the profile of biking as an efficient form of transport, great exercise and a fun way of getting around. 

Felicity Close

Auckland

Auckland City Council did themselves proud once again in organising the Bikers, Breakfast, at which CAA had a very successful display stall. This was cunningly designed so that the shade tent, display boards and brochures etc. all packed down to fit on a BoB bike trailer for transporting. This not only maximises credibility, but also allows the stall operators to arrive by bike and thereby still claim their free breakfast. Another useful thing for your stall is novel bicycles: Adrian’s BOB trailer and Sally’s lime green Birdy folding bike at our stall were good attention-getters. During the Breakfast several CAA members wandered around the crowd of fast-breakers, spreading the gospel. There was a wonderful buzz in the crowd, as there often is at free food events! A big thanks to Auckland City.

Continuing the culinary theme, the Sunday of Bike Week also saw the return of the CAA „Winery Wobble%, a nefarious wine trail for self-propelled

lovers of the grape. 8 or 9 CAA-ers made the trip along the NW cycleway and Henderson Creek path to 3 West Auckland vineyards, each with its unique character. Some light heads, and bags bulging with bottles (and no casualties)- a very relaxed way to round off the week. 🚲

Adrian Croucher

Bumper Biker's Breakfast In Wellington

Despite a grey day, cyclists turned out in their hundreds for the free bikers' breakfast in Wellington's Civic Square on the Wednesday of National Bike Wise Week.

Marilyn Northcote of Cycle Aware Wellington (CAW), who co-ordinated Wellington's Bike To Work Day, said "It was fantastic to see so many cyclists enjoying the food and entertainment laid on for them. It was a real celebration of cycling as a great way to get to work."

Over 400 people rode in for the breakfast today – similar numbers to last year's event. In brief speeches, Government ministers Annette King (who biked to work) and Marian Hobbs, Wellington's mayor Kerry Prendegast and city councillors all spoke of the need to promote cycling for its environmental, health and other benefits.

Land Transport Safety Authority Director, David Wright, said it was important that good roading infrastructure was built to support cycling. He hoped to see this happen in the near future.

Cycle Aware is grateful for financial support from Wellington City Council, Bike Wise, and ACC, for breakfast food sponsorship from Kellogg's, Mother Earth, Starbucks and Mainland, and for free bike checks from On Yer Bike.

However, organising an event like this really stretches the resources and enthusiasm of a small voluntary organisation. CAW is looking for greater involvement from WCC next year, and for other local authorities in the region (Upper and Lower Hutt, Porirua, Kapiti Coast, as well as Wellington Regional Council) to play a more active role in promoting cycling through events such as Bike To Work Day. 🚲

Robert Ibell

Designing For Cyclists

Around About A Roundabout

In the last *ChainLinks*, we looked at some on-road solutions to providing for cyclists at roundabouts. An alternative approach is to provide separate pathways for cyclists circulating around the outer perimeter of the roundabout. Figure 1 shows a typical layout; note the use of splitter islands to provide refuges for crossing.

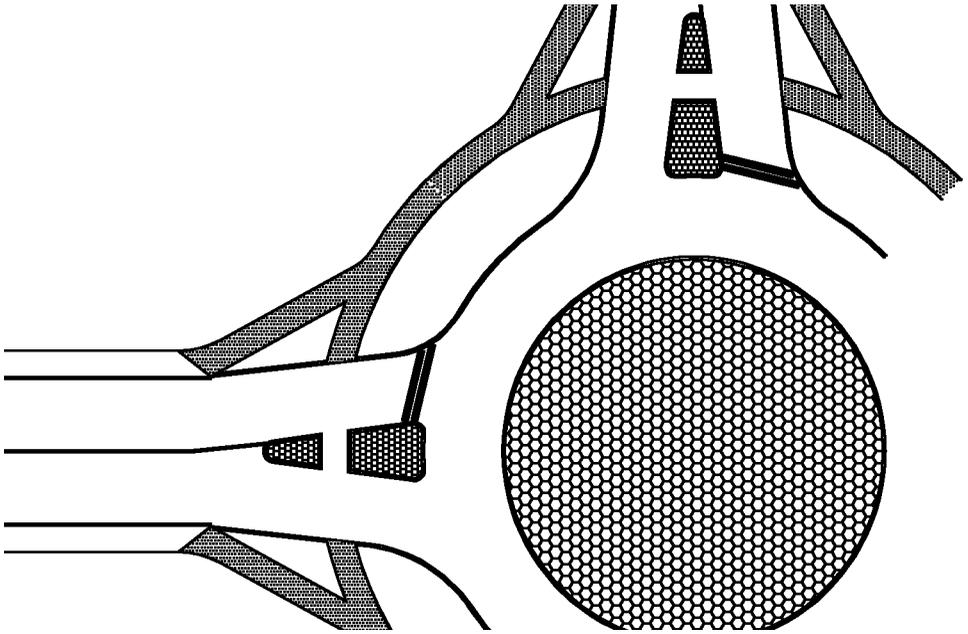


Figure 1

This approach has been used recently on many new roundabouts in NZ (e.g. Christchurch ring road) and is the preferred design now in the Netherlands. By separating the paths from the road it clearly defines the give-way priorities. Unfortunately these priorities are often to the detriment of cyclists who will have to give way to a number of legs that they wouldn't have to if staying on the road.

A variation on this is to give priority to the circulating cyclists rather than the entry/exit traffic, as shown in figure 2.

This form of priority is generally used in the Netherlands for urban areas only, where more cyclists are expected (it is also notable that for their newer multi-lane roundabouts, only a single exit lane is provided that then widens to two lanes after the cycle crossings). At the very least, this design should be considered here on minor side-road legs of roundabouts. For smooth operation, the path has to be sufficiently far away from the roundabout to allow an exiting vehicle to stop clear of the circulating traffic, e.g. >5m.

Priority for cycle crossings is not currently legally covered by NZ Traffic Regulations; because it is not technically an intersection you can't use Give Way signs for example. Hopefully this will be rectified soon under LTSA's forthcoming Road User and Traffic Control Devices Rules. Providing the cycle path on a raised platform can help to reinforce its priority (and slow down traffic anyway). Apparently however this method can also suffer

from that previously-mentioned "magic carpet" effect that has caused concern about some raised pedestrian crossings.

Speaking of pedestrians, in most cases you will also expect foot traffic to want to get around the roundabout too. How the cyclists and pedestrians cohabit requires some attention to detail, otherwise cyclists might prefer their chances on the roundabout (or stay away completely!). Adequately wide paths (e.g. 2.0m+) and shared path signage may do the trick; or parallel path networks may be in order. Use of coloured surfacing on the cycle/shared paths and cycle/pedestrian stencils may also help to highlight the special nature of this path.

You may also want to consider whether your circulating paths are explicitly one-way (in the same direction as the adjacent traffic flow) or two-way (allowing right-turners to "short-cut"). Two-way paths often have a poor safety record. Motorists may not be expecting cyclists from either direction, and opposing cyclists could get a rude shock too. Consider path arrows and the angle of your path merges to clarify this.

Providing perimeter paths generally requires significant extra land to do properly, so they won't be appropriate everywhere. If you make the route

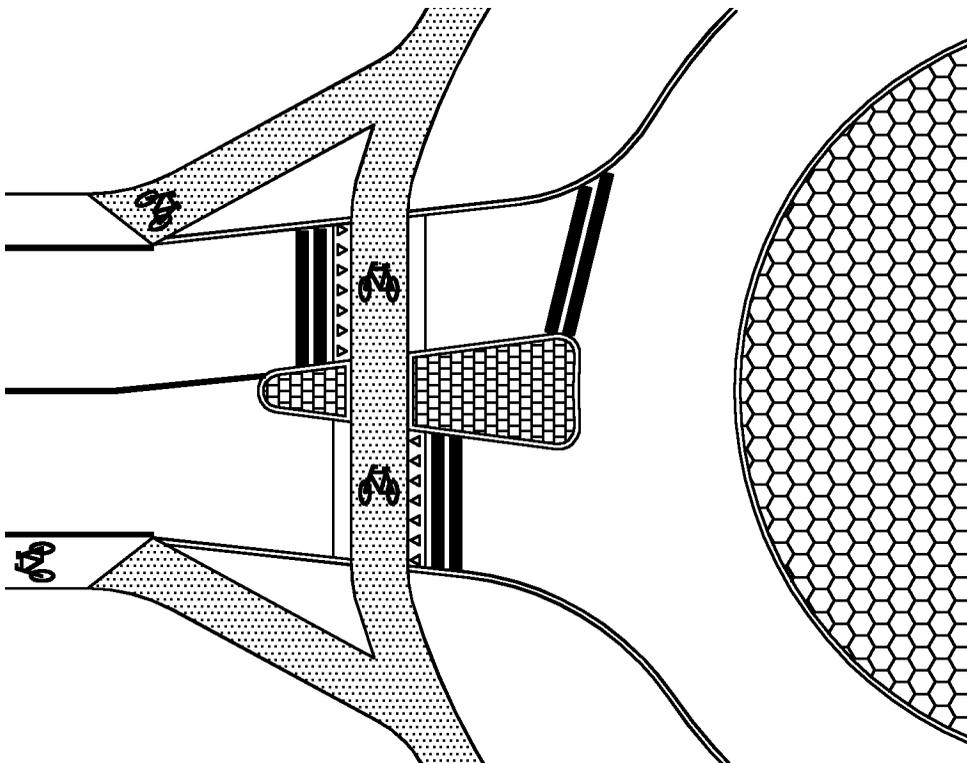


Figure 2

too circuitous then many cyclists won't bother using it either. And if the traffic volumes mean that cyclists on the paths will have just as much trouble crossing the approach legs as they would negotiating the roundabout, then you really need to consider grade-separation (e.g. underpasses) or change the intersection to a signalised one.

Finally, remember again all the little details. Path-to-road transitions should be smooth and handrails provided at crossing points. Cyclist regulatory and warning signs and logo stencils should be liberally used, together with direction guidance if necessary. And don't forget to make sure that cyclists remaining on the road can still negotiate the roundabout reasonably by slowing traffic down.



A recent roundabout reconstruction in Christchurch (Bexley/Dyers).
Note the handrails at all crossing points.

Some relevant reading:

- Austroads, 1999. *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14: Bicycles*, Section 5.5.2 (Roundabouts) and Section 6.7.2 (Crossings of Roads)
- Boender, John P. 2000. *The New Dutch Guidelines on Roundabouts*. Conference Proceedings 2nd International Symposium on Highway Geometric Design, June 14-17 2000, Mainz, Germany. Editors: R. Krammes & W. Brilon, pp.184-191.
- CROW, 1998. *Uniformity in Roundabouts*. CROW Publication 126, Ede, The Netherlands.

All feedback please to Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz)

Government Announces National Cycling Strategy

The Government's long-awaited announcements on transport policy hit the airwaves on 28 February. The overall direction should be good for cycling, though of course we need to see details before we start disbanding CAN. The most surprising announcement (nice surprise!) was that "the government will develop a National Cycling Strategy which will be required to be taken into account in the allocation of funds". This, of course, is something that CAN has been asking for, but earlier indications were that it was unlikely to happen. Roger Boulter's mammoth Strategy Foundation Project may well have helped to swing it – having such a thorough and professional document to hand around must have given the decision makers more of an idea of the scope of the problem and the solutions.

Of course, the cynics among us will be muttering about sidelining, diversionary tactics, ghettos etc., and there is always a danger that such a strategy will have no teeth, no funding and no policy backing. However, the good news is that there have also been overarching objectives and priorities set which should support a good cycling strategy.

The objectives of the NZ Transport Strategy will be:

- assisting economic development
- ensuring safety and personal security
- improving access and mobility
- protecting and promoting public health, and
- ensuring environmental sustainability.

With a little bit of thought, cycling can contribute to all of those. In addition, the government has identified clear priorities for the National Land Transport Fund (formerly the National Road Fund):

- reducing severe traffic congestion
- improving passenger transport
- promoting walking and cycling
- assisting regional development and alternatives to roading, and
- improving road safety.

Again, it isn't hard to see how cycling can easily fit with all those. In addition, "funding agency Transfund NZ will be required to ensure government priorities will be better reflected in its future funding decisions," and "both Transfund and Transit NZ will be required to review all major projects currently planned, to ensure that they all meet the new strategic objectives."

What about the money? Another welcome announcement was "the first dedicated funding for walking and cycling". Yes, only a slim \$3 million,

but that is a \$3 million increase on what we have now. It doesn't compare well with \$1064 million for roading or \$106 million for public transport, but it does give us the chance to show how inadequate that amount is! And some of the other funding announcements may have an impact on cycling: the public transport funding could be used to help achieve better integration between bikes and buses or trains; the \$30 million for regional development could help with cycle tourism projects; the extra \$34 million for road safety education and enforcement could be the beginning of a 'Share the Road' campaign.

So, a big thank you and congratulations to everyone who has helped to put forward the case for cycling! Have a celebratory drink, but only a small one – we have lots more work to do before we are freewheeling.

(Full details of the transport package can be found on <<http://www.executive.govt.nz/minister/gosche>>.) 

Jane Dawson

From The PR Desk

Display Materials Available For Loan

CAN has three high quality, full colour, laminated posters available for members to borrow for use in displays. They were created by MSO Design in Wellington under a sponsorship deal – CAN is grateful to MSO for their support.

The posters are:

1. CAN's vision & aims – an eye-catching 190 x 90cm, including lots of photos
2. "CAN – The Voice for Cyclists" – 63 x 43cm
3. A brief description of CAN – 60 x 43 cm.

Places the posters have already been used include the CAN stall at last year's national cycling conference in Christchurch, in a bike shop in Paraparaumu (as part of a display by CAN group OCEAN), and at Cycle Aware Wellington's Bike to Work Day stall during this year's Bike Week.

The posters are kept with the CAN library. To borrow them, contact Robert Ibell on 04-385 2557, dawbell@actrix.gen.nz. Borrowers meet the cost of returning them to the library.

CAN Library Sees Increased Use

CAN (in association with Cycle Aware Wellington) maintains a substantial reference library of cycling material, including books, articles, magazines, brochures, videos and CD-ROMs.

The library forms an invaluable resource for people working in the cycling area, whether professional, student or volunteer. The last year has seen a big increase in borrowing. We are now acquiring university theses written using items from the library. The latest is an honours dissertation from Otago University by Lara Moynihan entitled “*Can European Cycleways be Adapted for use in Urban New Zealand?*”

Well over 400 items are listed on our website at <<http://www.can.org.nz>> – more material is regularly bought, scrounged or donated. A paper copy of the library list can be obtained by contacting the CAN 'librarian' Robert Ibell on 04-385 2557, <dawbell@actrix.gen.nz>. CAN covers postage costs for small items, but borrowers pay postage for larger packages.

Groups and members, as well as people outside CAN, are encouraged to make use of the library. We are also keen for people to donate stuff or list their resources in the website database so it becomes available for others to use. 🚲

Robert Ibell

London Funding To Be Scrapped?

Plans to axe the £8 million annual budget for the 2,000-mile London Cycle Network (LCN) next year have shocked London Cycling Campaign (LCC).

LCC chairman Peter Lewis has learned that senior officers for Transport for London (TfL) – including the Transport Commission’s Bob Kiley, the American brought in to improve London’s ageing tube network – consider the current cycling network as underused and therefore not worthy of further funding.

Their proposals to drop funding are included in the draft budget for 2002 and do not reflect the commitment shown to cycling in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy.

“We do not deny that the current LCN is not successful,” says Lewis. “That is why we at the LCC have consistently lobbied for the Mayor and TfL to take strategic control of it and deliver high quality, high demand routes rather than the poor quality, inconsistent, unstrategic facilities being currently delivered.”

The LCC is lobbying members of the TfL board to not simply reinstate the budget but to increase it to a more realistic £12 million.

Their case has had positive coverage in the Evening Standard and on BBC London Live TV and radio.

The threat of cuts has had a drastic effect on the LCN’s borough partners. Camden, which was to take over joint project management of the LCN from December and recruit five project managers, has put this move on hold.

The Cycling Centre of Excellence, set up this year by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, is delaying advertising for an overall project co-ordinator; other London boroughs are unlikely to make plans for cycling expenditure until they know what TfL's cycling budget will be.

The LCN issued the following statement: "The London Cycling Campaign deplores the proposed cuts in the TfL cycling and other sustainable transport budgets for 2002/3.

"It calls on the Mayor, the Greater London Authority and the Transport Commissioner to reinstate and increase the funding in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy." 

Source: *Cycling Weekly*, 2001

Call For Submissions

Healthy Action – Healthy Eating

The Ministry of Health has developed a consultation document designed to open discussion on key issues, priorities and actions to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce obesity.

While socio-economically disadvantaged groups are over-represented among obese populations, *Healthy Action – Health Eating* is an attempt to have an integrated approach to improving nutrition and physical activity across all sectors of NZ society.

CAN issued a media release following the issuing of this document (available on the CAN website or by contacting CAN).

Cycling for transport or recreation, and programmes such as Safe Routes to Schools have an obvious part to play in increasing levels of physical activity and reducing levels of obesity. Cycling also offers cheap access to exercise and independent mobility for people on low incomes.

These (and other) points need to be reinforced in submissions from cycling interests. Please contact 0800-226 440 or <pubs@moh.govt.nz> for a copy of the consultation document.

It is also available at <<http://www.moh.govt.nz>> – look under publications.

Submissions are due by 5 pm on Friday 29 March 2002.

Traffic Control Devices Rule

The Land Transport Safety Authority have issued the 'red' draft of *Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices (Rule 54002)* for consultation.

A traffic control device includes any sign, signal or notice, traffic calming device or marking or road surface treatment used on a road for the purpose of traffic control.

There are plenty of issues in this draft rule that concern cyclists, including the status and marking of cycle lanes, and CAN urges groups and members to make submissions.

The draft rule is available on request from the LTSA's Helpdesk by ringing 0800 699 000. It's also available on the LTSA's website at:

www.ltsa.govt.nz/consultation/traffic-control-devices/traffic-control-devices.html

Closing date for submissions is 30 April. If you'd like help with writing your submission contact CAN. ☺

National Road Safety Advisory Group (NRSAG)

The Over the last 3 years, the NRSAG has established a pattern of meeting with cycling representatives once a year. At the meeting on 12 February, Jane Dawson from CAN and John Gregory from Cycling Support NZ went along with a longish agenda of things to raise.

First off, we went through the issues raised previously at these meetings (as briefly as possible, given the long list) and updated the NRSAG on what progress had or had not been made. For the statisticians, there were 6 areas where some progress is being made, and 9 areas where we feel that little or no progress has been made. In the latter category, some of the responses we got were:

Re allowing 30km/hr zones:

Tony Bliss, LTSA, said there were "not big safety gains" from them anyway, in terms of current injury statistics (NB: CAN does not agree with this position and will pursue this issue further);

Re the setting of priorities for LTSA rule changes:

We were invited to highlight our priorities to the rules team at LTSA;

Re improving the knowledge of the police about laws relating to cycling:

Steve Fitzgerald of the NZ Police said he was happy to work on this with us;

Re improving the gathering of statistics on crashes:

ACC are modifying their injury reporting forms to try and better identify the reason for the injury.

We then went on to note that there have been some behaviour improvements from current road safety campaigns, but that we would like to see a 'Share the Road' campaign started. We made the point that sharing the road means car drivers sharing with other car drivers, as well as with other road users – a sort of 'courtesy on the roads' campaign. We argued that some measures could be done easily now, within existing work programmes, and that LTSA should be making the case to the government now for major funding to run a national campaign.

We again asked that a cycling representative is appointed to the NRSAG. We feel that we have useful comment to offer on a wide range of road safety issues, not just the once-a-year cycling issues.

We finished by asking whether there was any help that we could give to the NRSAG, and this led to some interesting discussion. Questions raised included: – how well is the system working for us on a consultation level? – what is the impact on our resources to attend meetings etc.? – how is the involvement of cyclists in road safety issues working at a community level, and how could it work better? – can other agencies help our participation with e.g. literature reviews, resourcing help? – would it be helpful for us to get letters of support for research applications?

Do you have any feedback on these questions? Let us know what you think!

Jane Dawson

Snippets

Cycling 2001 Web Site

The papers presented at the Cycling 2001 conference are now available at:

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/recreation/cycling/conference/2001>

World Transport Policy & Practice

This is a journal available on the Web at: <<http://www.ecoplan.org/wtpp>>, we'll let them advertise themselves:

“The first practically-oriented journal dealing consistently and with full independence with the major issues in a field of international concern, the Journal was founded in 1995 in an attempt to provide scholars, researchers, transport operators, policy makers and ordinary smart people concerned with the marked unsustainability of our current transport arrangements with a high-quality, independent medium for the presentation of original and creative ideas in world transport. The Journal appears four times a year.”

Membership Renewals

Thank you from my heart if you have already renewed your membership for 2002. There are still those have not been ticked as renewed on the database. CAN needs a staple base of members and a continual increase in membership. If you have mislaid your renewal form, just use the slip on the back of this magazine and write clearly “Renewal only”.

Thank you also to all of you who have made donations when sending us your cheque. ☺

Elisabeth Mikkelsen, Membership Secretary

News From Spokes – Canterbury Cyclist’s Association

- The last 6 months have seen a slightly lower profile but group is now renewing its energy after festive season
- Generating a list of priorities projects for the coming year and will be making a call to the cycling populace for genuinely enthusiastic and dedicated people to pick up specific projects and “bike” with them... interested pedallers should contact: <spokes_chch@hotmail.com>.
- City council continuing to lay down infrastructure to incrementally improving standards
- City cyclists seem to be in reasonable spirits and numbers although complacency in face of increasing motor vehicle numbers would be ill advised
- Larger Transit projects (motorways) providing grist for the mill!!!
- Continuing saga of obtaining access for cyclists on city buses (to facilitate mode sharing) remains frustrated by LTSA but is not yet a lost cause -
- Lack of cyclist access through Lyttelton tunnel still a SPOKES bugbear to which Environment Canterbury, Transit, LTSA and the bus companies have been unable to provide any solutions

Richard Hayman, Spokes Chairperson

News from Cycle Action Wellington

Police Workshop A Great Success

Cycle Aware Wellington (CAW) have been working with Wellington traffic police on a new educational and road safety initiative. On 29 January 2002, CAW facilitated a half-day workshop entitled “Being Cycle Aware”.

The target audience for the workshop were the officers of the city’s traffic police. The idea for the workshop was first raised by the police themselves some six months ago. It took some time to firm up the concept, and develop the content of the workshop. The project got a big boost when the police set aside a training day to ensure that all of their officers would be in attendance. This date was the first available day in 2002.

The workshop was roughly split into two segments. The first was a facilitated discussion of issues relating to road-safety and legality, and the second put the chat into practice! The officers were taken out onto the streets of Wellington, on bikes, so that they had direct experience of riding a cycle through some of the city’s most challenging junctions (to a cyclist, that is!).

CAW invited a small group of cyclists to attend the workshop to present their viewpoints, and tell their stories about safety issues that they face

every day. There were also participants present from Wellington City Council, the Land Transport Safety Authority, Transit NZ, Opus and MWH – a total of some 40 people attended. Over half of these took part in the ride (including all of the traffic officers!). Some rode their own bikes, and others used bikes from the Wellington Regional Community Bike Unit.

After the ride, a debriefing session was held, and feedback received from the participants. All in all, the workshop was declared a great success, and the police have even suggested that CAW would be invited to make this a regular event. Given the high turnover in traffic police, this might not be a bad idea!

For further information about the workshop, contact:

- David Laing of CAW on 04-386 1500, <laingmaguire@xtra.co.nz>, or
 - Tony Collins of Wellington Police on 04-381 2000, <anthony.collins@police.govt.nz>.
-

Intersection Campaign Kicks Off

One of Cycle Aware Wellington's projects for Bike Week was a campaign to educate motorists and cyclists about correct positioning and courtesy at intersections. This campaign followed on from the police training workshop (see article in this issue) held a couple of weeks earlier.

CAW worked in conjunction with Wellington City Council, the police, Transit NZ and the LTSA to produce a leaflet that focused on a busy intersection near the city centre that cyclists found particularly difficult. The Vivian St/Taranaki St intersection has high traffic volumes (including a moderate number of cyclists) and three lanes in each direction, with the centre lane being for both left turning and straight ahead traffic.

Cyclists don't necessarily realise they can and should occupy this lane when going straight ahead in order to prevent left turning motorists from cutting in front of them. Motorists often don't signal their intentions or aren't aware that cyclists may need to take up a lane to ensure their safety.

At morning and afternoon rush hour on the Tuesday of Bike Week, CAW members repeatedly rode through the intersection to demonstrate correct positioning, while Council staff handed out leaflets to motorists and cyclists under the supervision of the police. It was noticeable how much better behaved than usual the motorists were with the strong police presence – the same couldn't be said for some of the cyclists using the intersection. Some warnings or infringement notices were issued to both groups.

The leafletting was followed up on the Friday morning with police enforcement. Unfortunately no cyclists used the intersection during the hour the police were present! Over the next three months similar campaigns will be conducted at three other intersections in the city, including one roundabout.

For further information about this campaign, contact:

- Robert Ibell, CAW, 04-385 2557, <dawbell@actrix.gen.nz>;
- Cristina Van Dam, WCC Road Safety Co-ordinator, 04-801 3891, <Cristina.Van.Dam@wcc.govt.nz>; or
- Tony Collins of Wellington Police, 04-381 2000, <anthony.collins@police.govt.nz>.

CAW

New Cycling Group Starts Up In Golden Bay

Hello from Golden Bay, a new supporting organization, BLIP (bikelanes in paradise) is happy to report a great success at our recent BIG BIKE RIDE. About 250 people rode bikes from one end of the bay to the other to celebrate BikeWiseWeek and draw attention to the need for safe cycle lanes in Golden Bay. Lots of great spot prizes from BLIP supporters and wonderful music from Folkfire, made for a good party following the ride [the spa pools proved very popular]. We have some cunning plans to make next year's event even better. Hopefully we will be riding on some safe lanes by then...but lots of convincing to do in the meantime.

BLIP encourages everyone interested in cycling to write letters to the Ministry of Transport, Transit and local government to push for cycle lanes and draw attention to the mega benefits to the community, not just cyclists. We are meeting with Transit and owners of private land (who are happy to let a strip of their land be used as a cycle lane) on March 12, to see about working together to get these lanes happening. In the meantime, cycle on over to Golden Bay, the playground of New Zealand, we've got some shocking areas on our roads, but the scenery makes up for it. 🚲

Victoria Davis for BLIP

Ph.:03 5259 298; Email : moonbowbeach@hotmail.com

Cycle Steering Committee News

The Cycle Steering Committee (CSC) consists of representatives from the Health Sponsorship Council, LTSA, Police, Ministry of Health, Cycling Support NZ/CAN, Cycling NZ, the Hillary Commission and the Bicycle Industry Association of NZ. It owns and manages the Bike Wise brand and is convened by the Health Sponsorship Council.

At its last meeting on 7 February, the CSC discussed the following:

- National Bike Wise Week 2002
- the "Fitter/Fatter" brochure : "Watch your wallet get fatter while you get fitter" (a copy of this is enclosed – contact Felicity Close at Bike Wise, felicity@healthsponsorship.co.nz, 04-472 5777 to order more)

- population research – Bike Wise is seeking funding for this
- sponsorship guidelines to assist people when applying for Bike Wise funds
- the Bike Wise website (check it out at www.bikewise.co.nz & send your comments or suggestions to Felicity).

The next CSC meeting is on Friday 5 April. Members can pass issues on to Robert Ibell who acts as the CSNZ/CAN rep on the committee – 04-385 2557 or <dawbell@actrix.gen.nz>. ☺

Robert Ibell

Cycling Research

Initial Census 2001 Travel Information Available

Were you one of the 40,000 NZ'ers who cycled last March 6? The first detailed data from the 2001 census has come out; check it out at www.stats.govt.nz. Here are some travel-to-work statistics for you (only national figures available so far):

Main Means of Travel to Work on Census Day	Census Usually Resident Population Count	Percentage of those who Travelled to Work
Worked at Home	166,731	-
Did Not Go To Work Today (e.g. sick)	195,576	-
Drove a Private Car, Truck or Van	831,978	63.80%
Drove a Company Car, Truck or Van	164,667	12.60%
Passenger in a Car, Truck, Van or Company Bus	76,605	5.90%
Motor Cycle or Power Cycle	17,304	1.30%
Public Bus	52,167	4.00%
Train	15,111	1.20%
Bicycle	40,665	3.10%
Walked or Jogged	92,541	7.10%
Other	12,630	1.00%
Not Stated	61,290	-

So at least 83% of people rode in a Car, Truck, Van, or Motorbike. Meanwhile, the 10.2% of pedestrians and cyclists could grizzle about their relatively small recent government funding increase, compared with that for the 5.2% of public transport users!

Comparison with the 1996 census data suggests that the cycling proportion hasn't really changed (also 3.1% back then). However it will be interesting to see some of the regional comparisons; expect those in the next few months.

The census definition of "Main Means of Travel to Work" is "the method by which the respondent travelled the longest distance to their main employment on 6 March 2001." One problem with this is that it doesn't account for trips to work that involve a number of travel modes. For example, bike/drive to the train station, walk from the bus terminal, etc.

The 1997/98 LTSA Travel Survey overcame this hurdle by using travel diaries to record all trips taken by survey participants. In this way they could get a more accurate picture of overall trip patterns, although admittedly this is based on a much smaller sample (~14K people nationally). The table below shows the breakdown of all trips to work estimated from that survey:

Travel Mode (Trips to Work - main job)	Est. Annual Trips Nationally (millions)	Percentage of those who Travelled to Work
Drove a Motor Vehicle (Car, Truck, Motorcycle, etc)	414.4	68.60%
Passenger in a Motor Vehicle	48.8	8.10%
Bus	10.3	1.70%
Bicycle	13.6	2.30%
Walked	109.4	18.10%
Other (incl. Train, Ferry, Plane)	7.6	1.30%

Walking is clearly a big winner when examined this way; many trips to work have a walking component in them. Interestingly, cycling trips outnumbered bus trips in the 1997/98 survey, perhaps evidence of the recent success in getting people onto public transport. Having said that, the proportion of cyclists appears to have gone up slightly too (even when ignoring the effect of walking trips), so maybe our recent advocacy efforts haven't been in vain in reversing the declining trends of old...

The LTSA Travel survey data also contains information on trips made for other purposes too, e.g. education, shopping, recreation. At the very least, it would be nice too if in the future Statistics NZ also found out how students travel to school or tertiary institutions on census day!

Some online references:

- Statistics NZ Census 2001 website:
<<http://www.stats.govt.nz/census.htm>>.
- LTSA 1997/98 Travel Survey:
<http://www.ltsa.govt.nz/research/travel_survey/research/travel_survey.html>

Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz)

Talk Given At Otaki College

[The following is the text of a talk given at Otaki College on Tuesday 5th March by Liz Mikkelsen.]

My name is Elisabeth Mikkelsen, Secretary of the local cycling group OCEAN and member of the executive of the National Advocacy group: Cycling Advocates Network (CAN). I have cycled since I was 5 years old. I don't own a car.

I was asked to talk with you about safe cycling. The Police are here today to tell you about helmet wearing, so I want to make only three brief points on that issue:

1. Wearing the helmet does not ON ITS OWN protect you from getting injured or killed on the road.
2. Unless you wear a helmet that is undamaged and wear it correctly you are less protected than without the helmet.
3. In countries such as Holland and Denmark, where helmet wearing is not compulsory, there are less cyclist deaths than in New Zealand. Here are the figures:

1986-1996 – Fatalities per billion kilometres cycled

New Zealand	60
United Kingdom	47
Denmark	40
Holland	20

So What Is Wrong In New Zealand?

- Cyclists are soft traffic. There is little or no separation between us and the fast hard traffic
- .Drivers need to look out for cyclists and share the road better.
- Cyclists must be continually alert to dangers from motorists “Who do not see you!”
- Cycling is being made out to be dangerous, it is the environment you have to cycle in that may make it dangerous for you. But if you take the trouble to learn how to be safe you will be.

So How Can You Be Safe On The Road:

- FIRST – BE VISIBLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!! During the day: reflective patches/clothing or on your school bag – and at night front and back light. Ever thought about how strange it is that bikes are sold without lights? You wouldn't think of selling a car without a light.

- **MAINTAIN YOUR BIKE** – a broken pedal or a loose wheel can be your undoing.
- **LEARN GOOD HANDLING SKILLS** and use them sensibly. Get a group of friends together and practise on an empty parking space
 - Learn to brake hard without coming off, using back brake and front brake together
 - Ride with one hand on handlebars while signalling
 - Learn to balance while at a standstill
 - Learn to balance while cycling slowly
 - Signal, Signal and Signal again. **LEFT, RIGHT AND STOP**. This helps motorists know what you are going to do.
 - Learn the road code, the rules for you are exactly the same as for motorists. Speed fines too – a cyclist in Taupo got a speed fine for going 70 km in a 50 km zone.
- **BE ALERT!** At intersections or side roads, catch the eye of **DRIVERS** of cars waiting to enter or cross the street you are on, make sure they have seen you. Slow down and be ready to break hard.
- **SELECT YOUR LANE!** In Intersections marked with lanes – select your lane, if you are going straight, place yourself in the same lane as motor vehicles going straight. You are a vehicle, so you are allowed to do this. The best way is to move up in front of the first car in the queue, because then you can be quick away at green light and if you are turning right, you have time to show the line of motorists which way you are going by giving hand signal to the right. It requires care to cycle between two lanes of stationary cars on the approach to lights or a busy roundabout, in case cars start moving and try to change lanes.
- **LEFT HAND TURNS!** If you are going left – stay in the left hand side but not too close to the curb and try to be in clear view of the driver in the car, truck or bus, make sure they have seen you, or they may turn left too sharply and squeeze you. (Drivers sometimes do not signal left turns) Trucks and buses are particularly dangerous when turning left, because they claim not to be able to see you.
- **PARKED CARS! BE ESPECIALLY ALERT!** Do not cycle in and out between parked cars. Cycle in a straight line about _ meter away from parked cars to avoid being doored. If you are holding up cars – wait till you have a sizeable break in the line of parked cars and give way
- **DRAIN GRATINGS!** Do not cycle too close to the curb, cycle at least a meter away from the curb. Why? Because there may be vertical drain gratings that just love to catch bicycle tyres. Also a moment of inattention may mean you touch the curb with your front wheel and become unbalanced. Some roads have steep cambers.

- **OVERTAKING AND TURNING TRAFFIC!** If you are cycling in the left hand side of the road and want to continue straight past a side road or through an intersection and you hear a car behind you, watch out because the driver may overtake you and turn left right in front of you. That is why it is terribly important NOT to wear those earphones some of you are cycling around with.
- **ISLANDS** – Watch out for islands which narrow the roads – they are traps for cyclists in two ways:
- You may forget that they are there
- Two, motor vehicles may try to overtake you while you are within the narrow part. When you see one – pull out safely – looking back then cycle through the middle.

Cycle Assertively But Also Considerately. What Do I Mean?

If you need to get into the middle lane to go straight or turn right – first look back – give hand signal– look again to see if there is traffic now, if there is notice if the traffic has slowed down to let you through – Then go – don't hesitate, because then you only confuse the traffic. In short! Make a decision then go for it if the way is clear. Learn to start away at a traffic light fast. If you are really good you will be able to balance till the light turns green. Otherwise stay in the saddle with one foot on the ground and be ready to GO AND GET AWAY the minute the light turns green.

Incidentally, cycling is good training for learning to drive a car because, on a bike you are always on the lookout for dangerous behaviour of other drivers and always expecting the worst – such as U-turns right in front of you, drivers not seeing you in a roundabout and drivers not seeing you at intersections – or drivers misjudging your speed. (Average speed of a cyclist is 20-25 km/hour, that means you travel about 50 m in 1 minute.

DON'T GIVE UP – KEEP CYCLING – THE MORE OF US ON THE ROAD – THE SAFER WE WILL ALL BE!!!!!!!!!!!!

General Health Benefits Of Cycling In Project Evaluation

The Sumner to City cycleway in Christchurch is nearing completion. Two short sections are missing before the cycle facility is continuous over its whole 10 or so kilometres, connecting the seaside suburb Sumner with the inner city.

Most of the work so far has been relatively 'inexpensive' and has been fully ratepayer funded, but for the \$190,000 Aldwins / Ensors / Ferry intersection widening for fitting in some cycle lanes, subsidy from the state funding agency Transfund has been sought. Christchurch City Council has claimed general health benefits in the funding request for the first time, and the independent project peer review has approved the chosen methodology.

The methods of working out benefits are prescribed in Transfund's 'Project and Evaluation Manual' (PEM). CAN has regularly been meeting with Transfund on cycling policy issues, and in December 2000 raised the issue of including general health benefits of cycling in the project evaluation procedures for the first time. The two main objectives of this were:

- To make it easier for road controlling authorities to obtain government subsidy for cycling projects, and
- To counter the widespread view (within the transportation fraternity) that 'cycling is dangerous and thus needs to be discouraged', when in fact the general health benefits far outweigh any potential safety risks¹.

In its November 2001 meeting, the Transfund board approved the inclusion of general health benefits of cycling into the PEM. Although the next revision of the PEM is only due to be published later in 2002, the methodology can already be used. In essence, cycling accrues benefits of \$0.10 per kilometre travelled.

The methodology says that when a missing link in a route is added, cycle travel over the whole route (rather than just along the missing link) can be claimed as a benefit. The rationale is that the missing link may stop people travelling by bike along the whole route, potentially switching to a more sedentary mode of transport.

The challenge with the Aldwins / Ensors / Ferry was to establish the annual cycle usage on the Sumner to City cycleway. Historic count data for morning and afternoon cycle usage at the intersection was available, but this only covers 3 hours of weekday travel through the intersection itself. To get an estimate of the daily usage profile, all-day counts from four other locations were used and the peak hour counts scaled up in accordance with the profiles established elsewhere. Although this may sound crude, the very same methodology is often used for motorised traffic, and in fact, the daily profile for cyclists looks similar to an urban arterial road traffic profile.

Some weekend cycle counts were then undertaken to get an idea of the weekend usage of the intersection. But most importantly, a survey was carried out on site to find out how far cyclists were travelling on the Sumner to City cycleway. Some 50 cyclists were interviewed about their journey, which yielded average travel distances for weekday and weekend data.

The other type of benefit for this project was a predicted reduction in crashes, but the general health benefits accounted for some 60% of the overall benefits, i.e. the major component. Without this new type of benefit, this project would not have qualified for Transfund subsidy. My impression is that Christchurch City Council would have gone ahead with the project even without the Transfund subsidy, but some road controlling authorities would probably not have implemented the project without receiving that funding, showing the importance of the new methodology.

CAN has been impressed with Transfund's quick uptake of the suggested inclusion of general health benefits into the PEM. Our thanks go to the staff who have worked hard to achieving this policy change, with Kate Collins deserving a special mention.

The author would be pleased to assist other road controlling authorities in the use of general health benefits of cycling in economic evaluations. It should be noted that this methodology could also be used for general roading projects, as long as improvements for cyclists are achieved.

Axel Wilke (axel.wilke@can.org.nz)

[1] In fact, the British Medical Association published research in the mid 1990's, outlining that the 'years gained through cycling' far outnumbers the 'years lost due to cycle crashes'. Mayer Hillman, the author of the BMA research, later published a 20:1 ratio for the 'gains' versus the 'losses'. 🚲

Christchurch City Council Introduces Pool Bikes

The Council has taken a leap forward in making Christchurch a safer, quieter, less polluted and more civilised city. They have taken money usually spent on pool cars, and bought 2 cracking pool bikes instead.

The pool bikes will be used to attend site visits, meetings and so on within the '4-Avenues' which frame the city centre. The bikes are user friendly for the cyclist about town. They aim to keep life simple, and feature:

- Carrier racks to sling bags on,
- Chain guards to keep skirts and flares intact,
- Helmets to keep brains intact,
- Mudguards to keep riders nice and dry,
- Stands in case there are no walls available within the city that day,
- Locks, obviously.

They even have bells to tinkle at car-bound colleagues as cyclists saunter on by them in traffic queues. Yep, thanks to these bikes, Christchurch will be a more civilised place.

One bike is the equivalent of an automatic car: it changes gear for you. Completely idiot-proof! The other bike will appeal to all the show-ponies within the Council: who could resist the 1950s style cruiser?? You can guarantee staff will get spotted checking-out their reflections in shop windows as they sail past!

The pool bikes are the latest in a range of initiatives to encourage staff to cycle, as the Council strives to become a cycle friendly employer. The Council also boasts secure, covered bike parking, lockers and showers,

and a dollar-a-day maintenance allowance for those who prefer to use their own bikes for business journeys, rather than taking a pool bike, or worse still, pool car! 🚲

Victoria Lawson, CCC

Whatever You Do Don't Mention Cars!

Helmetists (those who advocate helmet use) worldwide like people to wear helmets; they are not just for bicyclists, just about all sports and even walking – they even managed to make the latter compulsory in one city – are targets. However, regardless of how valid they might believe helmet wearing is for motorists there is an unwritten rule that you don't mention this fact. Why? Well who in Government, or automobile clubs, is going to support the forcing of bicyclists to wear helmets if it also means they will have to wear them in their cars? Exactly.

However a few years ago the *Australian Transport Safety Bureau* (ATSB) broke the helmetist ranks and published a report announcing what the professionals already knew; wearing helmets in cars made at least as much sense as wearing them on bikes. News of this report didn't go down too well, both the NZ AA and the then Minister of Transport were quick to dismiss it; and the Minister was less than pleased, as indicated in a letter to the editor, after the Dominion published an article I wrote highlighting the issue of helmet wearing in cars and the hypocrisy of the NZ situation.

Surprisingly the ATSB are still persuing the issue, though apparently in the form of headbands only and not complete helmets:



The above picture is taken from the October 2001 report:

Further Development of a Protective Headband for Car Occupants,
Anderson RWG, Ponte G, McLean AJ, Tiller R and Hill S

The keywords on this report are:

Head protection, Helmet, Car occupant protection, Energy absorbing materials, Impact testing

While the abstract reads:

"In this report, we document a series of tests of different energy absorbing materials, to ascertain the potential benefit of a protective headband worn by car occupants. The testing reported on here extends the work reported in CR193 "The development of a protective headband for car occupants" (Anderson et al., 2000) by investigating the suitability of materials that, on the whole, are more efficient in absorbing energy than those tested in CR193. CR193 did not consider the form that the headband might take in a production version. This is also addressed in this report with a chapter on the development of a design concept that would be feasible to manufacture and deliver to market."

So it seems the issue of helmets for car occupants is not going to go away like the NZ helmetists would like, and one day they may have to answer for their current hypocritical stance. We can but hope this happens of course, as the current situation is clearly either bad for bicyclists or motorists!

Explanation: The *theory* of helmet wearing argues that certain levels of protection are gained by wearing a helmet during various activities. The claimed benefits are around seventeen times more motorist lives saved compared to bicyclists' live if both wear helmets – a rather significant ratio if you happen to be a motorist! You can choose to accept this theory or not, either after studying the research or simply based on your own "common sense." The problem in NZ; apart from bicycle helmet legislation that has failed and a Government which apparently couldn't care less of course; is that those who claim to accept this theory when referring to bicyclists then go out and risk their own heads in their cars, showing they don't really accept it at all...Their dislike of the ATSB reports would seem to stem from this dichotomy in their behaviour.

The full report can be obtained from:

<http://www.atsb.gov.au/road/rpts/cr205>

The report is rather technical, with lots of figures, graphs and equations. But the message of this and earlier reports is simple: if you believe that the risk of head injury while bicycling is high enough, and the protection offered by helmets sufficiently mitigates this risk, then wear a helmet or headband in your car. ☸

Dr N Perry, University of Canterbury

Photo Gallery

Quadcycle

The cycle shown on the front cover and below was the idea of its rider, and was built with the help of Robert Stein who kindly supplied the photographs. ☺



Dual Cycleway!



This dual cycleway was spotted in Nelson by Iain Dephoff. ☺

PLEASE JOIN ME UP TO CAN

Name
Address
.....
Phone
Fax
Email
Occupation

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Unwaged	\$15
Family	\$25
Waged	\$20
Supporting Organisation	\$50

Membership Fee \$
Plus a donation of \$
Total \$

Please make cheque payable to
Cycling Advocates Network

Please send information about 'Cycle Safe' Insurance

How did you find out about CAN?
.....
.....

Please send with your cheque to: Cycle Advocates Network,
PO Box 6491, Auckland

Deadline for next issue is Apr 19th 2002

Please submit news items, articles, "Letters to the Editor", "comment" etc.
Send to <ChainLinks@can.org.nz>, or post items c/o CAN, PO Box 6491,
Auckland – electronic submission is strongly encouraged. For advertising
inquires please email <can@actrix.gen.nz> or write to CAN. ♻

