



Annual General Meeting 12 April 2016, 6:00-8:30pm Broadacre House, Newcastle upon Tyne

Minutes (DRAFT) – to be reviewed and approved at AGM 2017

Present: Scott Dawson (Committee member), Roderick Joyce (Committee member), Katja Leyendecker (Chair), Claire Prospert (Secretary), John Watson (Treasurer), Sally Watson (Committee member), Grace Adams, Paul Adams, Tom Bailey, Cllr Ged Bell, Patrick Carr, Michael Cookson, Wilbert Den Hoed, Bill Dodds, Karen Elliott, Nicky Frearson, Michael Gardner, Richard Groves, Ruth Hayward, Richy Hetherington, Graham Jellett, Tom King, Cllr Felicity Mendelson, William Mortada, Neil Murphy, Mark Nelson, Rorie Parsons, Colin Percy, Cllr Dan Perry, Pete Pickard, Carlton Reid, Bob Richard, Shannon Robalino, Cath Scaife, Chris Sherratt, James Stanton, Armelle Tardiveau, Andrew Thorp, Tony Waterson, Rupert Weare, Peter Wesolowski, Laura Wilkinson, Nicola Young, Nils Clemmetsen (observer), John Dales (Urban Movement), Paul Gasson (London Cycling Campaign, Waltham Forest) Graham Grant (Newcastle City Council), Ali Lamb (Newcastle City Council)

Apologies: Cllr Nick Forbes, Alistair Ford, Kathleen Aldane. Suzy and Peter Fenton, Kath Lohfink, Paul Snedker, David Moorhead, Peter Ward, Cllr Marion Talbot, David Hogg, Thomas Hall, Vicky Gilbert, Rachel Overman, Robert Mullen, Emily Pippard, David Angel (Davva), Cllr Rob Higgins, Glenn Howe, Gav Warrender, Karen Nelson, Peter Macdonald, John Litherland

1. Chair's welcome

Katja Leyendecker, the co-founder and Chair of Newcycling since 2010, welcomed the audience and asked **Claire Prospert** to lead on the formal business of the AGM

2. Minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM held on 24 March 2014 at the Cycle Hub were approved as a true record with no matters arising.

3. Reports (for information)

Claire Prospert, presented the annual report, which also is on the Campaign's website. Our motto, last year, was transport transition. We don't think that the transport authorities have embraced the need for change and the shift from the private car to sustainable transport including cycling. The current status quo is the answer and it does not do enough to enable cycling. Our focus remained on quality cycling infrastructure and political engagement. Our newly set up infrastructure team led by Scott was very busy, clocking a record number of volunteers' hours through preparation, attendance and follow up of council's Technical Advisory Group meetings, and discussions of council plans online and face-to-face. The team prepared and submitted 33 technical responses in total, some of them quite detailed. We made good use of our Campaign's policies: sustainable safety and protected space on main roads, saving time for responses. More facts and figures are in our Annual Report, available on the website. Claire concluded by thanking all committee members, volunteers and members who helped the Campaign last year.

John Watson, Treasurer, summarised the financial annual report: we started the year with a positive balance of £2,700 and finished it with about £2,400, a healthy financial situation. Our expenditure amounted to just over £2,000 and we raised an income of £1,700. Most of our income came from members' donations (Thank you!) and corporate members' fees. John made a call for donations, in particular during the "grow your tenner" campaign of localgiving (our donations host), which will happen again in October. The window for donations which get doubled up to £10 may be very small (a week) so do watch out for our call for donations, every pound you give helps the campaign. In terms of expenditure, main costs are website maintenance (after a cost review, we have recently switched hosts to keep costs down), travel costs to events and training, promotion materials (e.g. Space for Cycling ride in April) and resources and books (e.g. sustainable transport without the hot air from Steve Melia).

4. Management Committee 2016-17

Claire Prospert introduced the process to appoint the Management Committee. As there were fewer nominations than 10 (max places available on the committee), it will not be necessary to hold a formal election.

The following members expressed an interest to remain on the committee and Claire Prospert asked for members in attendance to second them:

- **Scott Dawson** – seconded by **Tony Waterson**
- **Roderick Joyce** – seconded by **Tom King**
- **Katja Leyendecker** – seconded by **Shannon Robalino**
- **Claire Prospert** – seconded by **Richy Hetherington**
- **Sally Watson** – seconded by **Cath Scaife**
- **John Watson** – seconded by **Carlton Reid**

As is customary, the constituted posts and roles will be discussed and appointed at the first Committee Management meeting in May. It is possible to co-opt members onto the committee throughout the year, anybody interested please contact the Secretary.

This concluded the formal business part of the AGM 2016.

5. Campaign Plan 2016/17

Katja Leyendecker presented the draft campaign plan for 2016-17, which builds on our transport transition message and continued political engagement.

After a year of articulating what transport transition is and communications with key city decision makers, we are proposing to return this year to lobbying for a quality cycling network. The Campaign will still be focusing on Newcastle (dealing with one council is keeping us busy enough), but we are keen to hear from surrounding authorities' areas and support other groups around (and local groups within) Newcastle. Worth noting that Newcastle council is doing a lot to activate people in local communities which is good to see but the Council's message/vision could be stronger.

Our own vision is about liveable cities – since the creation of the Campaign in 2010, we have been very clear that we want a better transport system for Newcastle and that the Campaign supports a much broader agenda, i.e. cities which are healthy, fair, inclusive, green and sustainable. And of course, cycling is a key ingredient of liveable cities.

Newcycling's vision, please see Katja's presentation: "Every modern liveable city has embraced cycling – an inexpensive quick means of active transport, which is inclusive, green and healthy. And our aspiration for Newcastle is just that. We are looking to learn from cycle cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam. We know from speaking to local people, that many don't cycle because of the aggressive traffic and road environments. Yet, many like the idea of getting around by bike. Together we are asking for better cycling conditions and more dedicated space for cycling."

More precisely, creating the built environment that enables cycling for all. So this year, we will re-focus on the adoption and implementation of a quality cycling network. Let's look at the council policy –the council is already committed to build 7 strategic Cycle routes and a (city centre) ring road, as stated in the One Core Strategy– **Bill Dodds**, in the audience, will recognise his "tube map" concept.

Our proposal consists of 9+2 routes (7+2 radial routes and 1+1 ring routes - city centre + periphery). These 9+2 routes will be the key protected cycleways of the city. Our priority is to make this network council policy and have it included in the City Plans. We are determined to put the cycling network back on the map and it may take longer than the next year!

In addition, we want to see quality built into the cycling network. And we believe that Sustainable Safety, the Dutch infrastructure principles, can help do that. Indeed we were very impressed by the way Dutch do road safety when they visited

Newcastle in 2013. They do it in a very holistic, inclusive and intuitive way. Sustainable Safety is based on:

- the creation of a network, and the clear functionality and classification of roads
- the elimination of risks and the problems at source through design
- consistency in the design to make it recognisable
- how human beings behave

Throughout next year, there will be opportunities for members and Councillors to be involved and support the Campaign's plan.

If you're a member, please watch out for our calls/requests to write to your Councillors and/or MP. If you are a Councillor, check out for the strategic cycle route through your ward and get involved. Our website provides lots of resources for Councillors. The Campaign is also involved in the newly established Newcastle Transport Forum – walking and public transport are allies of cycling.

A member, in the audience, asked how key stakeholders can be convinced by the proposed plan. The panel discussion will cover this question.

6. Speakers

Cllr Ged Bell, Cabinet member and portfolio holder for Investment and Development at Newcastle City Council, addressed the audience and made clear his strong support for cycling improvements and better, safer streets:

- He has a wide remit including the implementation of the One Core strategy and works with many organisations across the city
- Like others, he had good and bad experiences with highway design
- A culture of change is needed, he is too often criticised by people who want to use their car “from their lounge to office desk” and claim the right to their own individual “highway”. This has to change.
- Our roads have seen and will continue to see significant investments, the council was successful with CCAF, key junctions monies and more than £60m have been secured for highways improvement
- One of the council's priorities is to develop decent neighborhoods, places and communities which are safe, enjoyable, pleasant and where people would want to move to.
- Councillors have shown support to cycling with 67% in support of space for cycling – so broad political support is there.
- At the same time there is opposition to change and Acorn Road in Jesmond is a prime example with shop owners initially strongly opposing improvements for cycling and walking. Now the debate has changed, and support is growing. But cycling seems to be a strong point of conflict.
- Pedestrianisation, safe space for cycling divide opinions so do not be silent

and make your voice heard.

- Changes happening or planned in neighbourhoods or in the city centre, such as John Dobson Street require strong will and political resolve – and community and individual support is essential too – people are needed to make cultural change happen.
- Strongly believe that these changes will create a better city and benefit all of us, and that future generations need it. Already now, walking along John Dobson Street without all the traffic is an amazing thing.
- Pollution created by traffic kill – more than 40,000 people die prematurely every year in the UK because of air pollution.
- Areas where support is needed will be Gosforth High Street and Brunton Lane

Cllr **Ged Bell** concluding by saying that tonight was his appeal for our support to make change happen together.

Paul Gasson from the Waltham Forest Cycling Campaign (part of London Cycling Campaign) was the second speaker of the evening. He gave a presentation on the Mini Holland in Waltham Forest (North London) which aimed to create liveable neighbourhoods. This scheme sparked a heated debate at local level and despite loud opposition, went ahead as a result of the strong council leadership and the collaboration and effective working together between the council and the local cycling campaign.

As research has shown, there is a huge proportion of people who would cycle if it was safer. So the key principles of Mini-Holland were very much based on that potential shift and more precisely:

- safe for those who want to cycle
- better walking environment
- public realm improvements
- removal of rat running from residential areas
- protected cycle facilities on main road to enable 8-80 to cycle

Waltham Forest has about 45,000 residents and includes different neighbourhoods (see map in the presentation). The scheme combined different elements: management measures (villagisation), a cycle superhighway, secondary town centres and complementary measures (bike hangars, cyclehub and events/rides).

Paul showed a number of photos documenting before/after situations: filtered permeability, Copenhagen crossings, bike lanes behind bus stops, new public spaces, etc.

The local council had a solid programme of public engagement with meetings, workshops, drop-ins, an on street kiosk, newspaper and online tools too: the common place platform was used for perception surveys and consultations (Newcastle recently started using it too), microsite (see slide from the presentation, with lots of pictures, people from all ages and backgrounds) and monthly e-news.

The local cycling campaign focused on the technical aspects of the programme

implementation: its infrastructure team was involved at an early stages and advised the council on both scheme concepts and design details. Another key input of the local campaign was to describe what the Mini Holland was and document progress: Mini Holland FAQ, key issues and successes. It also provided support at events.

As opposition against the scheme was mounted by from car-centric individuals fearful of losing 'rights', a new resident-based group "We support Mini-Holland" was formed to civilise the debate. It acted as a funnel for communicating important public issues to the council, attending meetings and workshops and organising local support. They were active online and on social media – focus was on positive messages, describing reasons and pushing for improvements. The group developed materials to counter myths and keep local people informed of opportunities for participation.

The key challenges were the sheer scale and time available which made a top-down approach of the programme inevitable, and came up against car centric culture and local businesses' perception. The local cycling campaign worked at a strategic and operational level with the council rather than being involved in community matters, enabling the "We support MH" group to step up, mobilise people and drum up the local support.

Paul talked about lessons learned and gave tips about what can help with local campaigning to create cycling, walking and generally more people friendly built environments:

- creating a compelling vision, right at the start, evidence based, positive, inclusive and vibrant
- use smart language (non threatening), avoid the word "cyclist"
- high quality pilots
- before and after pictures speak a million words
- don't waste your time arguing on twitter – not the right tool for discussion

There was real and solid political leadership locally, with Cllr Clyde Loakes, the Deputy Leader of Waltham Forest council, standing firm in support of the Mini Holland scheme and a better environment for people.

Finally, council officers worked closely with community and user groups – they were open to feedback and there was genuine partnership at all stages – through from feasibility, consultation to detailed design and implementation.

7. Panel Discussion – Bikelash: working together through change

John Dales from Urban Movement, currently advising Newcastle council on a number of schemes, introduced the speakers. He is a firm believer that cycling and more generally people-friendly space is great for cities. He is also involved in Living Streets and chairs the Transport Planning Society. The panel is made up with **Ged Bell** and **Paul Gasson**, who both spoke earlier, **Ali Lamb**, Community facilitator for transport development at Newcastle City Council, and **Sally Watson**,

committee member of NewCycling.

Bikelash is the topic of the debate – we are trying to make our cities more liveable and provide a better environment for all. How to counter car-centric opposition and mobilise public support? It is not the existing cyclists who will benefit most it is the wider community. John invited the audience to ask questions.

Question 1 (Carlton Reid): The Deputy Leader of Waltham Forest is from the Labour Party, so is Ged Bell. Are public realm improvements more Labour/Green than Conservative policies?

Ged Bell answered by referring to the recent residents' petition on Brunton Lane (North Newcastle) against changes to motor movements (zoning), fuelled by the Lib Dems. These situations are very disappointing. Promoting safer space for cycling and public realm improvements for better walking conditions should be supported by all parties and there should be cross-party support. Unfortunately and too often, cycling becomes a political football, being kicked by local politicians to score points especially near elections time. The Labour group in Newcastle is in support of cycling. Katja pointed out that other Labour Councillors are in attendance tonight: Cllr Dan Perry and Cllr Felicity Mendelson (sadly, no Lib Dem could be noted).

We need to re-think consultations; too often they give rise to all sorts of arguments rather than reasoned ones. Participation needs to be well thought through and expertly managed.

Question 2 (Armelle Tardiveau): What engagement tools work better than others? Paul Gasson talked about temporary measures, how long were they in place for?

In Newcastle, like in Waltham Forest, it was a steep learning curve – Acorn Road in Jesmond showed all sorts of tensions and it is now clear that the council should avoid putting any consultation forward as a popularity contest, with Yes/No options, which can further antagonise different sections of the community. **Ali Lamb** explained that consultation happens in phases: with engagement first around “concept” plans followed by a more detailed technical consultations.

Temporary measures in Waltham Forest were installed for 3 weeks only and **Paul Gasson** indicated that it would have been better if it had been for longer, perhaps 2 months or longer. The enlarged square showed in one of the slides was created following road closure.

Question 3 (Tony Waterson): Air quality is an important element, and there is not much information on the Newcastle council website. Can we have accurate monitoring data for key areas, also showing the impact of traffic reduction measures before and after intervention?

In Waltham Forest, the council did not use air quality data and did not believe it would have in impact. But in retrospect maybe it would have.

In Newcastle, air quality monitoring is in place in the city centre and Gosforth but

information is not used enough. In some areas in particular, pollution is a big issue. Measurement for Gosforth show high levels. There is an on-going fight on the high street about improvements. And the narrative about air quality is working, it is tampering the opposition.

The council is working to integrate Public Health in transport. As an example, the council Active Travel board (previously CCAF board) will involve Public Health – links need to be further developed between highways and public health

Question 4 (Chris Sherratt): filtered permeability can be done but closing major rat runs can be difficult – as shown in Waltham Forest. People in opposition cannot see the attractiveness of proposed changes. What can be done about it?

Policies and plans are the starting point – so consultations should not be about whether improvements have to be done but how they can be done.

There are engagement tools in Newcastle such as the commonplace website (interactive based map site); it was recently introduced and has been used for new schemes, and it has helped. It is open and transparent. However it is important to be clear from the outset about what is negotiable and what is not. Lots of work has happened to put in place and improve engagement mechanisms following delivery of first schemes. A review of the consultation process would be good.

Who are the opponents? It is important to recognise that opposition can be a (very vocal) minority, a hardcore which cannot be converted. Opponents objection are often based on misunderstandings or can pursue very small personal causes. It would be interesting to look at the psychology of it. The opposition is not the majority and attention should not focus on them. In Jesmond, as **Sally Watson** noted, there was community support to civilise Acorn Road.

It helps in the long term to document the process of change and storify improvements and the creation of liveable space. Do some homework first, have a good dataset, use infographics and photos. Hard data /evidence (often ignored by opponents) need to be combined with a personal and human stories and visuals.

Finally, and most importantly, everything comes back to the compelling vision. A clear uncompromised vision, supported by policies and plans. A vision which is about creating a better place for all, healthier, more inclusive, more sustainable and more pleasant.

Question 5 (Neil Murphy): The focus is on key corridors and improvements in wealthy areas – what about deprived communities? Investment in those areas is important too.

Ged Bell quoted that, in Newcastle, only 42% of households have access to a car, and in deprived communities it's much lower still. He rhetorically asked "So who am I representing?" It is a clear reminder for politicians to engage with numbers and understand their wards' needs. In place like Kenton (Ged Bell's ward) and Byker for example, plans for improvements need to be holistic, not just about transport or just about 'reducing inequalities'. Rather, fundamental questions need

to be asked about the use and health of our streets, public space, play areas etc.

8. Partners' updates

Katja Leyendecker started wrapping up the meeting, addressed the floor and invited partners in the audience to introduce themselves and give an update on their activities:

Pete Pickard from Recyke Y' Bike announced that it was the tenth anniversary of Recyke which is going strong and still growing. They are planning events and celebrations starting with their participation at the Late Shows in Newcastle on 14/15 May 2016, at the Journey. More information on their website.

Patrick Carr keenly announced the opening of his bike shop/workshop above the Pedalling Squares café in Gateshead and invited everybody to come and visit.

Rupert Weare introduced Space for Gosforth, a new residents group promoting sustainable transport. He invited anybody who lives in Gosforth to contact them and get involved.

END