

NEWCYCLING ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDED MARCH 2020

For a City with Space for Cycling. We lobby. We campaign. We publish.
We inform.



Cycling Infrastructure Safari in the West end – Thanks Chi Onwurah MP for joining us!

<http://newcycling.org>

<http://twitter.com/NewCycling> (twitter)

<https://www.facebook.com/NewcastleCyclingCampaign> (facebook)

Chair's foreword

Writing this from the vantage point of September 2020, six months after our AGM was supposed to take place, I'm reflecting that 2019-20 really was a dispiriting year for us as campaigners. Many ambitious plans for cycleways, such as for Barras Bridge, had fallen by the wayside and Streets for People appeared to have stalled. This was all the more frustrating given the spotlight on air quality and climate change in the political arena and the press.

Regardless, we pressed on with highlighting the vital role that cycling infrastructure can play in solving many of our 21st century urban problems. As a relatively inexpensive form of transport which helps people keep active and gives them, particularly children, more independence, it is inclusive, healthy and good for the planet. We made these points and more in responses to Newcastle City Council consultations on air quality and climate change.

On a more positive note, last year we came together with partner organisations to form a Sustainable Transport Coalition. We have our collective voice to show the strength of feeling there is about the urgent need for change. Ranging from national organisations to small community groups, we are all dedicated to working towards a safer, cleaner and greener city and it has been a privilege to work with so many committed campaigners.

Another reason for the importance of partnership working was Newcastle City Council's apparent withdrawal from stakeholder engagement activities, such as the Cycling Stakeholder Forum and its Technical Advisory Group. The new covid crisis has of course changed everything and we think that a fresh look at how stakeholder engagement can positively inform changes to infrastructure would be very productive going forwards.

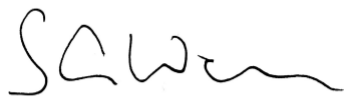
Our focus next (this!) year is on continuing to stress the importance of a network of protected cycleways and low traffic neighbourhoods in increasing cycling and of communicating these in positive terms. The stories our city's leaders tell about possible futures are important in bringing people along with them to achieve meaningful changes. We will also keep pushing for better standards of new infrastructure and to this end will ask the Council to adopt the government's new LTN 1/20 guidance on cycling infrastructure as primary guidance.

While last year was disheartening in terms of progress on cycling infrastructure in the city, we are extremely encouraged by recent changes such as those on Grey Street,

Queen Victoria Road and the five bridges now closed to motor traffic. These are small but important steps, with strong political support and leadership. Newcastle City Council has also outlined some ambitious plans and ideas in their Net Zero Newcastle: 2030 Action Plan. We know that a network for cycling is a critical part of the jigsaw and would like to see a city centre network clearly demarked, in addition to links with low traffic neighbourhoods. We have some way to go before cycling and walking are the natural first choice when deciding how to travel.

This last few months has been extremely difficult for our city and unfortunately it does look as though we are in this for the long haul. I want to thank you as members for your continued support, for your questions and challenges and for getting involved when called on. We'll be calling on you again in the coming year to support making some of the fantastic new infrastructure we are seeing on our streets a permanent feature. Watch out for these members' actions. We're also hoping to hold some online events and are always on the look-out for help with these.

Thanks again for your membership and please do get in touch if you want to get more involved in the campaign!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SAW' followed by a long, horizontal flourish.

Campaign in a year – review of our activities

Air Quality and Climate Emergency

The year was dominated by two major public consultations run by Newcastle City Council:

- The air quality consultation initiated in March 2019 and deployed through two stages leading to a final proposal submitted in January 2020. This was carried out jointly with Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead Councils.
- The climate emergency consultation issued in January 2020 and for which we submitted a reply

These consultations generated significant interest amongst the public. It resulted in the plan to tackle air quality to be significantly watered down.

Our [reply to the climate change call for evidence](#) included a number of recommendations to reduce transport carbon emissions through radical steps to reduce motorised traffic and provide space for cycling and walking, set at two levels:

- Strategic and operational: clear vision, budget, cycle network and designs
- Transport policies: Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, protected cycle infrastructure, school streets, 20mph on all streets and parking

Cycling and walking infrastructure – How long does it take to get anything built?

Progress in building cycling and walking infrastructure in the city didn't come close to the colossal consultative efforts from the Council. It is easy to lose track of what is really happening on the ground when reporting on a yearly basis. The two flagship programmes from the council, i.e. streets for people and the strategic cycle routes now developing into a full network through the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP) have indeed encountered many obstacles and progress has been slow over the last 3 years. We have yet to see any measures built on the ground!

It's worth looking back and getting a better sense of how long the process of building cycling infrastructure can take in Newcastle.

LCWIP timeline (2016-2019)

2016 – National Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Strategy consultation is launched

March 2017 – NewCycling publishes response to the national consultation

1 April 2017 – NewCycling holds their AGM which included a workshop on cycling network

April 2017 Government publishes the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and technical guidance for plans

January 2018: 78 LAs including Newcastle are successful in receiving financial and technical support to plan cycling and walking networks

3 January 2019: NewCycling responds to the NCC consultation on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans

21 March 2019: Council gives an update following end of consultation period at the stakeholder forum (responses from NewCycling and SPACE groups were noted)

19 September 2019: Council presents a map in development of the network and gives an update on the LCWIP at the Stakeholder Forum.

In November 2019, the proposed plan was submitted to DfT for comments/feedback (see minutes of Stakeholder Forum meeting). This was the last official communication from the council.

Streets for People timeline (2016-2019)

2016: the project is launched in 3 areas of Newcastle (Jesmond, Heaton and Fenham/Arthur's Hill). A reference group is set up for each area and surveys are carried with the support of [Urban Movement](#).

2017: Neighbourhood plans are developed and subject to public consultation in October and November 2017

March 2018: Findings of the consultation are published

November 2018: Council submits plans

December 2018: Prioritisation exercise involving ward councillors is carried out

January 2019: Council changes their plans sparking much disappointment amongst reference groups. In Jesmond, schemes that contribute most to cycling and walking were removed (see Space for Jesmond's [open letter to Councillors](#)).

City Centre: Barras Bridge and Percy Street (2015-2018)

September /October 2015: Council publishes transformational plans for the [City Centre North](#) areas including protected cycle lanes on Barras Bridge and Percy Street.

November 2015: NewCycling [responds](#) to consultation

November 2018: NewCycling [writes](#) to the Council's Cabinet member for Transport and Air Quality to express concerns about the "revised" plans in this part of the city centre which do not include any cycling infrastructure.

These are not the only major transport developments that have stalled over the years. The **Blue House** roundabout and the **East Pilgrim Street** redesign to accommodate the Great North Cycleway are still under review.

Our replies to technical consultation

Our replies to consultation:

- Retail core: <https://newcycling.org/retail-core-proposals-our-response/>
- West end junctions: <https://newcycling.org/junctions-in-the-west-of-the-city-newcycling-response/>

In September 2019, we responded to a Traffic Order and objected to the proposal on Queen Victoria Road, and in particular to the removal of footway by the Children Hospital.

Organisational, communication and finance

Most of the main organisational elements of the campaign have been in place since the campaign was established in October 2010 and we continue to build on its foundations. Here is a quick recap:

- The campaign is an unincorporated constituted group, you can read our constitution [here](#)
- It is managed by a Committee, a group of 6/7 active members who are planning, co-ordinating and delivering the campaign activities. This year, the committee met 6 times.
- It is entirely run by volunteers.
- It is a membership organisation, and to date we have about 1,600 members – anybody who supports our aims and objectives can sign up online for free [here](#) as an individual or a family.

- Since July 2014 **Christian Wolmar**, highly-respected transport journalist and a political activist himself, is the [Patron of the Campaign](#).
- We have a bank account with the Cooperative Bank and are supported by LocalGiving, an online fundraising platform which enables people to [donate](#) to the campaign in an easy and accountable way.
- Our treasurer looks after our accounts – we keep our running costs to a minimum and thanks to our donors, especially the regular ones and our corporate sponsors, we maintained a healthy bank balance (see account at the end of the report).

The Campaign Management Committee met five times during 2019/20 on 14 May 2019, 18 June 2019, 18 September 2019, 16 January and 11 March 2020.

The Campaign held two members' social evenings in:

- September 2019 at the Cycle Hub for discussion about transport and the climate emergency.
- December 2019, with Katja Leyendecker (co-founder of NewCycling) who talked about her PhD thesis and [a decade of cycleway activism](#). It was a pleasure to welcome Katja back.

In July 2019, we organised a Cycle Safari to look at the new Elswick and Benwell cycling infrastructure and we were delighted to have Chi Onwurah MP joining us. You can read more about it [here](#).

Working with and supporting other groups

Sustainable Transport Coalition

Building on last year's joint work, we have consolidated the Campaign's links with other local groups under the Sustainable Transport Coalition which brings together a range of organisations in support of cycling, walking and public transport across the region.

The 'Sustainable Travel Coalition' is made up of Newcastle Cycling Campaign, Living Streets, Tyne & Wear Public Transport Users Group, British Cycling, Cycling UK, SPACE for Fenham and Arthur's Hill, SPACE for Gosforth, SPACE for Heaton, SPACE for Jesmond, Garden Village Action group, Newcastle Greenpeace, North Tyne Cycle, Play.Meet.Street North Tyneside, and ZMOVE.

In May 2019, the Coalition issued a [press release](#) urging Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside chiefs to act on clean air and cut dangerous pollution levels on Tyneside.

Later on, the Coalition [called for](#) a new Cycling and Walking Commissioner to be appointed in the newly created North of Tyne Combined Authority and wrote to Mayor Jamie Driscoll to do so in order to help the region tackle poor air quality and the climate crisis.

Other groups

Following on a point raised at the 2019 AGM, we also issued in May 2019 a [statement supporting Extinction Rebellion](#) and the urgency to tackle the climate crisis. In Newcastle, the transport sector has had the lowest reduction in carbon emission compared to all other sectors from 2005 to 2015.

Finally, subject to resources available, we decided to support grassroots groups by providing up to £500 a year to a local organisation or a number of organisations for specific actions or a fundraising campaign. In 2019/20, we donated £500 to **Newcastle Cycle Without Age**.

Communication, Social media and Presence in the local media

We keep our members informed of our activities via our website and an e-newsletter (many thanks to **Tim**, one of our volunteers for his help).

We are active on social media: our friends of Facebook group has more than 800 members and our twitter account has nearly 3,000 followers.

In addition to the Coalition's articles (see previous section), the Campaign featured in the following articles published in the Chronicle:

- Our reaction to [Mobike's Newcastle exit](#)
- [Call to keep cyclists safe](#)

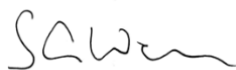


Financial Annual Report

Period 14/03/2019 – 13/03/2020

Item	Amount	Comment
	In / out	
01 Balance brought forward	£4,233.14	
2.01 Donations including GiftAid	£1,077.55	thank you for your donations!
2.02 Corporate Members fee	£30.00	
2.03 Grants	£0.00	
2.04 Interest	£0.00	
TOTAL INCOME	£1,107.55	
3.01 Room hire, refreshments & accommodation	-£295.05	
3.02 Website, publicity and events	-£234.76	
3.03 Affiliations and subscriptions	-£96.00	
3.04 Equipment and resources	£0.00	
3.05 Travel, training and conference	-£223.22	
3.06 Other - Donation to Cycling without age	-£500.00	
TOTAL OUTGOINGS	-£1,349.03	
Year end balance	£3,991.66	

Signed



Chair

Sally Watson

Signed

27-Mar-19



Secretary

Claire Prospert



Treasurer

John Watson