

Campaigns Report April 2022 - 2023

Now in my fourth year as CUKR Campaigns officer which combines many local cycling related networking and PR activities jointly with Reading Cycle Campaign, together with involvement in CUK HQ National Campaign programs (such as Big Bike Revival / Space for Cycling / Inclusive cycling support etc). This role involves external liaison with Reading Borough Council (RBC) and other transport related bodies (DfT / Sustrans etc); attending Cycle & Transport Forum; input to the planned "Cycle Hub"; communicating key topics back with CUKR committee / sharing consultation information with members and providing a response on behalf of the local group. I also representing CUKR at Reading Cycle Campaign meetings, co-ordinate with local environmental and other similar/ supportive groups and facilitating member attendance at appropriate events. The primary aim is to ensure a voice for CUKR representing "every day" / commuting cyclists at as many outlets as possible and lobbying for increased share of RBC transport and environmental funding to be spent on suitable cycling facilities. Also supporting the Publicity Officer and committee in awareness of the club and recruitment of new members to join rides through ongoing engagement and communications.

Cycling UK Central HQ has continued to deliver its annual schedule of events; including further rounds of the **Big Bike Revival Campaign** (specifically focussed on encouraging new or returning riders through beginner and confidence building cycle sessions and Bike Week. I have continued to support these through partnerships with **Reading Bicycle Kitchen and Avanti Cycling** – gaining funding for the Reading area and encouraging a source of potential new members for CUKR.

RBC are also continuing to fund a programme of activities to support more adults into regular cycling which are being run by Avanti Cycling including cycle training from complete beginner to road commuting skills, Dr Bike monthly repair sessions in the town centre and Bike maintenance workshops; being run by Reading Bicycle Kitchen plus Dr Bike pop up repairs.

<https://avanticycling.co.uk/well-give-you-the-confidence-to-ride/>

All these activities are potential good sources of new CUKR members, and I try to ensure material is on display and have put lots of people in touch with the CUKR Club website & FB groups following participation which has led to several new members!

This will be supported further this coming year with funding being allocated to CUKR for running monthly leisurely rides designed to encourage newcomers to try out the club and dispel the myth that all cycling groups are lycra clad/ racing demons!! There is definitely a need for leisurely 15-25 mile rides to encourage more newcomers as I'm frequently asked for the next step after someone has completed several road based confidence sessions.

In addition to the Cycle & Transport meetings RBC set up the Cleaner Air, Safer Streets (CAST) forum which brings in a wider participation schools and community groups and helps in gaining Council members airtime and investment to support cycling and walking initiatives; Reading Cycle Campaign (RCC) have some very experienced committee members taking part in these forum and relevant consultations / design groups and CUKR input to prioritisation of new budgets. I have also supported RCC in running several "inclusive" rides around Reading's best – and worst - cycling infrastructure to highlight the good, bad and ugly of transport planning – aim to link participants with CUKR for the more "leisurely" side of cycling.

This year **Bike Week** runs from **10-16 June 2024** celebrating everyday cycling for everyone and encouraging Active Travel. The aim is for local clubs to put on additional rides during the week - specifically aimed at new members / more leisurely – so if you'd like to volunteer to run a ride please do! We can register all events on the central/ national HQ heavily promoted site which should help gain new riders/ members.

The annual Reading Cycle Festival will be held on Sunday 8th September 2024 in Christchurch meadow. CUKR plans to take part with our own stand to promote the club locally. More volunteers are needed to help man a stand on the day and/ or lead leisure rides (on and off road) to end up at the event. The Festival Organising Committee are also looking for additional volunteers to help with the overall festival logistics/ marshalling on the day etc. please contact me on campaigns@cyclingsukreading.org.uk to express interest or find out more.



Anyone with young families (or as neighbours / grandchildren etc) may be interested in participating in local **Kiddical Mass** monthly events which have gone from strength to strength since set up in Reading a few years ago. Kiddical Mass rides are a worldwide initiative, where children of all ages take to the streets of towns and cities, on bikes, adapted cycles, wheelchairs, balance-bikes etc, under safe and properly marshalled conditions. The aim is to encourage others to consider making short journeys by bike and encourage drivers to treat cyclists more safely.

HAPPY CYCLING FOR 2024 and beyond!!