

CYCLING UPDATE

ISSUE

02

INTRODUCTION

COLIN BUCHANAN HAS AN ACTIVE CYCLING TEAM, INVOLVED WITH ALL ASPECT OF CYCLING POLICY, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION. READ ON TO HEAR HOW COLIN BUCHANAN HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY WORK ON PERMEABILITY OF CYCLE ROUTES.



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CYCLE PERMEABILITY

For those who have a remit to promote cycling from a low base, it can seem a pretty daunting task. Where do we begin? A good place to start is the 'low-cost' but effective option of Permeability, a strategy that can be important for cycling for three reasons: technical, financial, and political.

Technical

The concept of permeability has been around a while but is particularly relevant for cycling. A fancy definition: the extent to which the urban layout permits (or restricts) movement. More simply, it's about maximising route choice whilst minimising diversion.

In practice, this means overcoming the potential barriers to cycling presented by a whole range of highway engineering measures which historically were implemented to optimise the street network in terms of motor vehicles; measures unfortunately which tended to forget cyclists.

Ensuring that an area is permeable for cyclists will go a long way towards making an area more conducive to cycling, especially as part of a multi-modal journey.

Financial

The beauty of a lot of permeability measures is that they can be incorporated into more general highways and streetscape development programmes. The kind of measures required need not be overtly cycle-specific. Thus, when starting out on a cycle promotion programme, you don't even need huge budgets under the heading of 'cycling': you simply implement lots of small-scale but cycle friendly measures.



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Political

One day years hence, when cycling has become mainstream, such schemes may be justified. But until then, the best use of resources is to grow the base of cyclists by targeting the most realistic journeys that people are going to make by bicycle. These are short trips, 10 to 15 minutes, to local shops and amenities, to the local train station. Because permeability measures are part of a general programme with wider benefits for all, they are less likely to be objected to.

The key points here as follows:

- In order to develop a culture of cycling, target realistic journeys first. This could be done by doing a 'permeability audit' in an area delineated by a 15-20 minute cycle isochrone.
- Keep a database of permeability measures required, and use it to integrate these measures into highway or streetscape programmes.
- Improve and increase cycle parking in town centres and rail stations.
- Supplement permeability measures (infrastructure) with marketing campaign to all households within the target area.

The idea is that this builds up a base of cyclists that, in years to come, can offer justification to expand the cycle network with cycle routes for longer journeys such as commuters.

OUR HR MANAGER'S CYCLING PROGRESS

Having not cycled - at all - for the last 15 years (and never in a town) I was extremely nervous about negotiating London traffic. However, the route recommended to me was quiet, I could go at my own pace and I really enjoyed the journey. I might have chickened out at the last minute had it not been for the effort and enthusiasm of my colleagues helping me out.

Click here to see the full article: <http://www.colinbuchanan.com/view/about-us/hr-manager-s-cycling-progress>

OUR CURRENT PROJECTS

- A4 Cromwell Road Streetscape Project
- Tavistock Place Marchmont Street Junction
- Cromwell Road junction with Earls Court Road Junction Cycle Facilities improvement Study
- Greenwich to look at a particular junction where there is a high cycle accident rate
- Hammersmith Gyrotory and Toucan Crossing improvements
- Kings Cross Cycling Improvements at Midland Road
- Euston Station Interchange Study incorporating Cycle Forecasting
- Liverpool Street Interchange Study incorporating a methodology for Cycle forecasting

PROFILE ON...PHILIP LOY



What do you think are the critical issues for cycling in major cities?

As a commuter cyclist, I think perception is all important. Many people who could potentially cycle often cite the fear of doing so in general traffic. There are two ways of addressing this: training, and engineering. Both are equally important. The two complement each other very well, but one without the other is much less effective.

Do these same issues exist in more suburban areas?

Yes, but it the strategy of how to implement cycling is a bit different. For example, facilitating shorter, local trips to town centres rather than long commutes is likely to be a more realistic medium term target.

What capabilities do you bring to the team?

Actual user experience. Whilst it's good to have theoretical knowledge, the way it's applied in practice has often been the downfall of cycle design in the UK.

What has been your most challenging role to do with cycling?

Cycling issues are as much about the politics as about the engineering. Occasionally you have to be a bit savvy about dealing with all stakeholders.

As a team, what has been your greatest success?

I think being able to complete a comprehensive tranche of studies of the Red Routes in South London has been quite a task. We completed around 20 studies in two years, no mean feat! Many of the recommendations will be useful for the Mayor's proposed cycle highways.

Where is cycling going in Britain? Is Buchanan Cycling going too?

We work with our sustainable transport colleagues to assess best practice from the Cycling England Demonstration Towns. London is currently one of the most exciting places for cycling, both because of the growth in cycling and future plans. Buchanan Cycling was there at the beginning, and there's every reason to think we'll continue to be there in the future.

NEXT ISSUE:

CYCLE SUPERHIGHWAYS, CRISP STUDIES AND A PROFILE ON JENNIFER CROWLEY.