



## THE FUTURE OF STROUD DISTRICT? SVCC can make a difference!



*'My bike's greener than your horse'*

By now you will have received a number of emails from Sheila Booth about the need to take part in the Core Strategy questionnaire which has been put out for consultation by Stroud District Council. The Core Strategy provides the vision for the 'spatial planning' of the District for the period up to 2026 and sets out the Council's policies for the future.

The questionnaire offers you 20 strategies which will help to shape the future of Stroud District and invites you to comment on them before May 1st.

You can do this by:

- filling in the questionnaire online at [www.stroud.gov.uk/core](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/core)
- sending your comments via email to [core@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:core@stroud.gov.uk)
- writing to the Council Offices at Ebley Mill, or telephoning 01453 754328
- filling in the questionnaire on paper (request a copy from the council on 754092).

Core Strategy 3 states: 'Stroud District needs to improve its public transport system and develop other alternatives, to enable people to use their cars less. The high level of car ownership and car-reliance in the district has implications for carbon reduction.....children's engagement in physical activity – including walking or cycling to school – is relatively low in our district. Meanwhile, the average age of the district's population is rising, and the transport needs of older people must be met.'

The above, alone, should engage SVCC members, so get to it and make your opinions count.

### **CARS ARE SO YESTERDAY. FIND OUT WHY AND HOW VIA GREEN TRAVEL SATURDAY 13TH JUNE 9.30am–2.30pm SUB ROOMS FORECOURT.**

This 'Green Travel' event anticipates Core Strategy 3 above. So • Investigate cheaper healthier options with free personalized travel planning and information about buses, trains, cycle & walking routes • Join the Car Club: share lifts, save money, travel with others • Free bike checks and simple repairs with Dr. Bike • Outwit thieves – get your bike postcoded • Bike Market: quality second-hand bikes, second-hand cycle parts and clothing, Gloucestershire's best cycle map • Pedal-powered painting for kids – it's fun, it's free • Electric bikes, bamboo trailers, and more.

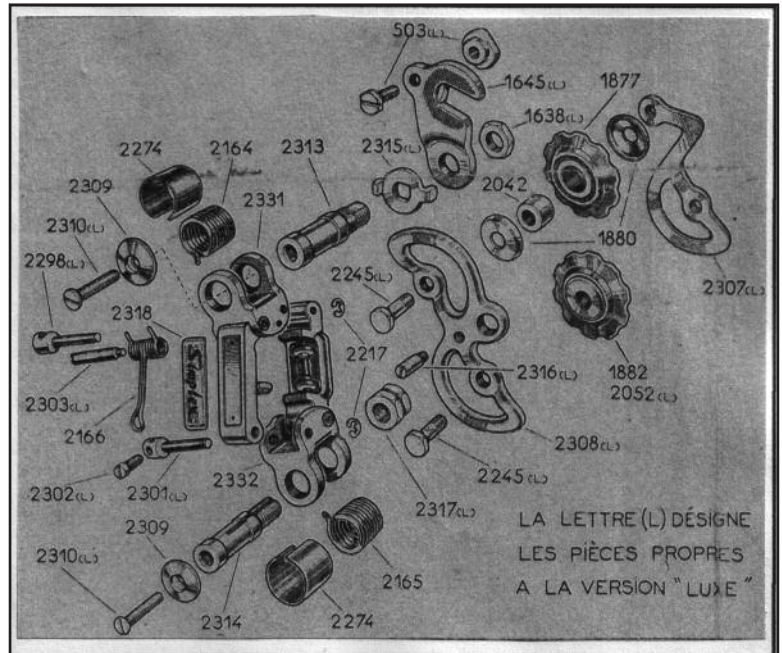
# BY THE WAY

## MAYOR BOJO PLAYS YO-YO WITH CLEAN AIR PLAN AND RISKS FINE

The European Commission has written to the Mayor of London threatening court action over air pollution. London now needs to reduce the emission of particulates by more than one third to meet EU limits.

However, the Mayor has made it difficult to make the cuts by cancelling the implementation of the next phase of the city's low emission zone.

Phase three of the low emissions zone was to have penalised vans and minibuses that fail to meet emissions standards. Mayor Johnson has cited the economic downturn as his reason for cancelling the green measure.



## EXHAUSTIVE ROLE FOR SILENT NON-POLLUTING BICYCLES

In its report *Building a Low-carbon Economy*, the Government's newly established Climate Change Committee estimates that doubling cycle use by switching from cars would reduce Britain's total greenhouse emissions by 0.6 million tonnes – almost as much as switching all London-to-Scotland air travel to rail.

## CYCLE HIRE SCHEME FOR OXFORD SECURES TOWN AND GOWN BACKING

Oxfordshire County Council has approved an 18-month pilot to test the potential for a permanent cycle hire scheme in Oxford. Members of the council's cabinet have agreed to form a steering (*sic*) group with partner organisations to develop a trial scheme. Representatives from Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University and the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust (ORHT) have indicated they would like to join the steering group.

### BIKE SHOPS: DON'T GO LOCO – GO LOCAL

Whether you want a new bicycle, your current machine serviced or repaired, or a copy of **Stroud District Cycling Map**, support your local shop, where you can talk to people who really know their stuff.

**Cotswold Collectables and Cycles**, 7 Long Street, Wotton-under-Edge, 01453 842259; bike sales, servicing, repairs, parts and accessories.

**Cytek**, 59 Westward Road, Cainscross, Stroud, 01453 753330; bike sales, servicing, repairs, parts and accessories.

**Halfords**, Merrywalks, Stroud, 01453 764571; bike sales, parts and accessories.

**Noahs Ark Cycles & Snowboards**, Bourne Mills, Brimscombe, 01453 884738; bike sales, servicing, repairs, parts and accessories, bike hire.

**Severn Cycles**. We are sorry to report that this business has closed. A sad loss.

**Slimbridge Boat Station**, Patch Bridge, Slimbridge, 01453 899190; bike hire, café.

**Square Deals on Wheels**, Farm Bungalow, Cowcombe Lane, Chalford, Stroud, 01285 760475, [www.sdeals.com](http://www.sdeals.com); internet shop and lightweight bike specialists.

**Stonehouse Accessories Ltd**, 18 High Street, Stonehouse, 01453 822881, [accessories@stonehouse](mailto:accessories@stonehouse), [powernet-int.co.uk](http://powernet-int.co.uk); bike sales, servicing, repairs, parts and accessories, bike hire.

## **WELSH PROACTIVE APPROACH TO CYCLING – HERE’S HOW, LOOK YOU**

The Welsh Assembly Government has pledged to triple the percentage of adults cycling to work by 2013. The Assembly Government also aims to double the number of people cycling for recreation. A ‘Walking And Cycling Plan For Wales 2009–2013’ includes: ensuring local authorities consider cycling when planning transport; a national marketing strategy for cycling; more 20mph zones; 100 new cycle instructors; travel planning; integrated cycle journeys with trains; on-road provision for cyclists; promoting cycle tourism.

## **BOJO A-GOGO FOR SEAMLESS NAKED STREETS**

Boris Johnson, the London mayor, has declared his intention to impose ‘naked streets’ on the capital. But this was no appeal for nudity. Instead, he plans to strip away traffic lights, kerbs and road markings to create ‘shared streets’.

Under the proposals, pavements will be removed so traffic and people share the same flat surface. Roadside railings, road humps and unnecessary signposts will also be banished from streets popular with pedestrians.

Johnson said he envisaged ‘a future where pavements would blend seamlessly with roads’. The conversion of Exhibition Road in Kensington, west London, would be the first step in a London-wide roll-out.

Trials of the naked streets concept in the Netherlands led to a dramatic reduction in accident rates. At one junction in the town of Drachten, accidents fell from 36 to just two. (*Sunday Times*)

## **CYCLE LINK FROM BOMBER BASE TO LAST LOCK ON THE THAMES**

Plans to open a cycle track running from Fairford to Lechlade have got into gear with a grant being awarded to the group steering the project. The East Cotswolds Strategic Partnership received £400 from Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum to help move the plans forward.

The long-abandoned railway line is now overgrown and ownership of the land along the track is divided between several farmers and sustainable transport charity Sustrans, which supports the idea.

(*Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard*)

## **ZUT ALORS! ‘PARIS RENTAL SCHEME SUFFERS ABUSE’, COMPLAINS SPONSOR...**

Eighteen months after the Velib bike rental scheme was established, 7,800 of the cycles (around half the fleet) have disappeared, assumed stolen. There is a craze, called Velib Extreme, for misusing the bikes and publicising the evidence on video websites. Velib is funded by advertising company JCDecaux, which gets some billboard space in return. Remi Pheulpin, JCDecaux’s director general, says the current contract is unsustainable. ‘All the receipts go to the City. All the expenses are ours. If we want the Velib set-up to keep going, we’ll have to change the business model,’ he told *Le Parisien* newspaper.

As a result other cities are respecifying their bike rental systems. Turin has withdrawn their official tender as only JCDecaux and Clear Channel Outdoor were able to meet the requirements set by the city council. London is fact-finding before it will issue an official tender for their rental scheme. According to London’s initial requirements only JCDecaux and Clear Channel Outdoor could technically supply the bike rental system. In the current economic situation the advertising revenues of both advertising companies have fallen considerably, making this type of package less attractive.

## **...BUT BOJO THE YO-YO HASN’T SAID ‘NO-NO’ – YET.**

Concerns that London’s forthcoming bike-hire scheme will suffer from high levels of theft have been quashed by London mayor Boris Johnson, according to *BikeRadar*.

The scheme – which is to come into operation mid-2010 and joins other schemes to make London more cycle-friendly in time for the 2012 Olympics – will see 400 locations provided for members of the public to hire and return bikes stretching over nine London boroughs. Fears for the initiative had risen since it was reported that Paris’ similar hire scheme had suffered from significant thefts – putting the future of the French scheme into jeopardy.

# STROUD NEWS

## **CALLING ALL SQUIFFY HUNGRY STROUD CYCLISTS WHO'VE BEEN LED ASTRAY!**

SVCC members should have received an email from Tony Partridge concerning the update of our Cycling Map of the Stroud District. Here is a reminder of what's needed:

1. We want to include good cyclist-friendly pubs – for instance those that are positioned along a good cycling ride, those that have good food or good local beers, and which welcome cyclists.
2. Are there any cafés that should be added to, or removed from, the list?

Please send any suggestions, and tell Tony about any corrections that need putting in (also, if there other ways in which you think the map could be improved). Email: [tony.partridge@virgin.net](mailto:tony.partridge@virgin.net); phone 822451.

## **ALL-IN-ALL ANOTHER SPOKE IN THE WHEEL**

by SVCC member John Meadley

We will be promoting *Changing Gear* again this year in the five schools in the valleys (Archway, Maidenhill, Marling, Stroud High and Thomas Keble). It is encouraging that a significant number of students who participated last year are still cycling to and from school, particularly as Spring emerges and the days get longer. *Changing Gear* will be broadly as last year – encouraging students to cycle with cycling vouchers as prizes and on-site training at school.

This year we are hoping to pioneer some on-road cycle training that will provide the opportunity for students to achieve level 3 proficiency and also we hope to have at least one bicycle trailer available for students to try. This year we are trying to integrate the scheme into the infrastructure of the county – with the town, district and county councils, with the police and with the NHS and particularly with the District Youth Council – to give it long-term sustainability.

*Changing Gear* will also be integrated into the wider 'Green Travel Month' activities, which will promote car sharing, the use of public transport and low carbon living and offer personal travel plans. If you want to see what happened last year take a look at the short video on <http://www.transitionstroud.org/changinggear>.

## **TIME FOR CHANGE – TRANSITION TO TRANSFORMATION**

The Transition Stroud Transport Group has been set up to try to make transport radically more sustainable in the Stroud Valleys area for three reasons:

- better quality of life
- reduction of carbon emissions
- in preparation for Peak Oil

To this end, we are currently working to develop Personal Travel Plans. This takes the form of a questionnaire which encourages people to look at all the regular journeys that they make and to get information about alternative, more sustainable options. We are producing two versions:-

1. A brief version, intended for self-completion and mainly aimed to provoke conversations about travel options. This has been developed by Hagar Niblett, the UK's 'International Climate Champion' who lives locally and studies at Downfield. Hagar hopes to get every Marling student to take one home to their family during June: Green Travel Month.
2. A more detailed version, designed to be completed face-to-face with a volunteer from TS Transport Group, who will be equipped with bus & train maps and timetables, as well as cycle & OS maps.

We will be trialling these questionnaires with the Transition Stroud 'Announce' mailing group in April / May. We then hope to offer them to Marling students (through Hagar), SDC staff (perhaps as part of their Green Travel Week), Carbon Watchers (a local project run by Severn Wye Energy Advice) and the general public via the stall at the Subscription Rooms, Stroud on 13th June (see front page). After that we will see what we have learned and make plans for what we would like to see happen in future.

If anyone would like to comment / have a look at the draft questionnaire and offer improvements / be involved (eg be a PTP volunteer advisor this summer), contact Carol Mathews on [carol.mathews@freeuk.com](mailto:carol.mathews@freeuk.com).

## **ANOTHER WAY HOME. WHAT AN IDEA, WHAT A BOOK, WHAT AN INSPIRATION**

On 14th April an anthology of photographs and poetry, celebrating the landscapes of the Stroud Valleys and our relationship with them, will be published by PhotoStroud. *Another Way Home* is the collective work of 78 people who live and work here. Richard Mabey has written the introduction, honorary Stroudie, Dan Hayon, has beautifully designed it, and at ten quid it's an absolute steal. The book is an affirmative, communal vision and a fitting expression of the co-operation and dedication of all who've brought it about. It is the perfect companion to the SVCC Cycling Map and both have tapped into our necessary regard for where we live.

*A hard rain's gonna fall*, sang Bob Dylan. It surely will if we let it. It surely won't if we pay enough attention to our planet. And *our* planet starts right here – at home. So come to a mass sing-in of *Hard Rain* at the outdoor exhibition of photographs for Dylan's lyric at the Museum in the Park 17th April 7.30 pm.

### **FRENCH BIKES**

a man on a bike  
beret and black cycling shoes  
he dismounts and with dignity leans  
his elegant machine  
against the front  
of the *boulangerie*  
so what? you think  
I cry:  
where oh where  
is your cycling soul?

time was  
Paris was a city of cycles  
more – it was a banquet of bikes  
this man belongs to that time  
you can tell by his look and his bike  
he knows something of it  
he will remember German troops here  
it made him what he is today  
*Je suis comme Je suis*  
he might possibly say

how old is he?  
older than he looks I swear  
he's shapely  
bright-eyed  
his legs lithe  
his skin tanned  
his allegiance to France so clear  
he could as well be wrapped  
in a faded *tricolore*

how old is his bike?  
twenty years younger I'd say  
and just as well-preserved  
every part of it is French  
as every part of him is French  
the frame bears  
the name of a French champion  
it's the *Tour de France* model  
when he bought this bike  
it was *le dernier cri*  
as – you can tell  
was he

he trusts the citizens of Paris  
he does not lock his bike  
when he returns with his *baguette*  
he finds it still in place  
perfect as ever  
he bends his *baguette* in two  
lays it in his frayed *musette*  
then with practised scoot  
mounts his work of art  
to join the traffic on his route

I watch him go  
riding out of a plate  
by Robert Doisneau

**by Jeff Cloves**

*Bicyclists and bicycles appear in the work (see below) of the great photographer of Paris, Robert Doisneau (1912 – 1994)*



## **HOT LINES REDUCE ROAD RAGE – WE HOPE**

**Potholes:** Ring Gloucestershire County Council on 08000 514514 and report the location, or log-on to their website: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/pothole](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/pothole).

**Glass or litter on cycle path, roads, pavements:** Ring Stroud District Council on 01453 754424.

## **COOL-HEADED CYCLISTS MUST SHARE BLAME FOR INJURIES, SAYS JUDGE**

A High Court judge has ruled that cyclists are partly to blame for their injuries if they fail to wear a helmet, even if the accident was not their fault. The ruling, which has caused consternation in the cycling world, could see damages for injuries cut by 15%. Critics believe it could be a backdoor means of forcing cyclists to wear helmets.

The judge ruled on a case brought by Robert Smith, who was riding to a friend's house in Brightlingsea, Essex, on a summer's evening in 2005 when a motorcycle ridden by Michael Finch collided with his bicycle. As a consequence, Smith sustained a serious brain injury.

Mr Justice Griffith Williams accepted Smith's case that he was close to the centre of the road, preparing to turn right into a driveway, when the motorcyclist, travelling at excessive speed in the same direction, tried to overtake him on the offside. However, Smith had not been wearing a cycle helmet.

The judge is the first to express sympathy for the view that this omission put the cyclist at fault and made him partly responsible for his own brain damage. 'There can be no doubt that the failure to wear a helmet may expose the cyclist to risk of greater injury,' he ruled. Subject to limitations, 'any injury sustained may be the cyclist's own fault'.

Smith's head hit the ground at more than 12mph and the judge therefore concluded that wearing a helmet would not have made any difference. But by establishing the principle of 'contributory negligence' in cases involving helmetless cyclists, the ruling could open the door to attempts to reduce damages by insurers.

Critics say there is no evidence that the rise in use of helmets has contributed to a decline in cyclists' deaths.

*(Sunday Times)*

## **TAKE YOUR FOOT OFF THE PEDAL: GO GREEN WITH THE GREENWHEEL**

Scientists at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are testing a new electric wheel hub attachable to almost any bicycle. The GreenWheel turns a standard bike into a fully functional electric bicycle, complete with motor and battery. All motor parts other than the throttle are encased in the wheel.

MIT researchers, claim the GreenWheel powers 25 miles of pedal-free riding, or 50 miles of assisted-riding. Its battery can be charged by pedalling, or plugging to a standard wall socket for 10–15 minutes. A GreenWheel has a lifespan of 40,000 miles.

### **NEXT SVCC MEETING**

Monday 1st June at 7.30pm.  
45 Bisley Old Road  
01453 762233  
ALL WELCOME

Electric bikes are becoming popular, but they are too expensive for many potential cyclists. If the GreenWheel proves affordable, electric power would be in the purchasing reach of many more people, making cycling an increasingly attractive transport option in our age of rising oil prices and eco-consciousness.

*This newsletter is published by Stroud Valleys Cycle Campaign, c/o 45 Bisley Old Road, Stroud GL5 1LU, tel 01453 762233, email [ckambites@fsmail.net](mailto:ckambites@fsmail.net). The Cycle Campaign works for better cycling facilities; membership is only £5 pa, £7.50 for couples, £2.50 for unwaged.*