

# ChainLinks

Cycling Advocates Network (NZ)

Special Edition (Jun-Jul) 03

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Transport fit for a King: Prince William on the way to University

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### **BikeNZ – Positive Progress at First Interim Board Meeting**

As *ChainLinks* readers will know, CAN have cautiously embraced the process, set in train late last year by Sport and Recreation NZ (SPARC), to form the new over-arching body BikeNZ to co-ordinate activities relating to cycling, and – more significantly – to receive and distribute Government funding (allocated to it by SPARC, who incorporate the work of the former Hillary Commission).

CAN were initially concerned at documentation which suggested the new body would be dominated by sport cycling, the focus of Cycling New Zealand, who are the body which currently receives SPARC money. But the Otaki CAN Exec in April decided to back the initiative, and to seek a place on the Interim Board of the new body. The Interim Board accepted me as CAN’s nominee, who attended the Interim Board’s first meeting on meeting on 24 April.

The whole process of forming BikeNZ is proceeding very quickly, with 1<sup>st</sup> July set for the new body to be set up and a CEO appointed. So far, I have had a smooth ride each time I have asked for changes in emphasis to reflect that this covers everyday cycling, not just sport – it's a big leap for the sporting bodies, if you put yourself in their shoes, to embrace a much wider perspective. One valuable change is that CAN have a guaranteed place on the Permanent BikeNZ Board.

But this is the easy part. The interesting period will be when we the Board work out the BikeNZ Plan, which will determine how the money is spent. There may be some interesting negotiations if we are to see some go into all the things CAN would like to do, and which at present is done in members' own time, paid for by the smell of an oily rag. ☺

*Roger Boulter*

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## **Bicycle Touring in France in the Ardeche Region**

Bicycle tours in France are a real pleasure. There are miles of country roads to explore, villages and roads are well signposted, and you can easily find a café terrace to rest for a while. It is wonderful to watch the farmers in their fields of lavender or hay or sunflowers. The local "Gites" (inns or hostels) we stayed in were clean and comfortable.

Many visitors are cycling in France these days, most with an organised tour, but it is also possible to be an independent biker, as we were. All it takes is a few words of French and a good sense of humour. My husband and I who are 60-ish, wanted to have a few days cycling in France this summer and we were amazed at the variation in prices and options. When we analysed the cost of a prepaid tour offered by a company in Christchurch, which included bike rental, meals, accommodation, maps and transport of luggage, it came to NZ\$250 per person per day. Breathtaking indeed! We were sure we could do it for less. The only tricky part would be arranging the transfer of luggage from point to point. This can be overcome by having most of it with a friendly inn-keeper, planning a circular route and biking with only a light back pack and panniers. Some of these advertised tours offer gourmet meals and excellent wines; we have to admit that at our stage of life we are trying to avoid the creamy sauces and endless cheeses, not to mention five-course meals. All the meals we ate were delicious and I find non-alcoholic beer to be the perfect drink at lunchtime when temperatures are 30 degrees or more.

Here are some examples of cost:

Trout and salad lunch for two	€13.00	\$26
One double room local inn per night	€30.00	\$60
Café breakfast per person	€5.50	\$11
Rent of bicycle per day per person	€12.00	\$24



Our visit to the Ardeche region was just after the Tour de France had finished. We must have looked very English with our broad sunhats and

cotton clothes. Several times a troupe of lycra-clad speedsters whizzed past us on light as a feather alloy bikes and as they shot uphill ahead of us would grin and call “Bon Courage!”

In summary I would say that exploring France by bicycle is a real pleasure and has the advantage that on rainy days (we didn't have any) you could stay in the town and explore for a day without having to keep to a fixed schedule. You can detour or vary the itinerary as often as you like.

Take the plunge – get a cycle map – and go!

Bon voyage! ☺

*Ron & Wendy Smith, Kapiti Coast.*



Shopping... in style  
(Firenze, Italy)

## CAN Welcomes New Webmaster

CAN is pleased to welcome Robert Parsons as our new webmaster. Robert has taken over the reins of the website from Tony Bewlay, who was forced to stand down because of illness, having put in a sterling couple of years revamping and maintaining the site.

Robert is currently taking time out from a Masters degree in Transportation at Lincoln University, working with the Center for Neighborhood Technology in Chicago, USA. Where he physically is fortunately doesn't really matter for this job. Robert has already started updating the CAN website, so keep an eye on it at <http://www.can.org.nz> for current articles, news, links and resources.

We're also taking the opportunity to have a think about any changes or enhancements we'd like to see on the site – if you have any ideas, let Robert know at [webmaster@can.org.nz](mailto:webmaster@can.org.nz).

### *Postscript*

Sadly, since the above was written, Tony Bewlay died on the 24<sup>th</sup> May. Most of us knew Tony mainly through his work as webmaster, in that he did an excellent and much valued job and will be missed. Our thoughts go to Gretel and the family. ☹

*Editor*

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## Hamilton City Council Siphoning Off Funds For Cycling

The Transfund Board has approved several Hamilton Cycling projects in February and April 2003, as reported in E-CAN. Sadly this will not assist cycling in our city one little bit, as our Hamilton City Councillors and Mayor have stuck a big spanner in the wheel.

At the November 2002 Council meeting they have made the decision *not* to allow the extra funding from Transfund to increase the cycling budget (*which has been capped to prevent this*).

Cycle Action Waikato members are very concerned about this Council decision. This decision is an obstruction to the Government initiative to assist cycling. The HCC has circumvented the purpose of this Transfund initiative specifically setup *'to promote more cycling.'* The NZ Government does not provide extra funds for walking and cycling just so that City Councils can reduce their spending in other areas of Council expenditure.

The Government was providing *extra cycle facilities* to our City (at no extra cost to Hamilton ratepayers). This *extra funding* was much needed, as the Hamilton Cycle Network development is progressing very, very slowly due to the extremely limited funds provided by this *present Council* for cycling, (half of what the *previous Council* provided). To add insult to injury, the *current Council* has now denied Hamilton cyclists Transfund funding also.

By reducing the Cycling funds available for Cycle Network construction, the Mayor and Councillors are making it harder to cycle around Hamilton. So they are directly contributing to Hamilton's traffic congestion and parking problems, as more people decide its too dangerous for themselves and their children to cycle, and take the car instead. Every year there are more and more motor vehicles on Hamilton's roads, and every year the traffic worsens.

CAW is requesting (through the Annual Plan process) that HCC remove the *cycling budget cap* and enable the Transfund dollars provided for cycling projects, to assist in the construction of our City's Cycle Network.

It is very sad to see that our Hamilton City Council is so out of touch with the way that NZ Transport Policy is moving (towards encouraging more cycling in New Zealand). Instead, Hamilton Cycle funding is to be siphoned off and used in areas other than cycle projects. Surely this is not what this special Government funding is provided for.

It is ironic that Hamilton is *one of only five City Councils* having cycling projects approved by the Transfund board. The vast majority of projects approved are applied for by Transit NZ. Good on you Transit for showing the City Councils the right way to go. ☺

*Rob Davidson, Cycle Action Waikato*

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## **Learn How To Ride A Bike... On The National Health Service (UK)**

Heart patients in Bristol will be the first in UK to be prescribed a new health treatment – free cycling lessons.

People suffering from heart disease, diabetes, rheumatic complaints, stress and anxiety will all be eligible for the “treatment”, it was revealed last night.

Patients will be referred by their GP or healthcare worker for six cycling sessions worth £120.

Under the Health on Wheels scheme, a personal trainer will visit a person to teach them how to ride safely and confidently and make cycling part of their lifestyle.

The initiative is being run by national Bristol-based charity Cycle West and is backed by the Department of Health.

It is hoped it will not only cut the number of deaths from serious conditions such as heart disease, which claims 18,000 lives a year in the West, but also help people suffering from psychological conditions such as stress and anxiety.

Director of Cycle West, Peter Andrews, said: “This represents a sea change for the NHS. Instead of doctors prescribing drugs, patients are helped to take gentle exercise.

“Cycling is a wonderfully healthy activity that benefits a wide range of conditions. It can be incorporated easily into a person’s daily routine, so it’s exercise that doesn’t feel like exercise.” Cycle West’s clients include voluntary organisations, schools and businesses.

Training sessions for adults normally cost £20 for 90 minutes.

Mr Andrews said a total of 25 instructors work for the charity and draw up individual programmes for people.

“It is tailored very much to an individual’s requirements. We visit the patient first of all and provide whatever is needed. Sometimes they just need a bit of confidence or help in setting up their bike,” he said.

“For instance, for someone with high blood pressure it may be showing them the best route to cycle to work on and taking them through this until they are confident.” ☸

*Western Daily Press, UK, 29 April 2003*

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*Letters*

Dear *ChainLinks*,

Many kids no longer bike to school because of the [*perceived? Ed.*] danger of the roads. I would be interested to hear from anyone who has experience of the controlled use of footpaths by cyclists, young and old.

I envisage rules to limit conflict with pedestrians and, for the identification of offenders, registration and the fitting of number plates. But the requirement to register would apply only to those wishing to ride on footpaths and the scheme would not apply to shopping areas.

*Syd Fisher, 427 Marine Parade, Napier.  
Phone: (06) 834 1416*

[*CAN does not agree or disagree with Syd. Note: in many parts of Europe cycling is allowed in pedestrianised “shopping areas” without ill-effect or the need for registration. Ed.*]





Delivery? No problem Ma'am, the bike's outside.

## Media Releases

### **CAN – Cyclists Welcome Airline Baggage Policy Change**

*(issued 1 May 2003)*

CAN, the national Cycling Advocates Network, has welcomed Air New Zealand's recent move to reduce the costs of carrying bicycles for domestic travellers. The previous Express Class charge of \$50 (one-way) to transport items like bikes and surfboards has been reduced to \$20.

CAN spokesperson Robert Ibell said that the previous charge appeared to be quite arbitrary compared with the true cost of transporting these items, and CAN (amongst others) had called for a review.

"We'd like to acknowledge all of the cyclists out there who took the time to voice their concerns to Air NZ."

CAN was still puzzled about the apparent inequity between bicycle charges and items such as golf clubs or ski equipment, which are not charged for separately unless overweight.

"This is a particular concern where the bicycle is adequately boxed or bagged or is designed for easy carriage", said Mr Ibell.

"A typical folding bike, for example, weighs less than 12kg and fits in a case smaller than your average suitcase. Yet people are being charged for them by Air NZ despite being under their weight limit."

CAN believes that some assumptions are being made by Air NZ about the type of customer who chooses to golf or ski, as opposed to bike or surf, and the relative desire to attract each customer group.

Mr Ibell said "Air NZ may be interested to know that in a recent survey of CAN's members, over 60% had household incomes greater than \$50,000, well above the national average. Are these customers not worth attracting?"

"Cyclists appreciate being able to use their bicycles in other locations for an efficient means of transport and recreation", said Mr Ibell.

"The Government's recent Transport Strategy is aiming to encourage more cycling and we would expect an airline partly-owned by this Government to set a good example."

#### *Postscript*

To all those members who took this issue up with Air NZ, thank you and congratulations! Now all we need to do is get cyclists treated the same way as golfers... 🚲



## **CAN– Motoring Lobby Wrong On Cycle Funding Say Cyclists**

*(issued 5 May 2003)*

CAN, the national Cycling Advocates' Network, has strongly criticised motoring lobbyists and business interests who are campaigning against road funding for cycling despite indications that motorists are happy to pay for cycle facilities.

A recent Automobile Association (AA) survey of its members, reported in the AA's policy newsletter "Advocate", found 71% support by members (including 23% "strong support") for using road taxes and charges to build cycle paths.

"It seems particularly strange that the AA would go against survey findings from its own members." said CAN chairperson Jane Dawson.

Ms Dawson said that the findings were not too surprising, given that many motorists also cycled or had children who cycled.

"National activity surveys have found that over 450,000 people take part in cycling over a given year, and that doesn't include mountain biking."

It is often argued that cyclists don't pay road taxes and therefore shouldn't receive funding. "Yet surveys of our own members reveal that over 80% of them own a car and therefore do contribute to road taxes," says Ms Dawson.

"They also pay local rates, which currently contribute far more to cycling facilities than national funds do."

Ms Dawson also said that it was important to remember that road charges mostly pay for the damage and external costs of roading, not for usage. "Some of these external costs, such as environmental damage and the health effects of inactivity brought about by car dependency, are not being paid for. It's motorists who are getting an easy ride in transport funding."

"Cyclists barely cause any damage to roads or the environment and are far more cost-effective to build for as well."

"Indeed, overseas research shows that investment in non-roading improvements like cycling is likely to be more beneficial in the long-term to tackling congestion than spending the same amount on building more roads," said Ms Dawson.

"The AA and their fellow business group lobbyists would do well to remember this in their current campaign against road funding for cycling."

### *Postscript*

The CAN Executive has received some queries from members about the AA's stance. Some of these people are also AA members, concerned about that organisation's position.

The impetus for the media release came from two things. Firstly, the AA Advocate article (Summer 2003, available at [www.nzaa.co.nz](http://www.nzaa.co.nz)) which talks about the membership survey showing support for spending on cycling facilities.

The second is the joining together of the AA, Road Transport Forum and Business NZ to oppose the Land Transport Management Bill which is currently before Parliament, and which would make some fundamental changes to the spending priorities within the transport system. The group has specifically got together to lobby against the bill.

The issue of 'diverting' motorists' money to pay for cycling facilities is listed in the NZ Herald (21 April) as one of the four key issues this new group has a problem with. To quote:

"Their concerns with the bill include:

- Elevation of social and environmental criteria for funding, which will allow cycle tracks and walkways to get funding at the expense of roads.

... The Government has also increased the amount of money going into roading alternatives such as cycling and walking.

'We have got no problem at all with that,' said [Business NZ senior policy analyst Nick] Clark, 'but what's happened is that road users' money is being spent on these things.'

Further background to CAN's press release is contained in the AA's various policy statements (also available on their website), e.g. 'Petrol Tax' ("The Association is opposed to any regional petrol levies [or 'green taxes'] which require motorists to subsidise the transport decisions of others").

CAN suggests that AA members unhappy with the AA stance on funding for cycling should write to the AA's National Council. 🚲

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*[This is based on a media release put out by Cycling Health, a another NZ cycling advocacy group which some CAN members are affiliated with. The release itself was too long to include, and has been edited down, but remains the views of Cycling Health. Ed.]*

## **Cycling Health – Dump Silly Helmet Law Say Cyclists**

*(issued 11 May)*

**Cycling Health, a new group which lobbies for safer cycling, has strongly criticised New Zealand's compulsory bicycle helmet law.**

The Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) is currently reviewing the Road User Rules which include the bicycle helmet regulation.

Cycling Health spokesperson Patrick Morgan said the law had failed and should be abolished.

“The law has failed to make cycling safer. The number of head injuries per cyclist has not decreased since the law despite increased helmet wearing rates.

“The LTSA is fond of pointing out that the number of cyclist head injuries has decreased by around 20% but they fail to mention that the number of cyclists has decreased by around 30%.”

Other reasons for dumping this silly law include:

- It is poorly thought out
- Lacks scientific support
- Bicycle helmets may increase some kinds of brain injury
- Helmets may reduce scrapes, but are not designed to protect against serious injury
- The helmet law has diverted attention from proven safety measures
- The law blames the victim
- The law is inconsistent and discriminatory



Mr Morgan said Cycling Health is not opposed to the wearing of helmets. “We are opposed to their compulsion. Individuals should have the right to choose whether or not to wear a helmet without undue interference by the government.”

Mr Morgan said the role of government should be limited to advising its citizens, without bias, about the pros and cons of helmets; rather than compelling their use by law while feeding false or faulty information to the public and brushing any negative effects under the carpet.

*So why does this matter?*

The law has failed to arrest the decline in bicycling, has failed to deliver the injury and cost reductions promised, and has “dangerised” bicycling in the public’s mind.

The consequences of declining cycling numbers are reduced fitness levels and increased health problems.

Competing activities such as television, video games and computers seem to be safer but their sedentary nature causes obesity, increased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer and depression.

An Auckland study in 2001 showed that one in seven children is obese. In 1994, about 1,500 deaths in New Zealand were attributed to inactive lifestyles. In comparison, an average of five children die from a bicycle-related injury each year.

Cycling is easily integrated into daily routines and is cheap, practical, non-polluting and fun.

The British Medical Association decided against advocating the compulsory use of helmets as the health benefits of cycling outweigh the costs.

Mr Morgan said well-meaning people believe the helmet law keeps cyclists safe. However, the evidence in New Zealand and overseas shows it harms the overall health of the population.

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## Cycle Aware Wellington News

The following summary of CAW's activities for 2002/3 was presented at the AGM in May.

The 2002/3 year was a good one for CAW, with lots of positive achievements to build on in the following year.

Submissions were made on city and regional plans. The Technical & Planning Group were 'virtually active', being involved in waterfront development issues and making other submissions.

CAW reps continued to attend meetings of the Regional Cycle Forum, which is becoming a more effective body, but needs greater input from all local authorities in the region.

Marilyn Northcote ran another two teacher training workshops at the Wellington College of Education (surveys showing a good level of follow-up work in schools). She also worked with Tawa schoolchildren on negotiating roundabouts, set up an adult cycling skills course, and organised a bike maintenance class (taken by Simon Kennett).

CAW ran another police training workshop, facilitated by David Laing and Marilyn, assisted by other members.

Bike To Work Day 2003 was great success, with more people attending than ever before – around 450 came to Civic Square for the breakfast – and a good range of politicians (including the Ministers of Transport, Sport & Recreation, and Health) spoke.

WCC have signalled that it will provide increased support for BTWD next year. Hutt City also did a Bike To Work Day this year, plus other Bike Week activities, including a fun-ride at which CAW did Dr Bike checks.

The CAW rep on WCC's Road Safety Reference Group helped to get action on funding for pilot 'Safe Routes' programmes to run in two schools, with money for a co-ordinator.

The monthly cycling page in Contact newspaper is running smoothly (thanks again to Marilyn). It has expanded to a full page, sometimes more.

Neil Newman initiated a meeting in Petone for people interested in getting active in sustainable transport issues. It was well-attended, with Jane Dawson speaking on behalf of CAW. It's hoped Neil's initiative will help get CAW's Hutt Group going again.

CAW received useful reports from Brent Efford, the joint cycling, pedestrian and public transport rep on the Regional Land Transport Committee, regularly during the year.

CAW is also involved in a WCC project to develop a cycling strategy and set up a framework for future cycling projects. 🚲

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## Spycams...

You've probably all come across a similar situation: riding along to work, you encounter road works that thoughtfully direct you into the path of traffic. Or maybe while exploring a new route, you find a really well-placed drainage grate right at a pinch point. Or perhaps you're sick of the motorists you always come across, hogging your cycle lane as they approach an intersection?

Whatever the scenario, you probably wished you had a camera handy to record the situation and pass it on to someone to take some action. You could try coming back later, but sometimes that is impractical, or the "problem" is gone. I used to keep a wee disposable camera in my backpack for such moments; but then you have to wait to process the film. Digital cameras are more convenient, but there can be quite a cost involved and not all are that easy to slip in a bag or pocket.

So it was with interest that I stumbled across a dinky Dolphin 1007 "pen cam" selling at Dick Smith Electronics for under \$100. This tiny digital camera was certainly small and inexpensive. The question remained: could it produce decent enough images? A trial proved sufficiently successful, so Spokes Canterbury decided to purchase four of them for some of its members to use when cycling around Christchurch.

The Dolphin is the size of a large highlighter pen (12x3x1.5cm) and feels fairly "tinny and plastic", so you don't want to throw it around or drop it too much! (seems to put up with the day-to-day rigours of bike riding though) It takes two AAA batteries and, as it



needs a little bit of juice to retain any pictures stored, you only get about two weeks even when switched off. The trick we figured for longer life was to take the batteries out after you've downloaded some pictures and not put them back in again until you need to.

Many low-cost digital cameras capture very low-resolution images (e.g. 320x240 pixels or less); adequate maybe for a close-up mug-shot or grainy web-cam, but not that useful for a detailed outside shot on the street. The Dolphin however can take photos with 640x480 pixels. You can take low-res pics too (and store four times as many of them), but they're usually not worth the bother. By default you can store up to 26 high-resolution images but there is a compression feature, which triples that – I couldn't detect any great difference in appearance. Like any camera without a flash, it's not great in low-light (e.g. shadowed areas outside), and not surprisingly doesn't like pointing into the sun much!

Basically there's only two buttons on the camera; it's pretty easy to work through the various options and select what you want. There's a little digital display on the back to show the various mode options and how many shots you have left. Unfortunately there's no pretty little preview screen on this cheapie, you'll just have to take your chances! There's a few handy little extras like a 10-sec self-timer and a "continuous" mode for taking non-stop shots to turn into a video. The camera also comes with a desktop stand and clip attachment.



Snapping road maintenance woes...

The software that comes with it is only available for Windows (98/Me/2000/XP); I guess at that price it's hard to get something that is also Mac-compatible. You also need a USB port on your computer to connect the download cable to the camera. The download software is not

initially intuitive, but you get used to it. You can also set the camera up as a “web-cam” for continuous live video. Also bundled are a whole bunch of very useful software tools for graphic/video/web editing; quite impressive for the price.

So what kind of pictures can you expect? I've attached a couple of sample images to show you what kind of detail you might get (not up to normal ChainLinks quality of course!). At this resolution, you wouldn't expect miracles, but it has generally proved sufficient for an on-the-spot snap (it's probably worth taking at least a couple of shots to ensure you get a good one). When downloaded they come out as large bitmap files, but they turn into small compressed JPGs pretty well with typical software like MS Photo Editor or Paint Shop Pro.



...or just poor driver behaviour

For more info about these things, go to Dick Smith online (<<http://www.dse.co.nz>>) and search for “Dolphin” or Cat No.XH4748. The price keeps dropping; currently you can pick one up for just \$69 (\$10 less than I did) and most DSE stores have them in stock. Happy snapping!

*Glen Koorey (<[koorey@paradise.net.nz](mailto:koorey@paradise.net.nz)>)*

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## Book Review

### “Rough Ride – behind the wheel with a Pro Cyclist”

*Paul Kimmage, 261 pp. Yellow Jersey Press, revised edition 1998.*

Irishman Paul Kimmage broke into the ranks of professional cycling in 1986 after a promising career as an amateur. He quickly learned that the

glamour of pro cycling was tarnished by drugs, money and the unspoken rules of peleton. In this sensational book he exposes a sport that has sold its soul to business, and cares little for the athletes who sacrifice their bodies and dreams. Essential reading for fans of Le Tour.

Winner of the 1990 William Hill Sports Book of the Year. Available from Wellington Public Library. 🚲

*Patrick Morgan*



Off to College...  
(Cambridge, UK)

## From The World's (including New Zealand's) Press

### Brisbane Ditches Free-bike Trial, Tries Bikestation Instead

A planned free bike trial has been scrapped by Brisbane City Council because public liability insurance could not be found.

Instead, the council is proposing a major bike station, complete with showers, toilets and lockers, for up to 400 cyclists in the King George Square carpark.

The council announced last June free bikes would be provided for public use at five or six CBD locations.

The \$200,000 trial, similar to schemes operating in European cities such as Copenhagen, was meant to reduce car dependence and make the inner city more bike friendly.

But transport committee chairwoman Maureen Hayes yesterday said council had no choice but to abandon the scheme when it became clear insurance was unavailable.

“There is no public liability insurance for such a scheme in Australia. The problem is mixed up with the fact that overseas countries don't have compulsory bike helmet legislation,” she said.

However, Cr Hayes said City Hall remained committed to catering for inner-Brisbane bike users.

“Council is now proposing a scheme to convert 42 car spaces on the top level of the King George Square carpark into a cycle centre,” she said.

The proposed cycle centre would operate on a user-pays basis, offering casual or permanent bike parking. A small bike repair store is also under consideration.

Cr Hayes said the bike centre was the first of its kind in Australia and would be modelled on stations operating in the US and England.

Bicycle Queensland manager Ben Wilson said he was optimistic that the bike station would be well used, provided the costs were kept to a minimum.

While the idea of providing free bikes in the CBD was a good one, the scheme would have been difficult to manage, he said. “I can understand why council has thrown up their arms. It was not an easy gig that one.”

The council will call for tenders next month to establish and manage the cycle centre. It is expected to be up and running by March 2004 if a viable tender was found. 🚲

*from Courier-Mail, Queensland, 13 May 2003*

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## Catering For Cyclists Pays Off

More and more Christchurch cafes are taking steps to cater for their growing cycling clientele.

Cycle stands are popping up outside cafes around the Garden City as businesses seek to attract bikers in need of a pre or post-ride caffeine and chocolate fix.

Coffee Culture Cashmere shop manager Adam Whitehouse says his year-old store has become a popular spot for the city's big cycling community because of its location at the foot of the Cashmere hills.

"We get cyclists, particularly mountain bikers, coming either before or after their ride. Many drive here, have a coffee and then tackle the slopes," Adam says.

Previously manager at Coffee Culture's Sumner store, opened in 1996 and handily located at the end of the popular Summit Road route, Adam says the two stores' popularity is a combination of location and a willingness to accommodate cyclists' needs.

"While we have cycle stands, many people with expensive bikes won't use them, so we let them leave their bikes out the front of the store or beside where they are sitting," Adam says.

"Also many cafes don't like cyclists wearing their cleats in the shop but we have never had a problem with that."

Multisport and cycling magazines are also a regular fixture at the cafes, in response to customer demand.

As for the ordering habits of the two-wheel enthusiasts, Adam says it depends on how hard they have been riding.

"Latte bowls are very popular, and so is anything with lots of coffee. But for that extra boost, you can't go past a Chocolate Latte."

Owner of central city cafe C-1 Espresso, Guy Griffith-Jones, puts his cafe's popularity amongst the cycling fraternity down to the environment and good location – close to cycle shops and the one-way system.

Operating from its High St location for the past six and a half years, Guy says C-1 attracts cycling couriers during the week and roadies and mountain-bikers at weekends.

"We haven't really done anything special to attract them. We have cycle stands, good food, high grade coffee and a broad cross-section of magazines."

*from The Press, Christchurch, 12 May 2003*

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## Bikestation Aspires To Be Hub Of A Revolution

SEATTLE – Mark Shandrow tried to change the world once. But it ended in disappointment. After college, he joined a group that tries to get poor communities to fight for things such as better sidewalks.

He found himself walking around one of the ghettos in Los Angeles. “I went door to door, saying I was there to help. But people kept looking at me like, ‘What do you want, white kid?’”

Shandrow decided to change gears. He joined another group, called Bikestation, that’s pushing a relatively simple concept: Give people a safe place to park their bicycles, a place to wash up and change for work, and more people will get out of their cars.

It’s been popular in Japan, but the idea is still foreign here. The three other Bikestations, at Long Beach, Palo Alto, and Berkeley (California), each attracts 1,500 to 1,800 cyclists a month.

The latest Bikestation in Seattle, which will open next Friday, has racks for 70 bicycles. A steel cage will come down at night, but people with a key card still will be able to get their bikes.

Members get a free taxi ride home if they’re too sick to pedal home or if their bikes break down. The station also has a repair shop to fix flat tires or to give the gears some jiggling.

Shandrow’s no bike aficionado: “All I have is a dumpy little \$100 bike somebody left at one of the bike stations for three months.”

So the organization is joining up with Aaron Goss, owner of Aaron’s Bicycle Repair in West Seattle, to actually run the station.

With close-cropped hair, beard and striking blue eyes, Goss looks a bit like G.I. Joe. “I just like fixing things,” Goss said, giving the pedal on a black, heat-treated aluminum bicycle a whirl.

Apparently, he likes to fix bigger things, too. A bucket outside his store is for donated spare parts, so he can fix children’s bikes for free. He decided to run the Bikestation because “cars pollute the world.”

Joan Mariev happened upon the Bikestation and rides her regular touring bike on nice days, her mountain bike when it’s raining.

She’d leave her bike at the station, she said. One time, she saw a woman lock up her bicycle at the downtown library. Awhile later, she saw the woman talking with police. Her bike was gone.

But even Shandrow and Goss say only time will tell whether their Bikestation really will get people out of their cars. Or if they’re just spinning their wheels.

For more information, go to: <<http://www.bikestation.org>>. 🚲

*from Seattle Post-Intelligencer, US, 10 May 2003*

## New Website With Street-by-street Cycling Directions

LOS ANGELES – Thousands of bicyclists will brave the roads on May 15 as part of California Bike To Work Day, pedalling to work instead of commuting solo by car. For some, it will seem like an act of bravery to share the road with speeding motorists. But a new website – [www.bikemetro.com](http://www.bikemetro.com) – can help cyclists plan for the safest and quickest route to work.

Bicyclists plug in their origin and destination information, indicate their skill and comfort level dealing with road hazards such as traffic, and the site will generate a street-by-street directional route complete with a map. The generated routes take into account the hills in the area, traffic volumes, bike lanes and bike paths to allow users to customize their ride.

“BikeMetro provides cyclists with a personalized route just for them,” said David Caswell, vice president of technology for GeoPerception, Inc., a Poway-based firm that designed the site. “Unlike other online mapping services that route cars on freeways, BikeMetro finds the shortest and safest way for cyclists using low speed streets and designated bike paths.”

The site covers routes and information in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties and locates addresses through a process known as “geocoding.” In addition, the free site features information on bike safety, equipment and maintenance, park and ride lots, shower facilities and other traffic tips. Bike enthusiasts can also log on to the site to chat with fellow bikers through links to bike organizations.

An environmental calculator on the site determines the pollution reduced by biking to a destination instead of driving a car, using factors including the distance of the trip, type of car normally driven and its gas mileage. In addition, the site features a calorie calculator that figures the number of calories burned on a specific route based on the distance, elevation, average speed and weight of the rider.

“One of the main goals of the site is to make it simple and easy for people to leave their cars at home and ride their bike,” said Caswell. “The environmental calculator helps riders see for themselves how much pollution they are reducing, as well as the very real health benefits associated with biking.”

The BikeMetro site was funded by a grant from the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) who funds clean air projects in the area from a portion of vehicle registration fees. 🚲

*from Business Wire, 9 May 2003*



# Designing For Cyclists

## Path Of Least Resistance

Off-road (segregated) paths are favoured by many people wanting stress-free (and traffic-free) cycling. But the stress level can rise again if cyclists encounter walkers, joggers, skaters/bladders, dogs, horses, and also other cyclists behaving erratically or taking over the pathway. It's largely a given in New Zealand that most cycle paths will in fact be "shared paths" – so how do we ensure that all parties are happy with the sharing arrangement?



The first priority is to make sure that the path in question is up to the demand imposed upon it. Many path conflict issues would evaporate for example if the path was just made wider, allowing people to pass with relative ease. Adequate path curvatures, sight distances and clearances either side can also minimise nasty surprises.

Despite this, pavement markings and signage are sometimes useful on high-use paths to encourage consistent path behaviour. For example, use of a dividing line to separate pedestrians from

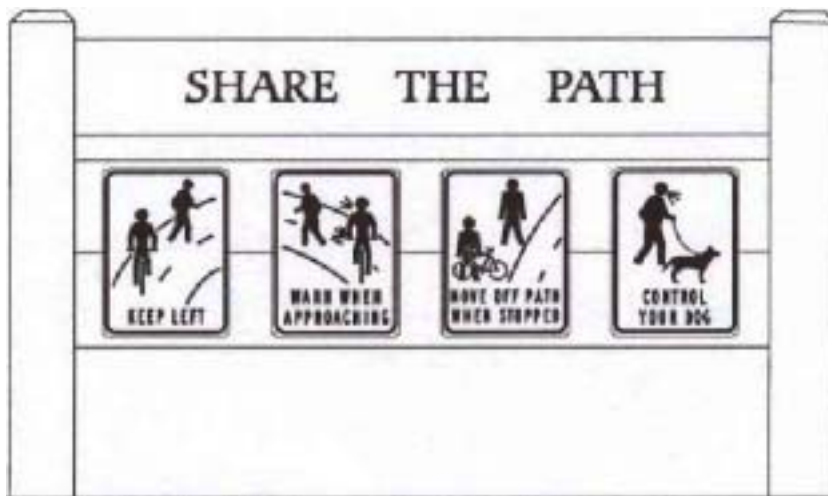
cyclists is common (with cyclist/pedestrian pavement symbols and signage to indicate this). If two-way usage is expected however, there must be adequate width in each section for safe unimpeded passing. Generally it is not desirable to require cyclists to "give way to pedestrians"; cyclists are less likely to use such a facility if they feel they don't have equal rights. A street mall may be a reasonable exception.

In many cases, separation of path users by *direction* rather than by type is more preferable. Passing behaviour is then consistent with that on roads, i.e. approaching path users know what side of the path to take, while faster path users can overtake slower ones by crossing over to the other side when safe to do so.

To ensure respect between the various user groups using paths (particularly when paths are of inadequate width) clear rules of behaviour should be promoted. Many Australian states for example, encourage the following simple system (which is also incorporated in the Australian Road Rules):

- Keep left (often reinforced by a solid/dashed centreline and symbols/arrows)
- Warn when approaching (e.g. sound bell, “excuse me”, etc.)
- Move off path when stopped (so as not to block other users)
- Control your dog (we’re not afraid of your dog biting us, we’re afraid of running it over!)

These instructions can be provided symbolically at the main path entrances, as shown below. For less well-used paths, it may be appropriate to just inform users of fewer key messages, e.g. “keep left” and “warn when approaching” (or just mark some lines/arrows/symbols on the path).



Specific instructions like this are usually more helpful to all parties than generic “Share The Path”-style messages on their own. And that means that everyone gets along just a little better!

### *Some Relevant Reading*

- Austroads 1999, *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14: Bicycles*, Section 6.6.1 (Shared Paths).
- (UK) Dept for Transport 1993, *Cycling in Pedestrian Areas (Traffic Advisory Leaflet 09/93)*, presents some research findings and design guidance on allowing cyclists in pedestrian areas.  
Web: <[http://www.roads.dft.gov.uk/roadnetwork/ditm/tal/cycle/09\\_93/index.htm](http://www.roads.dft.gov.uk/roadnetwork/ditm/tal/cycle/09_93/index.htm)>

- VicRoads 2001, *Shared Path Behavioural Signs (Cycle Note No. 10)*, provides more detail on using the signs described above. Web: <<http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/vrpdf/trum/tr2001121.pdf>> (435kB)  
*All feedback please to Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz)*
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## **Bike And Bus Go Together**

The bike and the bus can go well together, say members of the executive of the Cycling Advocates Network (CAN) who hired an old bus to supplement pedal power for their annual meeting in Otaki on the Kapiti Coast. The bus has room for 20 passengers and many more bicycles. It provided transport to and from Otaki Beach, where the local group Kapiti Cycling Inc. hosted the get-together. It also came in handy after a 40km ride on the Kapiti Coastal Cycle/Walkway during the weekend.

The bus belongs to the Wellington Omnibus Society, an organization whose aim is to preserve old buses. Mr Neil Brown, who drove the bus on this occasion, said the Society hired out the old buses for trips like this, and they are always looking for people to help them restore the old buses.

The two day meeting considered a wide range of issues, including how CAN as a national body could better support cycling advocacy in local areas like the Kapiti Coast. "Some local authorities, like Kapiti Coast District Council, are starting to think seriously about how they can provide better for cyclists," said CAN chairperson Jane Dawson. "With more funding now available for cycling, CAN is keen to help local cyclists to work with their councils and Transit NZ to help make sure it's well spent," said Ms Dawson. 🚲



## Snippets

### Pedalling onto the Information Superhighway



Laos villagers to get online with bike-powered PCs

BAN PHON KHAM, Laos (AP) –Villagers in this remote jungle hamlet have lived for years without electricity or telephones, relying on occasional visitors and a sluggish postal system for news of the outside world.

But soon many of its residents will be jumping on stationary bikes to pedal their way onto the Information Superhighway.

Custom-built computers – running on bicycle-powered generators – will transport villagers from rice fields to chat rooms and Web sites worldwide. They'll be able to monitor rice and vegetable prices, sell handicrafts and e-mail relatives. ☺

*Spotted by Patrick Morgan*

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### Dates For Your Diary

This year's AGM will be held – as usual – in conjunction with the Cycling Conference 2003. The formal business part (the real AGM) will be held on Saturday 11 October at about 6pm. The venue has yet to be decided but is likely to be on the North Shore, Auckland, where the Conference is being held.

The following day, Sunday 12 October, we will again have a 'CAN Do' where we discuss our policies and priorities for the coming year, issues affecting CAN's organisation, and any other matters that people feel should be discussed. Again, the venue has not been sorted out yet, but will be in Auckland somewhere! If anyone has great ideas for convenient, comfortable and cheap locations, please contact CAN Secretary Adrian Croucher. The CAN Do is likely to be 3-4 hours long. ☺

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### Workers Offered Cash to Get on Their Bikes

OSLO (Reuters, 6 May) – Norwegian workers are being offered cash incentives to get on their bikes as part of a government drive to encourage pedal power and cut car use.

The scheme, which also aims to boost fitness, started on Monday in parts of the country and will pay municipal employees about 40 cents for every kilometre they cycle while on business.

"We want healthier employees and less sickness absence," Hans Ivar Soemme, leader of a "Healthy City" project at Sandnes municipality in southwest Norway, told Reuters. He said he did not know of any similar schemes elsewhere in the world.

Workers will get 43 cents for each kilometre they ride up to a maximum journey of 5km. The ride to and from work will not count.

Meanwhile, an estimated 75,000 cyclists rode their bikes to work on Monday to mark the annual "Bicycle to Work" campaign, many stopping for a free breakfast organized along cycle paths.

As part of a drive to make Norway's 4.5 million people healthier, the Nordic country will be the first in the world to outlaw smoking in bars and restaurants nationwide in 2004. 🚲

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## **Come To The Conference!**

Assistance is available for local representatives from CAN-affiliated groups to attend the Cycling Conference 2003. CAN is offering to fund half the registration fee for one representative from each group, plus we can assist with travel costs to the North Shore. We have a maximum of \$1500 available, with the money being divided according to distance travelled and number of applicants. There will be more details available in the next ChainLinks, when the Conference registration brochure will be out, but local groups might wish to plan their attendance before that. 🚲

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## **Foreign Affairs Upgrades Bike Parking**

In a previous issue of *ChainLinks* we reported on bike thefts from the car park at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Wellington. We are pleased to report that the Ministry has now upgraded cycle parking by adding a locked cage for more secure access. MFAT also has showers, changing facilities, lockers, and an intranet bulletin board for cyclists. Well done! 🚲

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## **Cycle-friendly Employers**

Who are the most cycle-friendly employers in New Zealand?

Can you get a shower and park your bike securely when you get to work/school/uni?

How can your business save money and increase productivity by investing in cycling facilities?

SPARC (formerly the Hillary Commission) publishes a guide to being a cycle-friendly employer on their website at:

[<www.sparc.govt.nz/publications/index.php#cycle>](http://www.sparc.govt.nz/publications/index.php#cycle)

Now they are planning to add case studies of New Zealand businesses and workplaces who go the extra mile to cater to their cycling staff and visitors. EECA will publish a print version.

Cycle-friendly workplaces offer facilities and programmes such as:

- secure cycle parking for staff and visitors
- changing rooms and showers
- laundry facilities
- maps, route information
- intranet site containing route information, discussion group, lunchtime rides
- discounts at local bike shops
- BUGs (bicycle user groups)
- green transport plans
- access to bike tools
- participation in like BikeWise Business battle, triathlons, cycling events
- bikes for at-work use
- financial support (loans to buy bikes, mileage allowance)
- senior staff lead by example
- encouragement to cyclists



*Patrick Morgan*

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## **Cycling News From Around New Zealand**

*March:*

- Wellington City Council investigates providing a mileage rate for councillors walking or biking to work, to go alongside the existing car and bus subsidies.
- A draft cycling strategy is presented to Wanganui District Council outlining a 12-year plan for 50km of cycling routes, although some councillors are not impressed.
- A \$160,000 cycle/pedestrian path is to be built by Transit NZ next to the coastal highway between Pukerua Bay and Paekakariki.
- Transfund NZ approves nearly \$380,000 of funding for walking & cycling projects in Christchurch.
- Wellington Police launch their new “cycle patrol”, providing biking officers at busy city events.

*April:*

- Dunedin City Council trials green surfacing at five intersections along 2km of newly installed cycle lanes.

- Christchurch City Council launch a campaign encouraging cyclists to buy lights using 25% discount vouchers.
- A coalition of business, farming and motorist groups joins forces to campaign against the Government's proposed transport changes, including increased walking/cycling funding.
- Christchurch City councillors continue dithering about whether to put cycle facilities on or off a road alongside Hagley Park (or both), a year after the original proposal.
- Taupo District Council marks new cycle lanes along a number of arterial routes in town.
- North Shore triathletes start appealing for at least 20,000 signatures on a petition calling for non-motorised access to the Auckland Harbour Bridge.

*May:*

- Palmerston North City Council urge Transit NZ to make the "Old West Road" highway near Massey University safer for the increasing number of recreational users, including cyclists.
- The Government allocates \$3 million dollars again this year in the Budget for new walking and cycling facilities.
- Paremata locals are concerned that Transit NZ's new cycle/walkway under the new highway bridge being constructed could be affecting the inlet channel.



Bridging the generation gap (ages 9 to 73).  
(An Easter ride, Great Shelford)

## Quotable Quotes

*“I don’t think it has really told us anything new.”*

Wanganui District Councillor Stephen Palmer is nonplussed about the council’s new cycling strategy. (Wanganui Chronicle 26/03/03)

*“The nature of our work means staff often need to go out to site visits and inspections around the city – travelling by bike has a lot of pluses we’re keen to take advantage of.”*

Wellington City Infrastructure Manager Stavros Michael praises the new pool bikes available for staff in the council’s Rooding and Traffic Unit (Contact 27/03/03)

*“It’s not going to be the world’s most perfect cycle track... But it will be something.”*

Transit NZ road engineer Stanley Chesterfield warns cyclists not to get too excited about the planned pathway between Pukerua Bay and Paekakariki. (Kapiti Observer 27/03/03)

*“We’ve had people who come in and tell us that they’ve bought a bike because there’s somewhere to ride it now that’s off the road. Bike stores are telling us their bike sales are up. It’s really taking off.”*

A Porirua City Council spokesperson comments on the popularity of the new ‘Ara Harakeke’ cycle track north of the city. (Kapi-Mana News 01/04/03)

*“With this between my bike and the cars I feel a lot safer.”*

Golden Bay cyclist Arnd Wolvetang wouldn’t ride anywhere without his recycled road marker post sticking out the side of his bicycle! (The Guardian 02/04/03)

*“We want [motorists] to see the change in colour and say “hang on, what’s different here?””*

Dunedin City traffic engineer Ron Minnema explains the rationale for installing green surfacing at conflict points along cycle lanes in the city. (Otago Daily Mail 08/04/03)

*“I think it’s wonderful. It’s great to be able to help out someone less fortunate than ourselves.”*

Wensley’s Cycles owner Joy Lindsay is happy to be part of a nationwide World Vision / Avanti “trade-in” promotion, sending old bicycles to Africa for re-use. (Southland Times 8/04/03)

*“We’ve got no problem with that, but what’s happened is that road users’ money is being spent on these things.”*

Business NZ senior policy analyst Nick Clark presents his organisation’s concern about the increased funding for cycling and walking – but hang on, aren’t we “road users” too? (NZ Herald 21/04/03)

*“The cycling and walking funding would build less than 1km of motorway.”*

Greens co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons puts the business lobby’s concerns into perspective. (NZ Herald 21/04/03)

*“John Banks is completing motorway links at the moment and I firmly believe this is every much a missing link as a motorway.”*

North Harbour Triathlon Club president Graeme Knowles calls for access to the Auckland Harbour Bridge by cyclists, walkers and joggers. (Shore News 23/04/03)

*“We are encouraging health and fitness for our young people and yet we are making it almost impossible for them to ride safely on our roads.”*

Havelock North cycling advocate Don Kennedy isn’t impressed by Hastings District Council’s plan to defer funding on cycle facilities for two more years. (Hawkes Bay Today 26/04/03)

*“You can cycle pretty much anywhere in New Plymouth, except for this park... We have seen instances of people leaping embankments, racing down hills and cutting corners which might be exciting for them, but can be quite unnerving or dangerous for other people.”*

New Plymouth District Council parks manager Bryan Gould wants a tougher clampdown on prohibiting cyclists riding through Pukekura and Brooklands parks. (Daily News 9/05/03)

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## **Report From The Chair**

Its been a busy time since the last *ChainLinks*, as you will see from the variety of items in this issue. The CAN committee had a much-needed weekend meeting on the Kapiti Coast on 12-13 April, very generously hosted by committee member Liz Mikkelsen and other members of the local group Kapiti Cycling. The committee normally operates by email, and when thousands of emails covering a wide variety of topics hit your in-box every year it can be difficult to focus on the bigger picture of where we are going, how, and why.

The preliminary results from the Membership Survey had been rapidly analysed by Glen and Adrian, and were very useful as a point of reference

during the weekend, so a big ‘thank you’ to everyone who sent their replies in!

Unfortunately, committee members Steve van Dorsser and Nigel Perry couldn’t make it, though Nigel joined us by phone at one stage. The first thing we did was to welcome Roger Boulter to the committee. Many people will know Roger from his ‘Into the Mainstream’ project that has provided excellent background material for the national Cycling Strategy. Since finishing his project, Roger has had a bit more time on his hands so we took advantage of that and have co-opted him onto the committee.

In order to keep our brains refreshed, we also managed to fit in a local ride on borrowed bikes. Kapiti Cycling members John, Harry and Roger took us on a 2 hour trip along the route they are trying to get established between Otaki and Paraparaumu. Here’s hoping they succeed – it is a good mix of on-road (mostly quiet) and off-road travel, including stop-banks and sand dune paths, with views of Kapiti Island at the end.

A barbeque at Harry and Gail’s place was a great way to relax and get to know people a bit more. It’s amazing how quickly a normally cautious engineer changes after half a drink, but the photos are safe with me ...

Many thanks to our local group Spokes in Christchurch for their financial contribution to travel costs, and also to bus driver (and Cycle Aware Wellington member) Neil Brown for giving up his weekend to transport us to and from Wellington – how he coped with the incessant chatter, I’ll never know!

So, what did we discuss? Lots! Here (to make it more digestible) is a summary of the main issues. If you have any feedback, or want more information on a particular item, let us know.

### *Local Groups*

The contact between CAN and local member groups is patchy and in several areas needs to be improved. CAN needs to communicate more clearly how its work on policy, funding and political awareness will benefit local activities. Groups could usefully let CAN know more regularly what they are doing, and what has or hasn’t worked for them, so that CAN has more practical examples to build on in its negotiations, and so that other groups can pick up ideas.

### *Strategic Plan*

Helmet law position – as you can imagine, a hot topic! Decided to let current CAN policy stand: it reflects the range of members’ views. But we have to distinguish between the policy and the priority given to pursuing it. Need to take a pragmatic approach, i.e. what will work in the advocacy context.

BikeNZ – Decided that CAN should participate fully in the new organisation, and seek a position on the interim board. It is important that BikeNZ should recognise that CAN’s advocacy activities are essential for both

sporting and non-sporting activities, and have support for advocacy built into its aims. It is intended that BikeNZ will eventually be funded from events – we decided that BikeNZ was much better placed than CAN to run public fun-rides or longer tours.

Membership, Marketing, Funding – Identified a need to review subscriptions policy, to look at fairness of levy rates and confusion about different types of organisational membership. Agreed to carry out a membership drive during Bike Week 2004.

General – The complete Strategic Plan will be reviewed over the next few months to reflect priorities identified in the recent Membership Survey. CAN's Policy Statement will also be updated and expanded as appropriate – some issues need to have policy positions defined, like 'bikes on conservation land.'

### *Communications*

Robert Parsons has been appointed CAN's new webmaster (thanks, Robert!), and a list of updating and developments needed will be sent to him to work on.

Discussed whether *ChainLinks* should become 'glossy,' maybe for one issue during Bike Week. The possibility of links with Australian Cyclist will be explored.

The CAN library cataloguing and storage system needs to be reviewed to make access easier. Additions need to be identified and prioritised, and items in other libraries (including personal collections) need to be added to the database so they can be accessed when needed.

CAN's set of promotional posters is under-utilised and needs to be promoted. Decided to develop more resources for general displays, professionally designed and produced, on theme of the 'common myths' about cycling.

### *CAN Plan 2003*

The CAN Plan 2002 (actions and priorities for the year from June 2002) was reviewed. A few items could be ticked and removed (yes!), some items were added, and activities were prioritised based on their strategic importance and bearing in mind the amount of time and energy people have to spend on CAN business. [This is a living document. If you would like a copy, or would like to volunteer your time/energy, please contact us!]

### *Finances*

We are managing to get by without spending much money, but discussed the need to maintain reserves. Obtaining status as a 'charitable organisation' is likely to be difficult. The audit of the 2002 accounts is still not complete, but will hopefully be resolved soon.

The budget was re-forecast in the light of current information, and decisions made about how much we could spend on priority items such as assisting local groups to go to the conference.

### *Conference 2003*

Several committee members (Adrian, Roger, Jane) are members of the organising committee. We will have a display during the conference, and the 2003 AGM and 'CAN Do' will be held straight after. ☺

## **What Has CAN Been Up To In The Last Few Years?**

It is easy to forget what things were like back in August 1996 when CAN was just starting up. Looking back, all that hard (voluntary) work put in by many people in many places around the country really has been effective. We need to stop and celebrate occasionally!

### *Activities To Date*

- Regular meetings with Transfund, Transit NZ and LTSA about general policy directions, specific problem areas and future work programmes
- Meetings with Police, Min of Health, Min of Transport, Min. for the Environment, AA, SPARC/Hillary Comm, Ministers/MPs to raise issues affecting cyclists and make links to their policies and activities
- Representation on national bodies such as the Cycling Advisory Group, Cycling Steering Committee, Cycling Support NZ Board
- Submissions on LTSA Rules, Government Bills, national strategies
- Initiated cycle tourism group
- Information dissemination via ChainLinks, e.CAN, library and website
- Media releases and campaigns on relevant issues
- Assistance with coordination of national cycling conferences
- Presentation of papers on cycling at relevant (non-cycling) conferences/seminars
- Advice to members and other parties on technical and legal issues regarding cycling and cycle facilities
- Feedback to relevant parties on cycling research priorities
- Survey of members for feedback on priorities/issues

### *Achievements To Date*

- Contributed to the recognition of cycling's beneficial role by Government, through Transfund's walking/cycling fund, LTSA's pedestrian/cyclist initiatives, and the NZ Transport Strategy
- Provided impetus and feedback for development of National Walking/Cycling Strategy

- Incorporation of the health benefits of cycling within Transfund's cycle project evaluation process
- Assistance with development of Transfund's simplified cycle project procedures
- Involved in development/overview of NZ Cycle Design Guide
- Involved in development of cycling engineering/planning training courses
- Establishment of Transit NZ's Cycle Champions (in head office and regions)
- Incorporation of cycle-friendly issues within numerous national documents (Rules, strategies, guidelines, etc.)
- Assistance with development of LTSA Pedestrian/Cyclist safety initiatives programme
- Contributed to development of KidSafe resources for parents
- Development of a Handbook & Lobbying Guide for local groups
- Development of Cycle-friendly Employer resources for SPARC
- Initial development of 'Kiwi Rides' concept for Hillary Comm
- Funding and technical support for local group activities

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## **NZ Cycling Conference 2003**

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Bruce Mason Centre, North Shore City, Auckland, NZ

Keynote Speaker: Steven Norris, Chair of the UK Government's National Cycling Strategy Board and former UK Minister of Transport

The New Zealand Minister of Transport, the Hon. Paul Swain, will open the conference.

*Conference Theme:* Cycling strategies ... and how to implement them

*Conference Aim:* Exchange of information on cycling strategy development and implementation, including policy and network development, design, promotional initiatives, health, road safety and education.





Motherly love, and a seat with a view...

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## The Budget – What’s In It For Us?

A quick flick through the ‘Vote Transport’ part of this year’s budget reveals a few items of interest, but nothing startling. It makes the obvious statement that “the primary focus of the Vote Transport appropriation [i.e. the dollars] is achieving the NZ Transport Strategy vision that by 2010 New Zealanders will have an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system”.

The amount of money available for grants and administration of Community Road Safety Programmes seems to have dropped by \$39,000, with no obvious explanation.

A couple of interesting ‘performance measures’ that have been set for Transfund are that 100% of construction projects should have “considered cycling and walking as part of the design brief” and should be “consistent with the relevant regional cycling strategy and the NZ Transport Strategy”. Unfortunately, the amount allocated to ‘Walking and Cycling’ (maintenance and construction) has reduced from \$3 million to \$2 million, though we

should bear in mind that last year's amount was for 15 months rather than 12. Also unfortunately, those performance measures only apply to local roads. State Highways (i.e. roads managed by Transit NZ) merely have to have 95% compliance with "agreed levels of service and road condition standards".

On the bright side, there is another \$1million allocated to cycling and walking under the heading of 'purchase or development of capital assets by the Crown'. Under that budget line there is a performance measure for the "number of kilometres of cycleways developed" – the exact target to be determined when the National Land Transport is developed (by June 2003).

In summary, it looks like the amount of money available for construction and maintenance projects for cycling and walking will be the same as last year, though local road safety projects will have a harder time getting funded.

Our real gains, though, may come from the 'mainstreaming' of cycling and walking when projects are being designed. CAN has repeatedly highlighted the problem of cycling being an 'add-on' and not taken seriously, so we welcome this change.

It will be interesting to see how the target is set for kilometres of cycleway, and also how Transfund sets about ensuring that those target kilometres actually get constructed each year. ☺

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## Food for Thought...

The following two items were sent in independently to *ChainLinks*, they seem to go together and should make us all think. Ed.

## Signs of the Times

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of us who were kids in the 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's probably shouldn't have survived.

Our baby cribs were covered with bright coloured lead-based paint. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets. Not to mention the risks we took hitchhiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horrors! We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank lemonade with sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from this.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem. We would leave

home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the street lights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. No cell phones. Unthinkable!

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo 64, X-Boxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, video tape movies, surround sound, personal cellphones, personal computers, or Internet chat rooms. We had friends! We went outside and found them.

We played cricket and football, and sometimes, the ball would really hurt. We fell out of trees, got cut and broke bones and teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it. We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live inside us forever.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rang the bell or just walked in and talked to them.

School examinations were tough and some students weren't as smart as others, so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Horrors! Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law. Imagine that!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors, ever. The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all. And you're one of them! Congratulations.

Please pass this on to others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before lawyers and government regulated our lives, for our own good. 🚲

*Passed on by Axel Wilke*

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## **The Culture of Fear**

I'm always perplexed at others (non-cyclists mostly) mentioning to me how dangerous cycling is, so I've kept track of things I've read that disprove such notions. I recently read "The Culture of Fear" by Barry Glassner.

In the introduction, he lays out his theory, which is,

"Mary Douglas, the eminent anthropologist who devoted much of her career to studying how people interpret risk, pointed out that every society has an almost infinite quantity of potential dangers from which to choose.

Societies differ both in the types of dangers they select and the number. Dangers get selected for special emphasis, Douglas showed, either because they offend the basic moral principles of the society or because they enable criticism of disliked groups and institutions.

Richard Nixon said, 'People react to fear, not love. They don't teach that in Sunday school, but it's true.'

The short answer to why Americans harbor so many misbegotten fears is that immense power and money await those who tap into our moral insecurities and supply us with symbolic substitutes."

At the conclusion he adds, "Statements of alarm by newscasters and glorification of wannabe experts are two telltale tricks of the fear mongers' trade.

Other tricks are:

- the use of poignant anecdotes in place of scientific evidence,
- the christening of isolated incidents as trends,
- depictions of entire categories of people as innately dangerous.

The success of a scare depends not only on how well it is expressed but also, as I have tried to suggest, on how well it expresses deeper cultural anxieties."

This all adds up for me in relation to as why (as I see it) cycling seems to get treatment at a lower level than other road users. I believe, in general, that we are a disliked group to motorists and there is a monetary incentive to try to keep us in cars as much as possible. I think that discriminating towards cyclists is a substitute to handling the real problems of motor vehicles and it is also a way of giving others an excuse as to why they don't ride bikes to get the exercise that we all need – "it's too dangerous!"

The British Medical Association has said the benefits of riding a bike outweigh the risks by a ratio of 20 to 1.

The American Medical Association concluded: "Even after adjustment for other risk factors, including leisure time physical activity, those who did not cycle to work experienced a 39% higher mortality rate than those who did."

The Harvard Center for Risk Analysis says the risk of death for heart disease is 1 in 397, a motor vehicle accident is 1 in 6745, and for a bicycle accident is 1 in 376,165.

I'm sticking with my theory that cycling is a good, and not a dangerous, thing. ☺

*Posted to <<http://www.bikeforums.net>> by 'closetbiker'*

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# Cycling Research

## Always Take The Weather With You...

The days are getting shorter and cooler, and there you are battling away on the bike on a frosty morning or through a wild southerly storm. It's usually about this point that you (and everyone that you know...) start to question why you're biking in a country with not flash weather. This raises two interesting research questions: (1) how likely is it that the weather will turn sour when cycling, and (2) what effect does it have on the amount of cycling?

Bruce (2000) looked at the first question in some detail; as a MetService forecaster he certainly had some good data to work with. He studied the rain records of the four main NZ centres and found that the chance of rain in any given hour averaged < 10%, with the chance of more than light rain (>0.4mm/hr) < 5%. As you might expect, a relatively dry place like Christchurch was slightly better than a wet place like Auckland, generally only by 1-2% though. In winter your odds are slightly worse (except in Dunedin interestingly); e.g. 14% and 7% in Wellington for any rain and more-than-light rain respectively. It is important to remember though that for cycle trips of less than an hour, your odds of getting rained on are proportionately less. So in a typical fortnight for example, it is very likely that (say) no more than one of your daily commute trips might be significantly affected by rain. If you have some flexibility about your riding times, the chance may be even less.

Bruce also looked at wind and frosts around the country. Although some steady wind is common all year round in most places, few days suffer from bike-blasting gales, with the exception of Wellington, which encounters them on 13% of days (less so, away from the coast). Christchurch and Dunedin can expect to have about 90-100 frosty starts each year, but are fairly rare in the northern cities, except in certain suburbs.

So if the yucky stuff turns up, what do people do? A range of studies has tried to capture either what people say they would do, or what they actually do. For example, Wilde (2000) surveyed Canterbury University students and staff and found that they were roughly three times more likely to cycle on a "warm and dry" day, than a "cold and wet" day (with staff slightly higher than students). Separating out the individual effects, it seemed that cold weather caused about a 20% reduction in use, while rain resulted in a ~60% reduction.

Nankervis (1999) also considered this question in more detail, using commuter cyclists in Melbourne. Using a questionnaire distributed to cyclists commuting on a fine summer day, Nankervis was able to get more detailed information about the cyclists and their indicative behaviour under various weather situations. Over the year, stated cycling use per month

dropped in winter to ~50% of summer levels. In a similar study of Melbourne students, the drop had not been quite so dramatic, falling to about 70% in winter.

When questioned about their commuting behaviour under various circumstances, the following stated actions were given:

Action taken	Heavy Rain	Light rain	High temp (>30deg)	Low temp (<10deg)	High wind (>15km/h)
No change	13.00%	17.40%	78.30%	32.60%	71.70%
Change clothes	19.60%	60.90%	17.40%	58.70%	8.70%
Alternative mode	60.90%	17.40%	4.30%	4.30%	17.40%
Don't go / other	6.50%	4.30%	0.00%	2.20%	2.20%

Clearly, heavy rain is most likely to drive cyclists completely away from their bike. It is interesting those cyclists who make no change; perhaps they already ride suitably attired for whatever the elements throw at them. It is also interesting that student commuters were less affected by weather than their working counterparts, perhaps reflecting both the higher dress standard often required at work, and the usually better shower/change facilities on campuses.

Other studies have used actual cycle count data and tried to relate them to relevant weather statistics. Emmerson *et al* (1998) for example, used data from special automated cycle count sites in five UK towns and compared them against rainfall and temperature data. They found that a 1°C rise in the maximum daily temperature gave an approximately 3% rise in daily cycle flows (presumably the UK doesn't commonly reach the point at which cyclist numbers might drop off again due to the heat!). Meanwhile the incidence of any rainfall during the day saw an 11-15% reduction in cycle numbers. It is notable though that the variation in daily cycle numbers not explained by the weather effects was considerably greater.

Niemeier (1996) carried out similar research on five bike routes in Washington state, US. Using an ongoing series of manual observation counts, it was found that average cycle counts were largely consistent until daily rainfall got above ~0.3 inches (8mm) of rain, then dropped away. Increasing average daily temperatures meanwhile caused cycle numbers to increase rather exponentially, with about three times the cycle volumes at 70°F (21°C) than at 50°F (10°C) or below.

Hanson & Hanson (1977) used travel survey diaries in a Swedish city to relate cycle trips for different purposes to the prevailing weather conditions (including snow). They found that "discretionary" cycle trips (i.e. those with a choice in timing, destination or completion) were affected far more by weather than commuting trips. It should be noted that, even on the days that it snowed, cycling accounted for 16-29% of work trips! It may be

that a similar study can be done locally using data from the new LTSA Travel Surveys.

Research findings from overseas may not be directly translatable here, given differences in climate and cycling culture. Locally, Christchurch City has begun to collect continuous automatic cycle count data from some of its major pathways (e.g. Railway cycleway), as well as detailed weather information. In time, it is hoped that this can provide a very good dataset for relating weather effects with actual cyclist behaviour. The data may also be useful for scaling up isolated cycle counts, using seasonal factors, to get estimates of average annual use.

Overall, it appears that the likelihood of cyclists rushing to their cars and buses when the weather turns bad is rather dependent on what type of cyclists they are. Commuting cyclists are more likely to battle on than casual/recreational (“discretionary”) cyclists, and more experienced cyclists are also likely to be less affected in their cycling use by weather. Trip-end facilities and dress standard requirements can play a factor in cycling decisions too.

Statistics aside, it’s always important to remind to yourself that the worst that can happen to you this winter is that you will get a bit cold and wet. And if good weather-proof clothing can’t prevent that, then a hot shower afterwards is a pretty good remedy too... ☺

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Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz)



## Census 2006 – Consultation

Planning for the 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings is now underway. Statistics New Zealand has recently published its initial view on content for 2006 (Preliminary Views on Content report). As with other census cycles, the release of Preliminary Views on Content signals the start of formal consultation. An essential part of the planning is determining the content of the census questionnaires and consultation with interested parties is an integral part of this process.

CAN has a number of concerns about the limitations of the current questions, and is preparing a submission on the proposed Census content. A key issue raised in the past is that the census travel question only asks about work trips (not also education trips for example) and only for the “main means” of travel, i.e. not multi-mode trips. Similarly, the census only asks for the number of motor vehicles in household (not bicycles).

Electronic versions of the report and summary can be viewed and downloaded from the Statistics NZ Web Site:

<<http://www.stats.govt.nz/2006census>>

If you would prefer a printed copy of the report sent to you, please phone 0508 CENSUS (0508 236 787), or email <[census2006@stats.govt.nz](mailto:census2006@stats.govt.nz)>. Submissions close on Friday 27 June 2003.

If you would like more information, or to submit comments for inclusion in CAN's submission, contact Glen Koorey <[koorey@paradise.net.nz](mailto:koorey@paradise.net.nz)>. We will make available a draft submission on the website soon. ☺

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## CAN Members' Survey 2003 – Summary of Results, Part I

*[Apologies for the variation in the illustrations in this article. Those of you familiar with Excel will know the challenges to sanity it can present. Ed.]*

Embarking on an inaugural member survey always gives some cause for trepidation. Will we get a good response? Will the questions and answers make sense? Will our members' opinions coincide with what we're trying to do? So it was pleasing to see the fantastic response we got to the survey included with the last *ChainLinks*. By the time of the CAN Executive meeting in Otaki, we had 220 completed surveys on hand to guide us on some key issues. A few more latecomers have trickled in and, at the time of writing, we have 248 surveys; an excellent response from our 400 or so members. Some supporting organisations had tremendous levels of feedback from a large number of their own members, which helped to swell the numbers of valuable opinions – thanks for the encouragement!

The surveys were fairly evenly split between those filled in using the paper questionnaire (112) and those completed online (136). I'm sure our secretary would encourage you all to try to use the electronic version next time; he drew the short straw for entering the hand-returns! Nevertheless, we hope

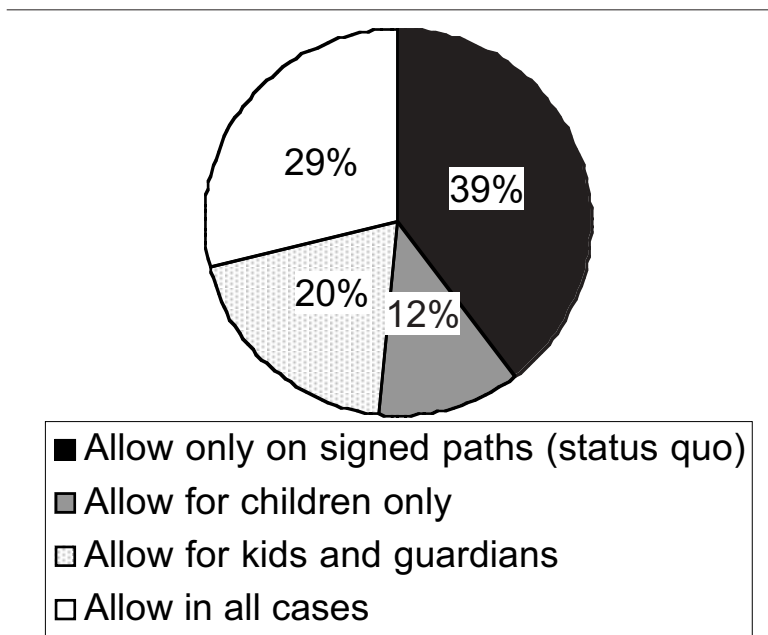
that the choice of survey response helped people to get their information in as it suited them.

There were a lot of things we wanted to know in the survey and, as a result, there is a lot of information that has come out of it. Therefore, because of the limitations of space, we have decided to split the findings into two parts. This month we'll look at members' opinions on cycle facilities and advocacy issues. Next time we'll look at just who our members are and what kind of cycling they do. If you can't wait until then for the next instalment, feel free to contact us now for more details.

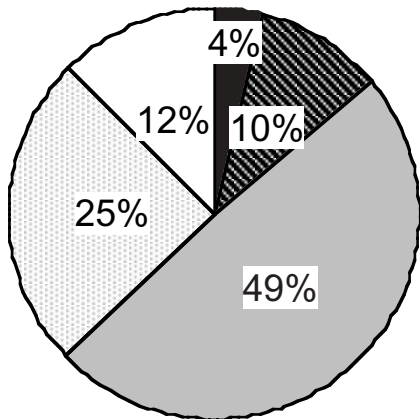
Right, onto thoughts regarding advocacy issues. Plots 1-6 summarise the results from the simple multi-choice questions.

Some general observations can be drawn from these findings:

- There is a bit of debate about the use of footpaths in general by cyclists (as is legally done in some Australian states). A number of comments indicated that it really depends on the situation, which perhaps suggests the status quo of signed shared paths only where appropriate is OK (or a more suitable cycling solution where warranted!).
- There was a bit of a lean towards greater enforcement of cyclists by the Police. The associated comments indicate that law-abiding cyclists feel that those cyclists who run red lights, use footpaths inappropriately, etc give us all a bad name and make it hard to get respect from motorists.

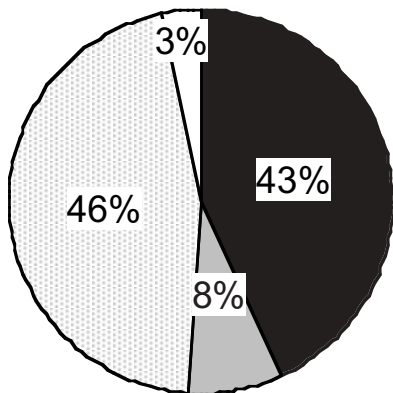


Plot 1: What are your thoughts regarding riding cycles on footpaths?



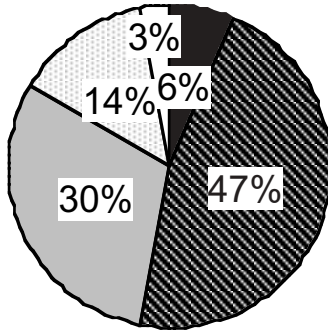
- Too over-zealous
- ▨ A bit tough on cyclists
- About right
- ▤ A bit light-handed
- Not tough enough

Plot 2: How tough do you think NZ Police are at enforcing cyclist behaviour?



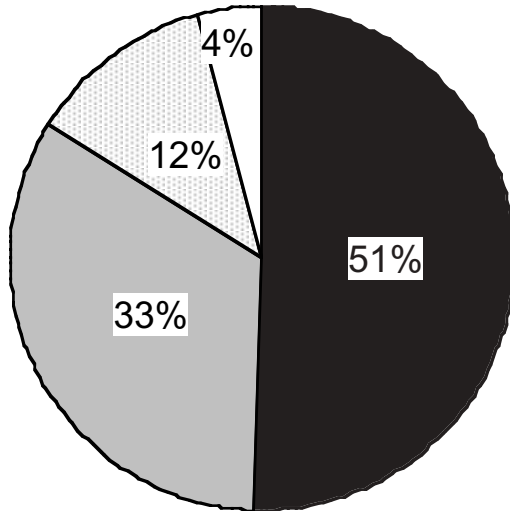
- Mandatory law (status quo)
- ▤ Mandatory for children only
- ▤ Encourage use of voluntarily
- Discourage wearing of

Plot 3: What are your thoughts regarding bicycle helmet wearing?



- Hardly any / worse
- ▨ Falls from your bike
- Hitting an object
- ▤ Hit by car in town (50kmh)
- ▥ Hit by car in country

Plot 4: How much head protection do you think a bicycle helmet gives you?



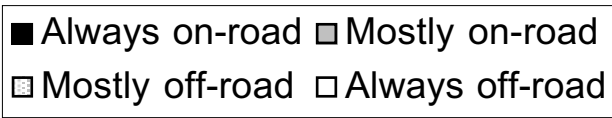
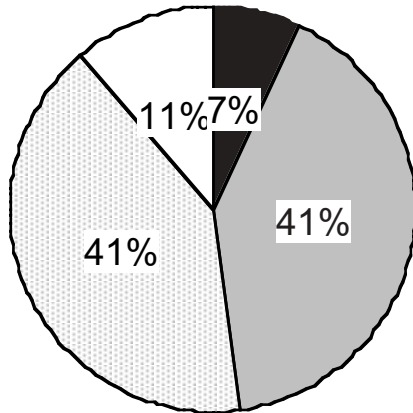
- Yes, always
- ▤ Probably
- ▥ Probably Not
- No, never

Plot 5: If the helmet law was revoked, would you still wear a helmet?

- Although almost all respondents wanted helmet use encouraged (and most would probably still wear their helmets irrespective of the legal situation), those who want the existing mandatory helmet law retained are in a slight minority (43%). Most people also recognised the limited ability of helmets to provide head protection, although there were a number of valid concerns about the way this question was worded.
- There was no obvious preference for on-road or off-road cycling facilities (we deliberately didn't put in a neutral option!) and, together with the associated comments, reflects the fact that there is no clear solution that will always meet cyclists' needs. As such, we will continue to advocate for the most appropriate facilities for cyclists, rather than being expected to use and accept what is provided, regardless of its merits.

The survey also asked how important it was for CAN to advocate for various things. Although we asked people to prioritise, there was a bias towards identifying everything as important (perhaps that reflects the current state of cycling in New Zealand?). Plot 7 below shows the average priority of each item.

It is notable that at the top of the heap are better cycle facilities and more money to pay for them. Clearly people also don't think much of our road planners and fellow motorists, as training for both groups is high on the list too. A number of people were unclear whether Police enforcement referred to motorists or cyclists; we were actually looking for both in general but will review this question in the future.



Plot 6: Do you prefer on-road (integrated) or off-road (segregated) cycle routes?

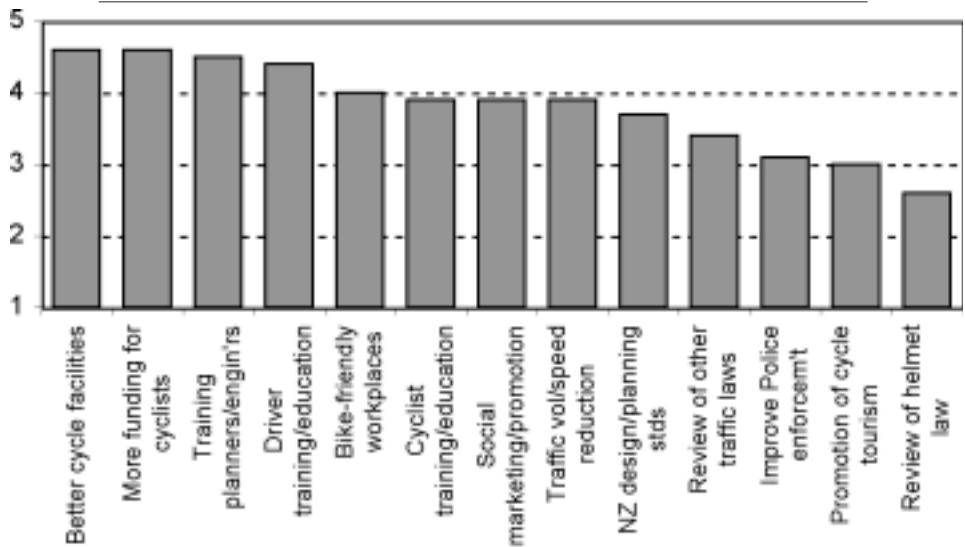
We also asked if there were any other things that we should be advocating for, and many people offered useful suggestions. Some of the most common ones included:

- linking all road funding to the amount spent on non-auto alternatives
- better central and local government policy
- environment & pollution issues
- encouragement of and facilities for children cycling
- promoting cycling in health policies

We will try to take them all on board!

The next questions asked about people's use and opinions of various road and cycle facilities. We were unsure how well people would be able to estimate their percentages of use, but only ~20% didn't try to do this. Although we didn't anticipate this, many people didn't provide an opinion on those facilities that they didn't regularly use; arguably therefore the results are based more on actual experience rather than perceived views. See plots 8 and 9.

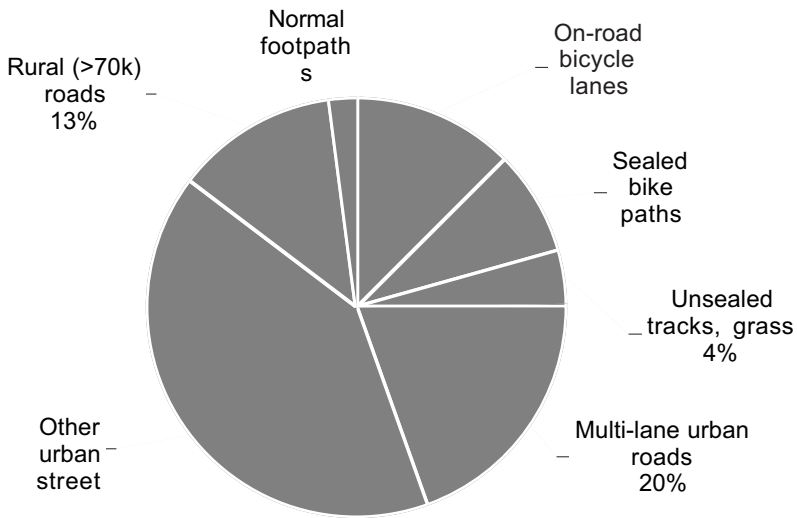
Perhaps not surprisingly, specific cycle facilities play only a small part in of our regular cycle trips. Although we will continue to push for more cycle facilities, it also reflects the fact that most journeys will continue to include normal streets on their way, and planners need to remember that



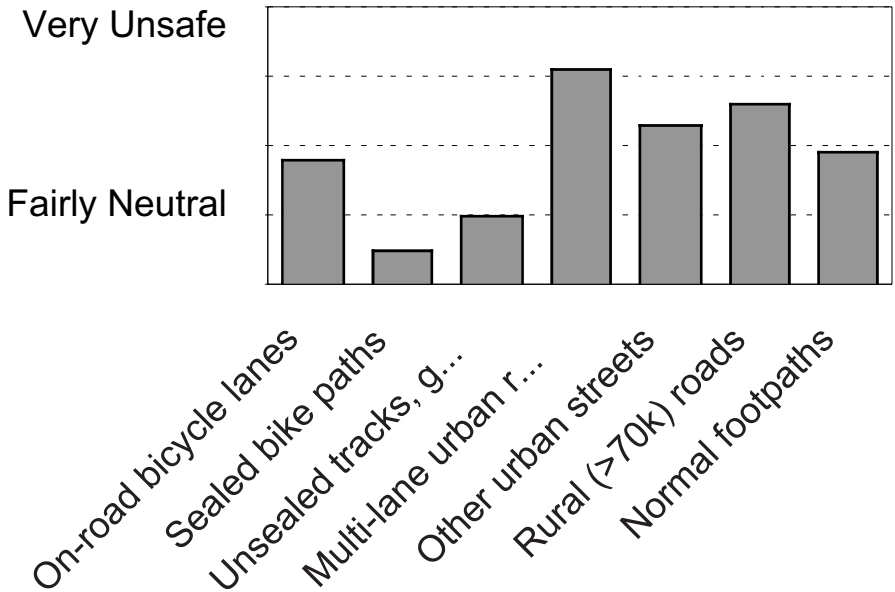
1: Not important; 3: Moderately Important; 5: Very Important

Plot 7: Average priority of each item

“every street is a cycling street”. As might be expected, people considered off-road options safer than on-roads ones, especially compared with multi-lane and high-speed roads. See plots 10 and 11.

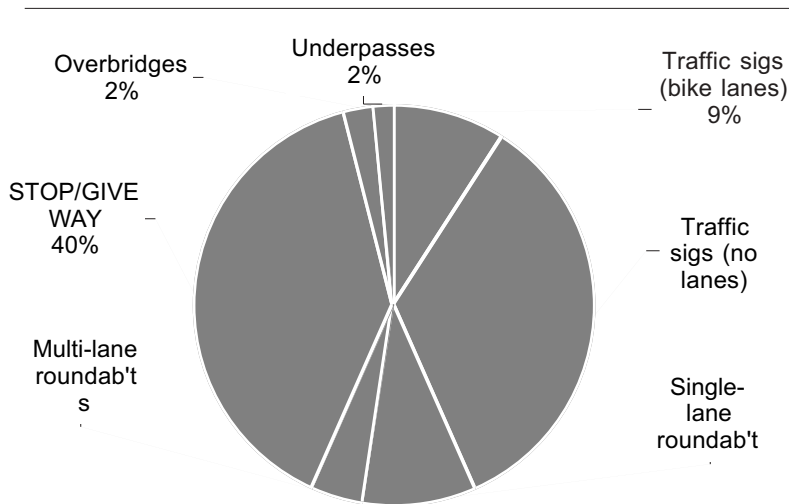


Plot 8: Proportion (in length) of normal daily trips made using various types of roads and cycle facilities

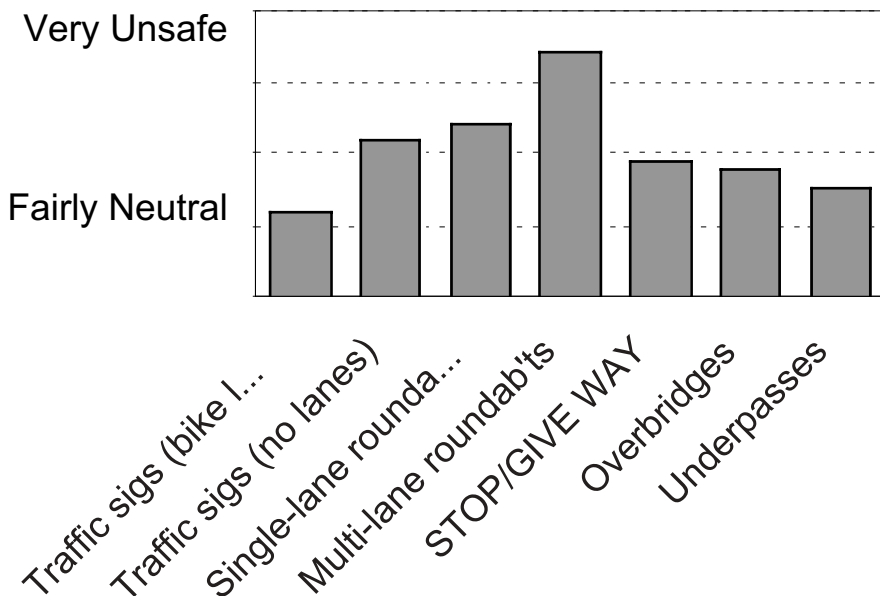


Plot 9: Perception of safety on each road/facility type

Traffic signals and priority-controlled (Stop/Give Way) intersections are encountered quite frequently (some of you also pointed out that we didn't explicitly include uncontrolled intersections in our list; where mentioned by respondents we've included them with priority intersections). The fact



Plot 10: Proportion of intersections/crossing types in normal daily trips



Plot 11: Perception of safety on each intersection/crossing type

that roundabouts don't feature in usage more often is probably reflected by the perceived lack of safety about them, especially multi-lane ones. Also interesting that overbridges and underpasses are not preferred as much as cycle facilities at traffic signals; possibly the latter are also considered more convenient.

A big thanks for all of the excellent comments received regarding this survey. We had clarification of answers, comments about survey questions, more thoughts on cycling advocacy, and a few pats on the back as well. You'll appreciate too that our aim to put quite a lot of questions in a reasonably compact survey meant that we were sometimes limited in our choice of suitably brief wording, but we will look at this issue of clarity/ambiguity more next time. Space here limits us from even beginning to mention the comments in more detail. Suffice to say that they have proved useful in making sure we analyse your answers correctly, and they will no doubt prove useful for both our future advocacy work and future surveys.

Yes, such has been the usefulness of this exercise already, we'd like to repeat it on a regular basis (probably every 1-2 years). The questions are not at all likely to be the same, as there will no doubt be other topical issues we'd like to gauge and many of you have suggested some good ideas for areas of research. So expect something again, probably in the middle of next year! In the meantime, our next focus is to do a survey of our various communication tools, namely ChainLinks, e-CAN, and our website. This will be for our wider contact community too – look out for that in the next ChainLinks issue.

### *CAN Survey Lucky Winners*

All survey respondents who submitted their answers before April 9th went into a prize draw for five \$20 book vouchers. We're pleased to announce the lucky winners:

- Dr Ralph Chapman, Te Aro, Wellington
- Michael Lloyd, Mt Albert, Auckland
- Tom Flewett, Eastbourne, Wellington
- Bruce Chambers, Remuera, Auckland
- Neil Talbot, Whitby, Porirua

(Sorry we couldn't do much about the geographical or gender spread!)

Congratulations – your prizes are on their way. 🚲

*Glen Koorey (<koorey@paradise.net.nz>)*



## Report Review

### “The Relative Risks of School Travel”

*Special Report 269*, Transportation Research Board, Washington, D.C., 2002, Web: <<http://www/trb.org>>

The report examines the relative risks of various the various transport modes used by children to get to school. The report is an interesting read, but does largely miss out on covering one important issue – what is the source of the risks? Often of course the source of risk to one transportation mode is not the mode itself but the users of another mode. For example, walking is fairly safe – the odd twisted ankle maybe – but children walking to school still die. To address that you don’t stop them walking! It is a pity the report fails to examine this issue further.


The report includes the following information on relative risks:

Mode	Per 100 Million Student Trips	
	Injuries	Fatalities
School bus	100	0.3
Other bus	120	0.1
Passenger in vehicle, adult driver	490	1.6
Passenger in vehicle, teen driver	2,300	13.2
Bicycle	1,610	9.6
Walking	3,109	4.6

#### **Estimated Student Injury and Fatality Rates by Mode During Normal School Travel Hours**

Walking and bicycling do not fare to well, but the risks in these modes are largely external – and the table might well point to the source, but that would require further analysis that the report does not include.

An interesting conclusion raised by one reviewer of the report is how a “safety measure” can go wrong. In some areas of the US school children are not allowed to travel to school by bus due to the “danger” of travelling without a safety belt. The total injuries to bus passengers above is 220, while that for car occupants is 2,790. In other words if a child who is disallowed from travelling by bus is instead taken by car then this “safety measure” increases their injury risk by over 12 times. For fatalities the increased risk is 37 times! Now the purpose of the “no bus travel without a safety belt” rules are undoubtedly well-meaning, but the results are not.

The report is well worth reading and is available in PDF format from the Transportation Research Board’s web site. 

*Dr Nigel Perry, University of Canterbury*

# Editorial

## Politics

I am a scientist, so politics often baffles me. I thought I'd illustrate this with a true story:

A few years back I was sitting in a local council working party meeting on the location and design for a new road route. A ratepayer, who just happened to be an engineer, was presenting an alternative route to the one favoured by many in the Council. He concluded, "... and this route is also shorter."

"In *your* opinion," was the quick response from a Councillor.

"No, in Pythagoras'!" was the instant reply from the Engineer.

The room fell silent...

Yes, the Engineer had removed a right angled bend from the route, and we all remember from childhood that one side of a triangle is shorter than the sum of the other two...

But not in Politics! Or at least not always. In politics facts are negotiable, truth relative, morality variable, in short anything goes.

Of course in everyday life not everything is absolute. My morality might not be the same as yours, the importance you place on some fact might be higher than mine, and life would be pretty boring if people were not different. But politics is a whole different ballgame. If you wish to make an impact in the political arena you have to decide what is inviolate to you, long before you enter, whether your integrity is up for sale, or not. It is a strange world indeed.

## Reminisces

I started editing *ChainLinks* in the early days, there had only been one or two issues and the fledgling CAN with just a few members was looking for an editor. I am a scientist, not a writer – indeed I've been known to joke that I'm numerate but illiterate. So why did I volunteer? My work with computers gave me access to some very powerful tools to do the job, to steal a line from an old TV show I "had the technology."

When you are receiving articles from people who are not computer whizzes, scouring the world for material, etc. and have limited resources having the technology is vital – or more precisely having the technology to tame the technology that your contributors are going to be fighting an often losing battle against.

A typical article might arrive by email. The innocent and well meaning contributor will have typed it in in Word (affectionately referred to as Wheeze), copied it into Outlook (the best virus distribution tool out there)

and sent it off to *ChainLinks* totally oblivious to the havoc these have wrought on their work of literature. For starters all computers actually store text as a series of numbers, but they differ on which number represents which letter. To avoid confusion email programs attach a note saying “this text uses this encoding.” Simple isn’t it? Well yes, except when the email program lies... as does Outlook all too frequently. The result? Well gobbledegook actually. Fortunately with the right tools the original masterpiece can be restored. Oh, the “joys” of technology!

In the early days *ChainLinks* was printed on A4 pages, and was just a sheet or two long. It was usually all text, with few illustrations. Each issue was first prepared for printing and then a clever program was used which produced a version for the web which looked remarkably similar to the printed version – a challenge for web output.

Later we switched to A5 booklet form. This has the advantage of being easy to read, no long lines to scan, and also fitting nicely on most computer screens for those who read the electronic version. However it has the disadvantage that the smaller page area causes many more copy-fitting problems and each issue to this day requires a careful juggling of material between initial input and final output.

The web version was also dropped, it really was limited, and “portable document format” (PDF) is now used both for the printer-ready (2 pages per A4 sheet, correct order for binding) and electronic (A5 pages, optimised for on-screen viewing – which is a polite way of saying lower quality graphics to keep the file sizes down!) versions.

The issues also got thicker and contained more graphics, and the man on his bicycle started riding through the pages to fill up blobs of whitespace.

Of course there are far more important things about *ChainLinks* than the production technology, and that of course is its content!

Over the years the breadth of material covered has widened. From being a few printed A4 sheets of local news *ChainLinks* has expanded to bring a slice of the world to its readers in every issue. The international media is scoured and people from all over New Zealand, and sometimes further afield, send in contributions ranging from the seriously serious to the way and out whacky.

During 2000 the production of *ChainLinks* even moved offshore. I had the pleasure of spending that year on sabbatical in Utrecht, Nederland. For a year a lived, and *ChainLinks* was produced, in a country which hasn’t forgotten the basic joys of riding a bicycle – though it hasn’t always been that way. Unsurprisingly the Dutch are a healthy bunch, and cycling is far safer there than here – for no other reason than they care about road safety and health with a passion not borne of a political need to appease the motoring lobby.

Production hasn’t always gone smoothly, issues have been late, and many a midnight candle has been burned to get an issue “to bed.” It is time

consuming, but it has always in the end felt worth it. However it's not a job I'd heartily recommend!

Over the years *ChainLinks* has received many compliments on its contents, and a few complaints – but the former hugely outweigh the latter. For those I am for ever grateful, it has been a pleasure – well most of the time!

## **Time To Move On, For Now At Least...**

Sadly I find I am compelled to stand down as editor of *ChainLinks*. In 2003 CAN has in my view changed dramatically; its lost some of its soul, its integrity, and changed its approach to politics. I wish it hadn't, I hope it recovers, but I cannot work in the current climate.

Now, before someone claims otherwise, it is not a difference over helmet legislation – the Exec has always had differences on that. But yes, the first sign of the change of direction came over a helmet-related story. An embargo was placed on reporting that the LTSA had apparently directly misled the public and slandered a medical doctor, both in an attempt to win an argument over bicyclist safety. Sounds like news. But concern was expressed that reporting the issue might damage CAN's relationship with the LTSA – truth and integrity are quick casualties when politics is played.

But that was just the start. Concerns soon arose over other issues, such as the handling of BikeNZ. Also a decision was made to ignore a motion passed at the last AGM and to suspend some of CAN's Policy; both without informing the membership, why? Actions such as these led to my questioning the whole new political stance that is being taken.

In future *ChainLinks* is to reflect the current political priorities of CAN's executive. I'm proud of that fact that very little that gets submitted to CAN doesn't get published, and what is published is rarely edited. Yes, editors are human and suffer some bias like anyone, nobody's perfect, and that affects contents. But now items are to be vetted to decide if CAN members should hear about them. Under the new regime I didn't even put in some major stories from France, the UK and the USA – too wacky or potentially political, I knew they'd get cut. However a letter I did include which detailed the carnage caused by cars was cut as it used a line about rally drivers helmets to introduce the topic – apparently it would be viewed by some as an attack on the bicycle helmet legislation! How I don't know.

Now I started this editorial by saying I am a scientist, not a politician. I've worked in the political arena for years, but I certainly don't understand it. Maybe the membership really want this change to happen, want CAN to adopt this kind of politics, control what news gets published, etc. I guess we'll all find out at the next AGM.

Right now I am a stranger on the Exec, it has become a foreign land, the joy has gone. CAN has lost part of its soul, and for reasons that simply don't make sense to me. Indeed the reasons appear dangerous and threaten the future of CAN's role as cycle advocates who are taken seriously.

Others in the Exec obviously don't agree with me, so its time to leave quietly and let the members decide at the AGM. It has been a hard decision, but in the end I think the only one.

Should the AGM so request I might be willing to take up the reigns of *ChainLinks* again. In the meantime maybe I'll submit an article or two, we'll see...

## In Closing

I would like to bring you one of my favourite photos one last time:



This picture embodies my hopes and dreams for New Zealand. Yes it is a great photo of a family outing. Mum, Dad, and a young boy sitting up front enjoying the view. It's healthy, fun, and all round wholesome. However the significance of it is where it is from – it is from the **cover of a motoring map produced by a motoring organisation**. When New Zealand prints such pictures on its motoring maps, we will have arrived.

May we not lose too many on that journey. 🚲

Nigel Perry, <npcycle@zoot.net.nz>

## Special Edition Addendum

*This addendum contains the letter whose insertion caused the original issue to be re-formatted, and lose a lot in the process; a letter cut from the original; and an article thought too wacky ;-)* Ed.

### Just For Fun: The Skeedaddlehopper



The “Skeedaddlehopper” concept has been a work in progress for the last ten years or so. I’ve built 22 different contraptions over the years; ranging from several bicycle-pulled bamboo seven-wheeled “push me/pull you” trailers (where someone rides and also pedals while sitting inside of the trailer) to the “Huggity-Ringed Roller” bike that gets steered by the elbows!

The Skeedaddlehopper design came about by realizing that the Midas Muffler people are really good at bending pipe! ....

They do it all day long to make exhaust pipes for cars. So, I went down there one day with six piece of 10feet X 1.5" dia. threaded aluminum conduit...and they gave it all the “Midas touch” by bending it into crazy-shaped “question marks” for me! I threaded three pair together to make three big snowshoe-shaped arches. They fan out (forward, middle and aft) and converge at the 3/4" X 3 feet axle. Two long, curved 1" aluminum conduit ties them all together.

Speaking of tying, the entire chariot is lashed together with truck tire inner tube (free) that had been cut into 2" X 2ft strips. Then everything is covered with a lightweight, decorative cloth.

This serves two purposes. It makes everything about the rickshaw look “organic” (sometimes people think that it is made out of sticks), and it keeps the sun from deteriorating the inner tube “tendons”. At some strategic load-bearing places I have u-bolted it together underneath the inner tube lashing.

Electric wheelchair aluminum 20" wheels are used. BMX 100PSI tires are used to make the rolling resistance go down to virtually nil! Each wheel can handle approximately 500lbs this way. Since the wheels are small and lightweight, the side-to-side motion is greatly stabilized.

When operating it, I lean over a padded contour-curved bar, and my elbows rest on pads as well. To go up slight inclines, I turn around and walk backward; taking “baby steps”. This is like putting it in “low gear”.

The ideal “balance-point” is when the driver’s weight is about 1/6th. So the people or “pet 25 lb rocks” are placed strategically. The heavy person sits over the wheels, and the lighter person sits way in the back.

To move it requires a “skedaddle” and then a hop – in which I get to glide for a while before touching back down to do another skedaddle!

Hydraulic motorcycle brakes are the ticket for zooming down hills at up to 25 MPH! More weight than usual is placed toward the back to lift up the driver. Then, when I get rolling, the brakes can slowly bring me back down so that I can glide for 20 feet at a time without touching! Though, if needed, I can stop very quickly – even with a full load of people (600 lbs). It’s ALL about balance. The kangaroo demonstrates this “loping” action. It’s tail balancing-out it’s body weight.

Last, but not least, is covering the entire craft with a waterproofed hemp canopy with a zipper door and roll-up windows! Hemp hammocks and even hemp oil brake fluid! A hemp oil tent heater warms it during the winter months. After taking a solar shower in complete privacy, roll out the goose-down hemp sleeping bag and fall asleep saying...“Home is where the cart is...” Sure, it could be linen or cotton too! But, I must say, if I did it all this way, I could REALLY shout, “Hemp, hemp, hooray!”

Darin Selby, Email <darin\_selby@hotmail.com>  
from the Internet

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## Letters Extra

*This letter was omitted from the original June-July issue as the Executive felt it was an “implied attack on bicycle helmet law – which is exactly how most members are probably going to read it.” Given this letter does not mention bicycles at all, and mentions motor vehicle helmets only peripherally as a “segway” into the problems caused by excessive car use, the Executive decision to censor it is inexplicable. Unlike the next letter, the Executive’s actions regarding this one **did** contribute to the Editor’s decision to resign. Member’s can now decide for themselves whether it should have been censored.*

Editor

Dear *Dominion Post*,

POSSUM’S HELMET: This morning’s cartoon showing a helmet on his car was misleading as he wasn’t wearing his helmet. All motorists should wear them as the Australian study showed a few years ago.

I also find the fawning over his car distinctly distasteful. Cars do the following in Wellington region each year;

- 30 deaths as a result of 27 crashes. 1+/fortnight
- 165 serious injuries. 3+/week
- 824 minor injuries recorded. 16/week
- 2,430 non-injury crashes reported.

For residents under the age of 44, the most common cause of death and trauma is the car.

Worldwide cars have the following effects;

- more than 1.2m people/year die from motor vehicles crashes, 1p/30secs
- this is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest cause of death worldwide, by 2020 it is forecast to be 3<sup>rd</sup> (WHO)
- the morbidity rate doubles when air pollution from cars is included
- more than 36 million people/year are injured, 1p/sec, of which 1/3<sup>rd</sup> seriously i.e. 1p/3secs.

Yours faithfully,

Daryl Cockburn, Transport 2000+

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*The letter did not make the original issue as it was felt that comments made by Jane in her open response may be misconstrued given that the Editor was resigning. To avoid any misunderstanding; neither Jane or any other member of the Exec requested that the Editor should resign, and the Exec did not sack the Editor. Indeed the Editor's resignation has no connection with Cycle Action Tauranga's decision to leave CAN and Jane's comment's on "dealing with the issue" should not be taken to mean this.*

*CAT's reasons for leaving CAN would suggest that they have a fundamental disagreement with CAN Policy; which is to call for a review of the cycle helmet legislation based on indications that it has not worked; and not really with the news and views published in ChainLinks. However this is unclear as they are not specific. Regardless we wish CAT well.*

*CAN of course is neither pro-law, anti-law, pro-helmet, or anti-helmet; it simply takes the view that the evidence of failure needs to be investigated. The CAN survey reveals nothing to indicate this Policy should be changed.*

*Editor*

Dear CAN,

I write as Chairman of Cycle Action Tauranga (CAT) with some anger, disgust and frustration withdrawing any further association with CAN.

Cycle Action Tauranga is committed to ensuring cyclists are safer on the road. We have initiated numerous successful campaigns including the walking bus, "Be Safe Be Seen" developing reflective CAT Eye helmet stickers, Mark Packs – packs containing lights and reflective gear, "Share

the Road” and “Safer Routes to School”. All these campaigns have taken place with the full support of our local authorities – Tauranga District Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Environment Bay of Plenty and the New Zealand Police.

CAN's protracted grizzling about cycle helmets is confusing to the general public and counterproductive to all the hard work we do to promote cycle safety.

Please accept this letter as formal resignation.

Yours faithfully,

*Mike Bibby, Chairman, Cycle Action Tauranga*

## **Open letter to Cycle Action Tauranga:**

Dear Mike,

I am very sorry that CAT has made this decision at the very point when the CAN committee was dealing with the issue. It would have been helpful to have your concerns raised with us earlier.

The work done at the local level by groups like CAT is essential. As CAN representatives, we do our best to support you by lobbying at a national level for funding to be made available, for positive attitudes amongst staff in government (both central and local) agencies, and for supportive baseline policies, rules and regulations.

We thought that the relationship between local groups and the national organisation was a symbiotic one, but clearly we have not done enough to communicate our role in the process.

CAN has, in fact, spent very little energy pursuing the issue of cycle helmets, preferring instead to work constructively with the LTSA, Transit NZ, Transfund, Ministry of Transport, the Police and others to ensure that cyclists are considered in the design and use of our roading network, and that politicians understand the benefits to the country of getting more people cycling. We have now moved to ensure that the content of ChainLinks reflects what we are actually doing.

You may also be interested to know that your letter has prompted us to develop better links with local groups around the country, so that we can all know more about each other's activities. But communication is a two-way thing: we rely on local groups taking the time to share their experiences, frustrations and successes with us and with the rest of the advocacy network.

We hope that CAT will reconsider its decision to leave CAN. You will be very welcome to rejoin in the future.

Best wishes,

*Jane Dawson, Chairperson*

# JOIN NOW!

Name

Address

Phone

Fax

Email

Occupation

## MEMBERSHIP FEES

Unwaged	\$15
Family	\$25
Waged	\$20
Supporting Organisation	\$50

Membership Fee \$

Plus a donation of \$

Total \$

Please make cheque payable to  
Cycling Advocates Network

Please send information about 'Cycle Safe' Insurance

How did you find out about CAN?

**Please send with your cheque to: Cycling Advocates Network,  
PO Box 6491, Auckland. You may use Freepost 147092.**

We respect your privacy and won't give your details to anyone not affiliated with CAN.

**Deadline for next issue is Jul 18<sup>th</sup> 2003**

Please submit news, articles, letters, comment etc. to <ChainLinks@can.org.nz>, or post items c/o CAN, PO Box 6491, Auckland – electronic submission is strongly encouraged. For advertising inquires please email <secretary@can.org.nz> or write to CAN. 