

Dundee Cycling Forum

Inaugural Meeting

24th October 2016

Dundee University, Dalhousie Building

Participants

Gordon Shepherd, Mark Simpson, Neil Quinney, Kate Treharne, Andrew Smith, Martin Harris, David Martin, Trudy Cunningham, Marianne Scott, Kim Reid, Nina Gillespie, Norma Lyall, Ron Lawie, Alexander Cochrane, David Robertson, Jojo Neff, Paul Crocker, Scott Reid, Robert Webster, R. Brooks, J Baird, Andy Llanwarne, Daniel Kochaniuk, Peter Clinch, Steve King, Laurie Bidwell, John Berry, John Whyman.

1. What can a Cycling Forum do for the Dundee Cycling Community?

Many comments and questions were raised during open discussion. They include actions from lobbying for infrastructure improvement and other policies to support cycling, to promoting cycling events and training.

Cycling Clubs - what can a forum do for them?

Everyday leisure and commuter cycling should benefit from the Forum, not just sports cycling and club cyclists. The Forum could provide a collective voice for cyclists in communicating with the Council and others - at present the cycling clubs don't achieve this. It could also raise the profile of cycling with the local community, to encourage more to take up cycling and support the work of the Forum.

Defects and infrastructure improvement could be requested for attention through social media such as Facebook (look at the new app introduced by Ramblers to report problems with paths). This could also let people know about upcoming infrastructure works, as well as events and experience of cycling initiatives elsewhere. This could be hosted by the Cycling Forum rather than the Council, which would enable it to be used in a more flexible way. Messages can already be sent to John Berry via the cycling@dundeecity.gov.uk e-mail address.

Noted that there is a good cross section of local cyclists represented in the meeting: club coaches, Sustrans volunteers, leisure riders, commuters, users of electric bikes, business owners, agencies such as Tactran, Dundee City Council officers.

Education and training for kids not only encourages young riders, but also makes more considerate future motorists. It can also encourage parents to get back on their bikes, even e-bikes.

Routes to schools need investment.

Election of councillors takes place next year, members could contact candidates to find out what they propose for policy to support cyclists. The 20mph scheme is an example. The campaign group Spokes are already contacting councillors but are focused in Edinburgh.

Current infrastructure in Dundee mainly provides shared space for cyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers etc. away from the road. There are complaints of conflict, even at current cycling rates. Would the situation be better if cyclists were segregated from pedestrians away from the footway, making it easier for the Scottish Government's vision of increasing cycling to 10% of short journeys to be met without increasing conflict with pedestrians? (Currently we are well short of achieving this aspiration, but it was felt at the meeting that the numbers of people cycling in Dundee has increased over the past couple of years).

The Forum should not just look within Dundee's boundaries. It should take account of provision in neighbouring areas outside Dundee in Angus, Fife, and Perth & Kinross, for commuters to the city and leisure riders leaving the city.

Cash is available through various schemes, to invest in interventions that increase cycling rates. The main constraint is the limited staffing at the City Council to develop and implement interventions. The Forum could help to initiate and develop these ideas.

Harestane Rd, the new Sidlawview Primary School is possibly a missed opportunity for dedicated off road cycling infrastructure for pupils. Onroad cycle lanes have been installed, but may be ignored by motorists parking on them, yet there was plenty of space for a segregated cycle lane. The renovated Harris Academy has no provision for cyclists along the Perth Rd.

Are big projects like main routes into and out of Dundee within remit of the Forum? Yes - but smaller improvements can be carried out quickly (e.g. re-painting bollards white so that cyclists don't run into them at night).

Dundee Cycling Strategy commits 5% of transport revenue and capital spend to walking and cycling infrastructure. However, it takes time to change the mindsets of transport and development planners. Maybe standards and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure more positive actions are incorporated in all relevant projects, not just left to officers to decide.

New schools! What is the requirement for active travel infrastructure? Planning Application process is there to ensure public opinion is taken into account. Broughty

Ferry Community Council had a member who checked the planning lists. Forum can share information and encourage members to comment on major applications or comment as a group. The Access Officer already reviews new planning applications and circulates significant ones to the existing Local Access Forum – this could be extended to the Cycling Forum.

Accessibility Standards required for planning consent may be too vague. Cycling Strategy states that the council will strengthen the requirements placed on developers for cycle parking and to link to the strategic network. The Cycling Forum could push for this. Dundee University are asked to meet BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards.

It is accepted that some motorists will flout the law. Police Scotland is all one force and action is being taken in some areas on drivers that do not allow space when overtaking cyclists (ie Highway Code Rule 163).

Is lobbying for improved laws or enforcement within the role of the Forum? It could be.

Representative of Police could be invited to join Forum – or attend specific meetings. Maybe a police officer would join as an individual, but be able to contribute relevant expertise.

Voice of cycling in Dundee is not loud or unified yet – this would help to make local politicians pay more attention to the needs of cyclists.

The Forum could organize a “Pedal on Parliament” event for Dundee.

Events to celebrate cycling could be put on by the Forum. This could be combined as a Festival, made up of smaller events organised by different group or clubs. We could include a cycle powered outdoor cinema! Events could be aligned with national days such as Bike Week or Cycle to Work Day.

Cash used for events should not reduce spend on infrastructure improvement!

A Cycle Hub building suggested by Dundee City Council in the Central Waterfront, should include local business or community enterprise, and expressions of interest would be welcome. There is no detailed plan for the hub. However it will not be at the train station, although there will be cafes and good cycle storage as part of the new station building. One idea is to locate it beside the V&A building once that is completed. Scottish Government is making funding available for such projects.

Cycling Forum should promote itself locally, to increase membership.

How do the Forum input into evidence gathering for funding? It may only be beneficial for some funding applications, but consultation on new infrastructure investment should come to the Forum as good practise. The technical evidence

gathering such as using cycle counters is upto the council, but design of infrastructure for cyclists can improve with consultation of experienced users.

Monitoring and review of initiatives for cycling should be done on a more regular basis, to encourage continuous improvement, and the Forum could encourage and support this. Positive feedback is welcome along with constructive criticism!

Can there be Mini Holland schemes in Dundee? Some London boroughs have had these to look at the requirements of an area more systematically, rather than focusing on small one-off projects.

Community Links funding is underspent each year, and Dundee needs good project ideas to spend it on, for big projects.

The Forum should have targets with achievable objectives in the short term (1-2 years), medium term (2-3 years), and longer term (5+ years). Early wins are important to build a sense that the Forum can achieve something, rather than getting frustrated because big projects take so much time.

Training is available locally, for riders to improve confidence such as Essential Cycling Skills (adults) or Bikeability (kids). There are also training opportunities for people to encourage others to cycle with employers or clubs . A list of training opportunities should be investigated. Some courses are free, there may be help for funding of courses. Forum members could take advantage of this training.

Is Bikeability to be rolled out across the city, more than the Active Schools as they are not specific? All Councils have external funding for this, and Dundee is looking for match funding to start the scheme. This could start as soon as next year. Could some of the 5% of transport spend not cover the match?

Cuts to Dundee City Council staff must be limiting staff time to achieve desired cycling projects, but a strong Cycling Forum could provide practical support as well as lobbying for more resources.

2. Structure of Cycling Forum

a) Membership

Various suggestions – police, bus companies, taxi drivers association, employers, universities NHS, Dundee and Angus College, Dundee City Pupil Council. However it was agreed that individual enthusiastic cycling members are more important at this stage than invited organisations, but inviting groups could be useful where discussions need external input or at open meetings.

b) The Forum should be constituted and set up as a not-for-profit organisation

c) Support from other Forums

Suggested that the new Cycling Forum has links to Dundee Local Access Forum, a statutory group at arms-length from the City Council, who also have walkers, cyclists, horseriders represented and who have been active in the city for 10 years. They are independent, and a structure is already in place. Some of their members are here tonight and could provide experience and help when needed.

d) Frequency of meetings

Should the Forum meet more than twice a year? Maybe quarterly, like the Local Access Forum? There was a feeling that there should be more frequent meetings, at least initially, to build up momentum and get the Forum established.

3. Nominations for Positions

A large number of participants indicated they would be interested in taking an active role in a steering group over the short term, to set up the Forum. Steve King, Marianne Scott, and Ron Lawrie agreed to meet to progress preparation work.

4. Immediate Actions

- Set up Facebook Page
- Review Cycling Dundee website
- Prepare draft constitution
- John Whyman will provide a record of discussion at tonight's meeting and circulate.

5. Date of next meeting

Monday 5th December 2016, 7pm, Dalhousie Building, Dundee University. Trudy Cunningham to book room etc. (the University's valuable support for this inaugural event was acknowledged).

John Whyman and Andrew Llanwarne, 26 October 2016