

## CTC RTR REPORT

Upheaval continues in the former Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire, and Sheffield is starting to look more like Barcelona than Moscow, with red-brick apartment blocks everywhere and weather to match - all we need now is the Playa de Rotherham as the water levels rise and the area will be perfect. We hear that the CTC has been given £300,000 by the government to educate their members about climate change – this is certainly needed in the South Yorks and North Derbyshire area.

The Summerfield St junction is nearly complete with right turns banned from Ecclesall Rd, and a new arrangement for cyclists crossing from Sunny Bank. I was amazed to hear however that the council planned to leave the unsightly and hazardous planter, with its solitary scraggy rosebush and collection of broken bottles and other rubbish in the middle of the cycle lane – a candidate for Warrington Cycle Campaign's "Facility of the Year, surely? Swift co-ordinated action ensued and the planter has gone. We still have concerns about the timings of the lights and the arrangements for cyclists crossing from Summerfield St to Sunny Bank, and are working with the council to resolve these.

To the north of the city, the shape of things to come is starting to emerge as the Shalesmoor is re-opened to outbound traffic, with shiny new cycle lanes, toucan crossings and access ramps to allow cyclists to make the manoeuvres that motorised traffic will be denied as it speeds from Penistone Rd to the Parkway – I say speeds, but the speed limit will be 30, and I have no doubt that the road will fill up and traffic will be reduced to a crawl yet again within a year or two. Nevertheless, we have gone over the plans with a fine toothcomb and tried to ensure that any manoeuvre that a cyclist might want to make is catered for, either on-road or by use of toucan crossings and cycle slips. However we will be very interested to hear cyclist's experiences on the ground now that they are actually able to use parts of it.

Close by, an Action Plan has been drawn up for the Kelham Island area. Key points are the need to maintain and enhance general permeability, links to the emerging Upper Don Trail, the exciting prospect of the conversion of the roads tunnel at Harvest Lane to a ped/cycle tunnel, the need to protect slightly tipsy cyclists leaving the Real Ale Quarter (don't ride drunk folks) and strategically placed cycle parking.

Just around the corner, we see Sheaf Square starting to emerge at the front of the station, and Paternoster Row becoming the default route for cycles, buses and taxis, when the planned link from Pond St goes in, we will at last have a signed safe route across the city, following the flattest possible route. I don't think we've had one of those in the 32 years I've lived here.

Our Green councillors, Jillian Creasey & Bernard Little, have been very supportive of the cycling agenda and I have been working with both of them to secure better conditions for cyclists in the city. I am taking Bernard for a ride along the TPT "airport loop" so he can see some of the challenges that hard-working volunteer Sustrans rangers face.

I had an interesting meeting with Local Access Forum, who represent disabled groups around the city. The focus was on shared use routes and the difficulties these pose for both cyclists and pedestrians, whether disabled or not. One interesting fact that emerged was that you are 70 times more likely to be hit by a car than a cycle on the pavement, and what's more the vehicle that hits you is very likely to be a police car! The solution that the disabled groups favour is height differences between cycle tracks and the footway, and that's something I think we can live with - bearing in

mind that in the urban context shared use is regarded as a last resort in locations where most cyclists would be loath to use the carriageway, for example on the Ring Road. We also talked about arranging rides for visually disabled users, so they can get a feel for cycling – tandem owners please get in touch!

Change seems set to continue, with the New Retail Quarter, the rejuvenation of the Moor, and major developments along the Upper Don Valley. Your Right to Ride Rep will continue to work with his colleagues in the Sheffield Cycle Campaign and the CTC to ensure that cycling does not get missed off the agenda.

Simon Geller  
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[ctc.rtr.sheffield@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ctc.rtr.sheffield@blueyonder.co.uk)