

## CROYDON BIKE WEEK 2006

### Bike Week review

*This year's action-packed Croydon Bike Week was organised by Mark Dawson of Pollards Hill Cyclists. The following is a shortened version of his review recently posted on [croydoncyclists](http://croydoncyclists.com)...*

A week late (I've been away) but here's the overview of the very successful Bike Week celebrations in Croydon.

We started with 2 rides around the **Croydon Cycle Quest** route. Only 6 opted to try the full 50 miles with another 8 on the shorter northern loop. The actual Cycle Quest leaflet still isn't finished but in the meantime check out <http://www.croydoncyclequest.co.uk>

Sunday's Spokes Rides and Dr Bikes had varying degrees of success. Kenley were inundated with bikes requiring a check up but others had fewer takers but more riders heading for Queens Gardens where the lovely Erin from Innocent had given us some free drinks. Not bad on a day that saw 50,000 on their bikes riding to Brighton in the annual charity ride and several other groups riding along the Wandle Trail.



*The 2nd Love Yr Bike took place at Croydon Arena*

Monday's Mountain Bike ride was a 15-strong success, 7 ventured up the Waterlink Way on Tuesday night while 40 cyclists enjoyed a free breakfast at Stuffins on Tuesday morning.



*History Ride participants view London landmarks from the Addington Hills*

The popular Solstice Ride met up with dozens of West London cyclists at the Roebuck high on Richmond Hill. Leading 30 riders back through a dark, deserted Richmond park and seeing a stream of white LEDs behind me was a real thrill.

Thursday's History Ride suffered a setback when our leader was forced to cancel due to family matters but we

combined the expert local knowledge of 4 riders, including the Chair of the Friends Of Shirley Windmill and made our own route up, with all riders contributing to the interesting facts along the way.

Friday's picnic was disappointing with only 4 but over 100 people came through the gate at Love yr Bike on Saturday. The Arena is huge so it was a little spread out but everyone enjoyed riding the different trikes and recumbents around the track.

Sunday's Windmill Ride saw 11 starters venture around the South London's windmills, Shirley, Brixton,

*Many thanks to Mark and the volunteers for making Bike Week such a success this year. Mark's full text, with ideas and links for continued rides through the summer, can be found on [croydoncyclists](http://croydoncyclists.com), message number 3916:*

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/croydoncyclists/message/3916>

Wandsworth, Wimbledon & Mitcham for those that couldn't work it out. Lunch at the bonus Windmill pub in Clapham. Meanwhile, the family rides out in Farleigh attracted plenty of interest whilst the Anerley club had their charity riders heading out to Downe.

More pictures can be seen at:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/croydonbikeweek/>

*Mark Dawson*

### Local elections

*Some voted Labour, still more voted Tory... but the Council got back in!* 😊

The local elections brought a change of control, and saw the departure of many councillors, good, bad or indifferent alike. In the light of this new dawn, what did Labour get right, what did they get wrong, and what might change under the new Conservative administration?

On the plus side, Labour's policies were worded to be more-or-less consistently positive towards both cycling and walking. They also had several councillors who were strongly supportive, and who helped push for progressive positions such as the new UDP's adoption of a transport hierarchy, with walking and cycling prioritised highest. Former councillor Martin Tiedemann deserves particular thanks for support he gave in his role as Chair of the Cycle Forum. Councillor Gerry Ryan

also, for fast tracking Croydon's new town centre cycling routes (implementation is supposed to start this summer). Other councillors were known to be genuinely supportive, but lacked influence under the new "Cabinet style" system of local government.

## **croydoncyclists gains critical mass**

Our croydoncyclists e-group, a Yahoo forum for anyone interested in cycling in Croydon, has now reached 108 subscribers – breaking through the 100 mark and up 20% on the levels reported in the last newsletter.

Messages can be received as individual emails, or in digest form, or browsed on the web. For more details see:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/croydoncyclists>

## **... but CCC needs people**

Despite current record membership, as a local group we presently have just 5 people actively involved. Certainly we could beat ourselves up on this but, in truth, with lower cycling levels and perhaps different demographics, achieving a critical mass of active volunteers has long been a problem for almost all outer London local groups.

Co-ordinator Ruth Chapple will sadly be leaving the borough soon to live elsewhere. We need more people and new energy, otherwise CCC will likely become increasingly "virtual" (a trend that started a year or two ago). More outsourcing, fewer newsletters, less general activity, etc. Ultimately, less local lobbying for cycling. Does this matter? Perhaps not immediately, but almost certainly in the medium and longer term.

So... if you think you might want to help, please get in touch ([austen@croydon-lcc.org.uk](mailto:austen@croydon-lcc.org.uk)) or come and say hello at a CCC meeting (see diary dates below).

On the debit side, we also saw some astonishingly retrograde measures under Labour, particularly in regard to one-way schemes, most notably the creation of a one-way gyratory system in Upper Norwood. These schemes were promoted by a small number of senior councillors, who unfortunately seemed to feel that cycling considerations were unimportant and that they could ignore the letter and spirit of government guidance, the UDP and their own party's policies.

How could the incoming administration improve on the record of the outgoing? Obviously by adopting similar progressive cycling and walking policies, but also by

making sure, somehow, that councillors selected to senior positions consistently uphold those policies.

Is this likely? At the moment the Conservatives and their policies remain largely unknowns. We should get more of a feel for the direction in the coming months, starting on 10th July at the next Cycle Forum. Councillor Richard Chatterjee becomes the new Chair, with Councillors Steve Hollands and Jane Avis attending as new members.

One welcome change is that the Conservatives are pledging to reinstate two-way working around Upper Norwood Triangle – so long as the local community is in favour. Obviously this would be extremely positive and something CCC would strongly support. Of course, things could be taken still further, Croydon having numerous one-way streets that presently deter people from cycling.

*Jeremy Rickard*

## **Diary dates**

*N.B. Croydon Green Drinks has a new venue!*

### **CCC meetings**

**2nd Wednesday of the month, starting at 7.45pm.**

Our venue is: Croydon Unison Social Club, Chatsworth Hall, Chatsworth Road, Croydon CR0 1HE. Meetings are fairly informal, and new faces especially welcome.

*Upcoming meeting dates: 9th August, 13th September.*

### **Croydon Green Drinks**

**3rd Tuesday of the month, from 6pm.**

Not a CCC event but some of us sometimes make it along. Venue is The Green Dragon [formerly called The Hogshead], 60 High Street, Croydon CR0 1NA. Look for the comfy sofas and the house plant, or call Richard on his mobile (07989 358842) if you can't spot the right group!

*Upcoming meeting dates: 17th August, 21st September.*

*This newsletter is available as a bookmarked, colour PDF from:*

<http://www.croydon-lcc.org.uk/news/newsletters.htm>

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