

## EAST MIDLANDS CYCLE FORUM

By *DAVID CLASBY*

### East Midlands Cycle Forum in Derby Feb 11th:

Derby Cycling Group had the idea for starting an umbrella group of cycle campaigners based in the East Midlands nearly 6 years ago. Since then East Midlands Cycle Forum has met at least once, usually twice a year. The meetings have been all over the East Midlands and this February they came back to Derby.

We all met at 10am at Yaffle Caf above Soundbites but after an hour when The Brewery Tap opened at 11am we quickly moved to their wonderful 1st floor meeting room. For the next two hours we had a superb talk from Simon Geller of Sheffield Cycle Campaign and also Secretary of Cycle Nation. Simon looked at what is happening in Sheffield and we were particularly impressed by the themed rides that happen once a month in the city on the Friday closest the full moon. They included a chip shop ride and many other wacky themes, a great idea. We also spent a lot of time looking at the future of cycling nationally and what we can do to support positive changes through cyclenation. Do have a look at their website at [www.cyclenation.org.uk](http://www.cyclenation.org.uk) as DCG is a member of this great national group.

After a superb lunch laid on by The Brewery Tap we sat down and spent a couple of hours discussing the planning process and engaging with local democracy. Topics that might make some want to bury themselves under a ton of manure. Lucky for us we had Lucy Care and Tony Roelich leading

the discussion and it was absolutely fascinating and really useful. There are so many changes a foot with planning and localism. Top tip, get along to your Neighborhood Forums and join your Neighbourhood Board and argue for cycling when ever you can. You can find details of when they meet on the Derby City Council website, this is local democracy in action.

To round the day off members of DCG took delegates on a bike ride around the completed inner ring road. We saw the good, the bad and the ugly. It rounded off an excellent day.

So a big thank you to all who came along from our sister organisations in Nottingham, Chesterfield, Sheffield and Northampton. Also a big thank you to the fabulous turn out from DCG members.

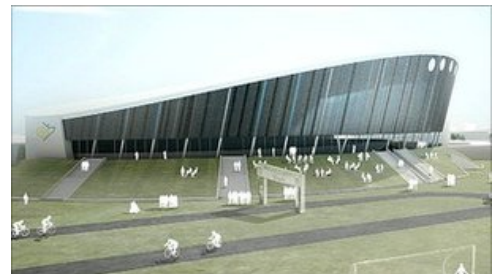
## POLITICIANS AND THE VELODROME

By *TONY ROELICH*

We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who wrote to their councillors and election candidates

in April and to those who wrote again in May to support the velodrome, signed the velodrome petition and

turned out in the market place to support it. There is no doubt that Derby councillors, if they didnt already, now know about all about Derby Cycling



**Derby Velodrome**

Group. We will be following that up with face-to-face meetings in the coming weeks to press home the case for more and better cycling facilities and services in the city.

You can read below our assessment of the part's cycling policy statements in response to our questioning of them; their full responses are on the DCG website. The poorest response was from the Labour Party and as they now control the city council we need to work hard to get them to develop good policies, quickly. However the publicity gained from your letters and signatures gives us a strong mandate on which to lobby.

The Velodrome was officially voted through by the council cabinet on Wednesday 11th July. Bowmer Kirkland have been appointed to build it. The developer must now get the plans for the foundations approved by the Environment Agency, and it is a pre-requisite that the budget cannot be extended if any problems are found. There is therefore still some element of risk that the project may not be completed, but, most importantly, all the political parties on the city council now support it in principle. That is a victory for Derby Cycling Group and the local cycling clubs who campaigned for the project to proceed. Many, many thanks to everyone who has supported this campaign.

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## COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

### LUCY CARE - DCG COMMITTEE

#### MEMBER

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- **How long have you been with DCG?**

I first joined Derby Cycling Group when I returned to Derby for my first 'proper' job in the 1980s. I had been stopped from cycling in the bus lane on St Peter's Street (before it was pedestrianised) which seemed very unfair - I'd previously been working in Coventry where cycles were allowed in bus lanes.

- **What is your role?**

Back then I took up the dual roles of treasurer

and newsletter editor. After a few years, I was elected to the County Council, and I stood down from these roles to avoid a conflict of interest. As I didn't stand for re-election two years ago I am now a free agent again and help out by going to meetings, pestering the council or whatever's needed.

- **Where are your favourite bike rides?**

I ride as a means of transport, not for the ride itself. But one of the best times to be riding is early on a summer's morning when the roads are quiet and the day not yet hot!

- **Which are the bikes you own?**

My regular bicycle is a Brompton - really handy when the meeting I'm going to is at the far end of a train journey. It's upright posture is also good for my back, which can be sore at times. I also have a drop handle bar hand built 531 road bike. Not ridden this lately...

- **What do you do outside Derby Cycling Group?**

I'm naturally a campaigner, working for a more sustainable and fairer world. I do this either as part of a group, like Friends of Littleover Parks or Transition Derby or by raising issues as an individual or within the Liberal Democrats, with whom I'm still active.

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## DERBY POLITICIANS AND CYCLING: HOW DO THEY STACK UP?

By *TONY ROELICH*

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Derby Cycling Group asked all six of the political parties what their policies are regarding cycling ahead of the council elections on May 3rd. This is how we think they fared, in the order in which we have received the feedback (to be updated as more information comes in):

- **Labour Party**

We received a copy of Labour's Derby manifesto from Paul Bayliss. Only one item covered transport (relating to buses within the Green Agenda policies). Cycling is not mentioned at all, which is disappointing. In his covering e-mail, Paul Bayliss has however agreed that cycling would be part of the mix of initiatives to help achieve their Green Agenda. But this agenda is unfortunately vague and has few concrete proposals.

On cycling - Labour needs some positive, practical, policies.

- **Liberal Democrats Party**

Hilary Jones for the Liberal Democrats set out a comprehensive vision for the return of a "cycle city" status to Derby. Her statement covers the need to consider cycling during the planning process, designing cycle routes and on-site facilities into new commercial developments, increasing safety by introducing 20mph speed limits and even details such as better cycle route signage and the introduction of non-slip manhole covers. She also expressed continued support for the new Velodrome (which "was a Lib Dems idea").

We think there has been considerable thought relating to cycling by the Lib Dems, and the Velodrome will be a huge asset to the city. We think - A job well done.

- **Green Party**

David Clasby from the Green Party is a Derby Cycling Group member as well as a Green Party candidate. He has provided a very comprehensive view of the Green Party's cycling policy, culminating with their aim to make Derby "the UK's leading cycling city by 2020 with 20% of journeys by bike". Their policy covers cycle friendly planning, making cycling the top priority in Derby's Local Transport Plan, council funded cycle training for adults as well as children and the creation of safer streets to encourage new cyclists including 20mph zones, advanced stop areas at all traffic lights and more attractive cycle

routes through parks and open spaces. They also advocate more controversial policies such as opening pedestrian areas to cycling, contra-flow cycle lanes on one-way streets and look to allow turning left on red for cyclists at traffic lights. They do also point out the importance that "all users feel safe".

This policy is thorough, it has aspiration and it has detail. Our verdict - The one to beat.

- **UKIP Party**

Alan Graves for UKIP told us he has been a strong supporter of cycling locally in Alvaston, especially supporting cyclists at the Neighbourhood Forum, in relation to the creation and running of the national standard BMX race track in Alvaston Park and ensuring the new London Road rail bridge has more space for cyclists. He thinks the council has a strong policy towards cycling which he would keep. We are very grateful for this support, but we would like to see positive policies from UKIP as well. We are however pleased that Steve Fowkes, the Derby UKIP leader, has offered to meet with Derby Cycling Group after the election.

For UKIP - We look forward to working with them in the future.

- **Conservatives Party**

Matthew Holmes, the incumbent cabinet member for transport, wrote to us about the Conservative's cycling policy. It covers the inclusion of cycling in the planning of new developments with council and planners "encouraged" (we'd prefer "required") to engage and consult with stakeholders and working with neighboring authorities to extend cycle routes beyond the city boundary. Matthew too wants Derby to be a "cycling city" and supports many revenue based initiatives such as cycle training, travel plans and a route planning service, as well as capital funded facilities (cycle paths and lanes, contra-flow schemes, etc). The Conservative's unique ideas in this review are a cycle hire scheme and a specific focus on increasing the propor-

tion of commuting journeys made by bike.

Overall this is a focused approach with the potential to deliver good and measurable results.

- **BNP Party**

Paul Hilliard from the BNP recounted his early years on his bike riding to work and the pleasure he derived from rides in the country. He went on saying that encouraging children to cycle more to school, making people more aware of cycle routes around Derby (especially the off-road routes) and provision of more cycle lanes and cycle stands would all help with problems of congestion, pollution, health and obesity. He also noted that some of these things cost little money and could benefit anyone. Finally he said that if elected he would like to meet us to discuss what more the BNP could do to help cyclists.

In summary, a welcome appreciation of the basic cycling issues and the advantages that cycling can bring.

**For the Future,**

It is very encouraging to find well presented policies from half of the local political parties. Some of the ideas are aspirational, others are more practical, but there is a good basis to deliver a better future for cyclists in Derby. If the Conservatives, the Green Party or the Liberal Democrats are running the council after the election, or have a share of it, Derby Cycling Group hopes to see rapid progress in developing these ideas because current practice and experience do not match these policy aspirations.

UKIP and the BNP have a good basic platform on which to build, but Labour do need to think hard about the benefits which cycling can bring to Derby, we think they do not yet have the whole picture. There is a need for these three parties to further develop positive policies, either on their own or by talking to organisations such as Derby Cycling Group about the issues cyclists and would-be cyclists face and what is needed to make things better. We are pleased with the offers made to discuss cycling further.

## A NOTE

By *DCG COMMITTEE*

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Dear DCG members,

Please visit the DCG website for up to date information on the Groups activities. Late in 2011, we moved to a new design of the website intended to make it a lot easier for all members to become involved in any ongoing discussions or to share their cycling related news.

All members should have been set up with a login and received an email with details of their username and password. If these have been misplaced then email the webmaster for a reminder. Once logged in, members can create new items of news or comment on existing items. The committee is particularly keen to gain feedback from members on their views of ongoing issues and areas in which campaigning should be concentrated. There have been problems with spamming on the website so you might find there is a small delay between you submitting a contribution and it becoming live on the site. We're trying to make this delay as small as possible but please bear with us.

We also want to collect cycling related photos from Derby so, if you have any suitable, please try the "Photo Upload" feature towards the bottom right of the screen.

The event calendar is currently fairly sparse so please send details of any cycling related events in the Derby area to the webmaster. One impressive feature is the Cyclestreets project (see link on bottom right of website) which allows you to specify start and finish points in the Derby area and be presented with a choice of suitable cycling routes (fastest, quietest or a balance of the two).

If you are on Facebook you are encouraged to join the Derby Cycling Group Facebook Group.

Please send any suggestions, comments or details of problems to

[webmaster@derbycyclinggroup.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@derbycyclinggroup.org.uk)

Thanks

**DCG Committee**