



CHESTER CYCLING CAMPAIGN
.....Working to Create a Cycle Friendly City



**Minutes of the December Meeting held on Wednesday 6th December 2023
at 7.30 pm at Bowling Green Court**

Present:

Cathey Harrington (CH) (Chair), Stephen Perry (SP) (Secretary), Simon Brown (SB), Arnold Wilkes (AW), Ian Slater (IS)

By video link: Peter Willams (PW), Paul McCormick(PM), Steve Pemberton (SPem)

Apologies:

John Violet (JV), Ashleigh McCraight (AMc), Nic Siddle (NS), Julia Bennett (JB), Eileen Morgan (EM), Claudia Caldeira (CC), Laura Ryan (LR),

1. **Minutes** of the previous meeting were accepted. IS will ask CS to upload to the website.
2. **Matters Arising:**
 - NC – has shared details by e-mail of the proposed Heritage Centre Lightfoot Street
 - SB – has added Claudia Caldeira as a CCC Facebook editor
 - JV – has shared information on the proposed route to station for Charterhall Drive
3. **Finance - Treasurer's Report attached:**
 - Bank balance is 5440.92, as of 2/12/23, see full report attached
 - CCC has match funded the Police & Crime Commissioner's fund with £250 for the benefit of The Bren Project, which was gratefully received.
 - We need to renew the contract for Bowling Green court – **Action JB**
 - CCC have received £125 from the now disbanded 'Friends of the Millennium Greenway'
 - Simon Sandford Health Box has provided us with £250 to subsidise our led rides in Ellesmere Port
4. **CW&C Liaison – see report attached**
 - CCC members are encouraged to respond as individuals to the CW&C Transport Plan and to share their feedback with JV, by the end of December. The consultation link is <https://participatenow.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/local-transport-plan-4-phase-1>
 - Action All**
 - The meeting asked that JV will then collate all comments and compile a CCC response
 - Action JV**
 - The meeting agreed that we (JV) will share our feedback to compare feedback with AMc/CNC at the January CCC meeting. **Action JV/AMc**
 - The meeting also asked that JV should respond to the CW&C proposals for Northwich in behalf of CCC, based on his superior knowledge **Action JV**
5. **Planning Review – see report attached**
 - SPem confirmed that CNC have been advised that consultation on the Frodsham marshes Solar panel installation is expected to be launched in the New Year. CNC will be consultees
6. **Membership update – see report attached.**
 - 2 new members. Chester East PCN have not renewed their corporate membership. CH to contact PCN to encourage them to renew their CCC membership **Action CH**
7. **Website development – see report attached**
 - The meeting agreed to support CS's proposal to migrate the website to Krystal Hosting
8. **ATfest 2024 Update**
 - SP gave a general update on various initiatives that are being considered in support of a holding another festival in 2024. City Centre Councillors have been engaged in various

recent discussions and a meeting was held in November to test their interest and support for an event.

- The current preference is that a much less ambitious event is held, but with an even greater focus on generating interest and engagement with local school children and their parents. The likely date for such an event will be the weekend of 15/16 June, which will coincide with the planned GreenExpo event by the Riverside.
- SP will provide a more detailed update in advance of the January CCC meeting.
- In support of any event and to generate a more planned process of engagement directly with school children, SP proposed that CCC should offer to organise 'cycling assemblies' to a limited number of primary schools, similar to that organised for Guilden Sutton Primary School in October. The meeting agreed to support this proposal with a target to hold at least one 'cycling assembly' per month from February 2024 onwards. In further support of this initiative SP has agreed with the Cheshire West & Chester Association of Primary Heads (CWAPH) that we can have a short session on the agenda of their next meeting on 27th March 2024 at Cheshire View, with the opportunity to have a promotional stand at the event as well.
- Suggestions from the meeting that these 'cycling assemblies' could be coordinated with Bikeability events at a particular school and could be extended to include our offering a Saturday bike maintenance event will be further considered.
- Finally SP explained that he has accepted an invitation to represent the CCC in the new initiative Chester Great and Small (GAS), see <https://chestergreatandsmall.co.uk/>

9. Other Activities

- PW explained concerns being expressed by visually impaired users of the proposed new LCWIP from Birkenhead via Wirral Waters to Liscard Village, where walking, cycling and motor vehicle routes will be demarcated with coloured tarmac and without additional kerbs. This concern is a matter that may need to be taken into account in other future infrastructure designs.
- Simon's Lights – CH will advise by email those interested in joining this outing when the weather is suitable. The plan would be to meet at the Piper in time to depart at 19.00.

Action CH

- Our 'abandoned bikes' initiative - the meeting supported IS's proposal that the initiative to identify abandoned bikes has been cancelled
- SB will write the Letter of the Month in December.
- We need to find volunteers to write January and February letters and to Chair and take Minutes at January, February and March meetings. We will contact CCC members again to encourage volunteers. **Action SP**

The next meeting will be held on January 3rd 2024 at Bowling Green Court and by video link
Chair: **IS** Minutes: **CH**

REPORTS - shared prior to or after the meeting.

Treasurer's Report - November 2023 (Figures as at 02/12/23)

Transactions	£ Income	£ Expendi ture	Balance s £
Opening Balance (Lloyds) 31/10/23			5291.73
Credits			
Memberships – Stripe	129.94		
Memberships - PayPal	24.25		
Memberships - cheque	40.00		
Healthbox CIC	250.00		
Debits			
PCC match funding to Bren		250.00	
Simon Brown expenses – tape		5.70	
Arnold Wilkes – expenses sundries		22.30	
Ian Slater expenses sundries		17.00	
Sub-total	444.19	295.00	
Bank balance 02/12/23			5440.92

Membership Secretary Report - November 2023

Membership.

235 members as at 28th November.

2 new members in November.

Other news.

Arnold and I have done some initial route finding in Ellesmere Port and met with Canal & River Trust folk about a shared programme of led bike rides, to start in January, supported by funding from HealthBox. £250 of initial funding was agreed - hopefully this has been received now.

CWAC Liaison Report - November 2023

- Charterhall Drive to Station link became a concern after contractor for hotel started operations in the area. Agreed that Simon Brown would approach local Councillors whilst I contacted officers. Contractor has improved access for cyclists and pedestrians. Council insisting on 3m wide access route around perimeter of site mainly following the established route. Work is currently curtailed with no presence on site.
- Council asked for support for preliminary scheme at St Oswald's Way/St Anne Street junction. This junction was on a list of schemes requested by CCC in September, mainly regarding the city centre. The current purpose is to obtain Active Travel England approval which will not be decided until 2024. If successful then the more detailed design will be progressed dependent on site survey, statutory undertakers, safety audit etc. It is significant that the Council are now undertaking preliminary designs before requesting funding which should result in more accurate cost estimates. I have not commented on the connections with Victoria Rd and

Delamere St at this stage nor the detail of the 3m cycleway since the scheme is not at that stage.

- The Council have responded regarding the possibility of using land at Lightfoot Street as a second station entrance. They are currently committed to the Gateway Scheme and appear to be putting all their eggs in that basket. I have responded indicating the significant cost variations between the two schemes. Should the Gateway proceed then Lightfoot Street would still form a convenient addition to the scheme. The Gateway is now on hold following Rishi Sunak's announcement that the railway will be electrified.
- In December, I intend to follow up on Pierre's suggestion that consideration be given to having time limitations for cyclists at Chester Cross and St John Street crossings. I have waited until now as I was told that the Traffic Regulation Orders would be looked at in the New Year.

Cycling Matters Report – November 2023

Winter issue in production.

Electronic version - A Councillor alerted me to the fact that, because I now use the Campaign's electronic mailing service, Cycling Matters! was ending up in Councillor's spam bins. So I emailed them all individually and asked them to add "enquiries@chestercyclecity.org" to their contacts. I received about 10 replies saying that they had found it in spam. I cannot of course be sure that all will have added the email address to their contacts.

Hospitals:

COCH - I approached Jill Morgan (Sustainable Travel and Transport Manager) and am hoping to meet end December to discuss how we can help with actions in the COCH Travel Plan. NB: Axis PED, the agency who wrote the TP, won the Green Expo Award for Transport 2023 for this Travel Plan, in recognition of reducing parking demand by 355 spaces.

CWP - Arnold & I had meeting with Veda Carter (Sustainability Manager) about cycle access to the Bowmere site (there is a plan for it to be improved), and how we can contribute to actions in the forthcoming CWP Travel Plan.

Cheshire East Primary Care Network - I've been attending meetings about every 6 weeks. Their bid for Step Up A Gear funding for cycle storage for practice staff was unsuccessful, but they will bid again in future bidding rounds, the aim being to co-ordinate with activity with CCC.

Talks I am doing a talk to Handbridge WI on 2nd January "Get Going on Cycling - What Women Need to Know"

Other things:

Met with Councillor Matt Carter, Handbridge Park ward, to let him know about the Campaign and the work we do. Andy Cairns and I have put together a crib sheet for anyone doing the same for other Councillors - or anyone else. Andy will test it out when he meets his new local Councillor.

I've replied on behalf of the Campaign to The Wyldewoods, the new development on the old Beechmore Nurseries site, to have CCC included in their "Meet the Neighbours" initiative and hopefully their "Hello Chester" mini booklet

Webmasters Report – November 2023

Following some work I have done recently on the website, we now get these monthly reports of website traffic. MonsterInsights is a tool that makes Google Analytics more user friendly as it has now become so incredibly complex in its latest incarnation.

2,000 web page views isn't bad for October. I doubt it represents a 100% increase on September. I think this figure reflects the fact that I connected the tool to our Google Analytics in mid-September.

Nic's interactive Google map is now up to fifth place which is great. And Greenway flooding is ninth due to a wet month.....

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Proposal to Migrate Website to Krystal Hosting

I have become increasingly dissatisfied with our current hosting company, EasySpace, for the following reasons:

1) Lack of Transparency and Price Rises - Back in October our hosting contract was automatically renewed. The relentless price rises have continued. EasySpace are not transparent and open about price rises, and the first you know about them is after they have automatically taken the money from your account. EasySpace also charge separately for services that are included free in hosting contracts with other hosting companies.

2) Forced Upgrade to PHP Version 8 - In January EasySpace will be forcing us to upgrade to version 8 of PHP which is the computer language that underpins WordPress, our content management system. This carries some risks for us as we use a lot of plug-ins. These are additional WordPress modules which enable us to have additional features on the website such as the ability to send out newsletters, to have our document library, etc. I cannot be 100% positive that all of our plug-ins will be compatible with PHP version 8, and some parts of the website might not work as a result.

3) Wild Variations in Website Response Times - Our website slows down periodically for no obvious reason. This may be due to EasySpace shoving too many websites onto one server.

I have learned about Krystal Hosting through the Chester Eco-Communities network. (Krystal are coming to the next People, Planet, Pint event.) Krystal are a B-Corp business which offers 100% green hosting, and has outstanding reviews on Trustpilot. I have had initial talks with them and they have been very helpful. The advantages for us would be:

- they will refund to us our unused time with EasySpace, effectively refunding us 10 months of our remaining contract
- they will be about 50% cheaper - roughly £100 per year instead of £150
- they will take automatic backups of our website and database daily, saving me a tedious job
- they run their servers on 100% green electricity from renewables
- they will include SSL encryption for free without extra charge
- they will handle the migration of the website themselves for free
- they will handle the management of our domain name for about one third the cost of EasySpace
- they will let us choose the version of PHP that we want
- they will provide an unlimited number of email addresses for us for free
- they avoid yearly price rises and only occasionally raise their prices for customers

This is a no-brainer. Unless there are any serious objections, I intend to move the website to Krystal in mid-December.

Planning Report - November 2023

1. Three actions were rolled forward:-

(1) investigate costs/availability of leaflet holders for external use. These are a minimum £15 each and it was agreed at the Nov meeting that this was too expensive.

(2) order land registry hard copies for the land covering the disused railway land opposite Vauxhall on N Road, E Port. The one I already had was less than definitive so I was a bit reluctant to buy more, but I have now managed to establish the registrations anyway. They are as per the sketch below:-

It appears that the disused railway track bed is not registered to Vauxhall (although the road is). A reasonable assumption is therefore that the whole of the MSC Railway assets remain within the Peel organisation and are not part of Vauxhall/Stellantis.

(3) Review of footpaths and submission against plans for Sutton New Hall Farm (23/02279/REM). Still to be done. It is worth noting that Redrow have just applied for what they are calling a “non-material amendment” (23/03630/NMA) which seeks to “to remove all reference to Solar PV installation”. So much for sustainability! I will not comment on this for CCC as it is not directly related to cycling –some may want to make individual comments?

2. Lightfoot Street. Ref route to station for access from Lightfoot Street. Email circulated showing that land is available for this and is within CWaC’s ownership. John V has passed on the info to Mark Youngman of TfW and to Karen Stevens.

3. Frodsham Marsh Solar Farm. Still no further news of the supposed report on the local consultation. I take it that CNC has heard nothing?

4. LIDL-Caldy Valley –Again, no word as to when this might be brought to Planning Committee and no revisions to submitted plans.

Some recent Planning Decisions on checked applications:-

(Outcomes:- green - OK, peach - mixed, red - not so good, lilac -	Use of property as registered children’s home for up to four young	94 School Lane, Hartford, Northwich, CW8 1PN	Awaiting decision	Edward Shepherd	Cycle storage now included in recommend ed conditions
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uncertain,
white – info
only).
23/03368/FU
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people aged
between 8
and 18