

Cyclists pedal their way to route funds

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AFTER more than six hours in the saddle, seven cyclists have raised £7,000 for a new bicycle route into Oxford

Keen campaigners from Eynsham, Cumnor and Botley took on the 62-mile challenge through London to raise money for a pedestrian and cycle track linking Botley to Eynsham.

Third time rider John Blackie from Cumnor – who completed this year's course in nine hours – said: "Oxford is a city synonymous with cycling."

"Oxfordshire County Council has the opportunity to make a real statement to create a dedicated community path which works for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers. It will open a greatly needed route west out of Oxford."

"We know taking part in high-profile events like these keeps the project in the public eye and brings the plan closer to reality."

The overnight event ran from Saturday through to Sunday morning starting and finishing



RIDE ON TIME: B4044 cycle campaigners after last year's London Night Ride

at the Olympic Velodrome.

Peter Lister, from Cumnor Hill, completed the London Night Ride in six and a half hours, with Nigel Richardson, from Botley, taking seven, Sam Tharme, from Oxford, and Nicky Chambers, from Eynsham taking seven and a half hours and John Blackie, from Cumnor and David Eaton taking nine hours.

At 77, Derwent Swaine, from Cumnor, who completed the route in seven and a quarter hours, was the oldest rider.

For four years members of Bike Safe have fought to have a path along the B4044 from Eynsham through to Dean Court and have been raising money to prepare a business case at the request of Oxfordshire County Council.

Ian Leggett, chairman of Bike

Safe West Oxford, said: "As many local riders and residents know, the B4044 is more popular with four and five-axle HGVs than two-wheelers."

"There is almost no provision for pedestrians and none for cyclists, the solution is the B4044 community path. At a time when everyone realises that traffic congestion is polluting our air, we have to be serious about building a sustainable transport network."

"This means building the kind of safe paths which will encourage people to walk or cycle, and not drive everywhere."

Previously the campaign received £30,000 in donations from the public and a further £50,000 from corporate givers to help fund a formal planning application for the path.

News

▲ Councillors launch bike week with city tour event



WE'VE GOT WHEELS: Politicians, council officers and members of the public on a gentle tour of the city

AN 'omni-party' bike ride featuring councillors from across the spectrum pedalled through the city yesterday to launch Oxford Bike Week.

The annual cycling festival, which this year runs until next Saturday, features a plethora of events and workshops encouraging people to ditch the car and get on their bikes.

At yesterday's event city and county councillors, officers and members of the public pedalled side by side on a tour of the city.

It was organised by Oxford cycling campaign group CycloX, which aimed to use the gathering to debate the development of cycling and cycle infrastructure.

Picture: Richard Cave

Chairman Simon Hunt said: "Cycling provision in the city could be made better in the future with a little forethought and the commitment of political will."

For more information on events taking place throughout the week please visit oxfordbikeweek.co.uk/

Meal appeal hope all in a good cause

PHILANTHROPIC foodies are invited to a special meal in East Oxford tomorrow night to raise money for charity.

At the city's latest Project Soup evening, diners are invited to a pay-what-you-like meal at East Oxford Community Centre from 7.30pm, with a suggested donation of £4.

After dinner, guests will watch presentations from three local community projects about their work and then vote for which one should get all the proceeds from the night.

There will also be live music from local performers.

Find out more at projectsoupoxford.weebly.com

Fun at summer fete

SUMO wrestling and a squishy slide will entertain families at a summer fete today.

The European School in Culham is hosting the joint event with neighbouring Europa School UK.

It will also feature a barbecue, raffle, pottery and live music.

Entry to the fete in Thame Lane is free, with families across the area welcome from 11am until 3pm.

The food bank will have a stall and will welcome donations.

Parish meeting

VILLAGERS can attend a full meeting of Grove Parish Council on Tuesday night at the Old Mill Hall.

Councillors will discuss spending in the year ending March 31 and any updates on the plan to build 2,500 homes at Grove Airfield.

The meeting starts at 7.30pm.