



## SHOTLEY PENINSULA CYCLING CAMPAIGN

### Newsletter No.18, September 2016

[www.spcc.info](http://www.spcc.info)

Welcome to our latest occasional newsletter. Our apologies that it has been such a long time since the last one but, as you will see below, there is a reason for this.

#### **Shotley Peninsula Green Way**

As you know, we have been concentrating our efforts on the section of the route from the edge of Ipswich at Bourne Bridge, to the top of Freston Hill, and also on the Shotley section which would link Shotley Street and Shotley Gate.

In the case of the Ipswich to Freston section, earlier this summer we received a significant setback to our progress, which we have been trying to resolve ever since, and were delaying sending out a newsletter until a resolution had been found. Unfortunately, no resolution is currently in sight, so the committee felt that a newsletter was needed to let you all know what is happening.

In a nutshell, the problem is as follows: for approximately four years we have had a provisional route agreed for the SP Green Way (for use by cyclists, walkers and wheel-chair users) from Bourne Bridge to the top of Freston Hill, using land in three different ownerships. Out of the blue, earlier this summer, one of the landowners contacted the SPCC withdrawing his support for the route crossing part of his land, (though still permitting another bit of the path on his land on the other side of the road). Despite our best and most polite efforts to get the landowner concerned to change his mind or to agree to an alternative route, our negotiations have failed. The only option left would be the SP Green Way to use the B1456 for more than half a mile. This is a fairly intimidating road for inexperienced cyclists and, in particular, the committee does not feel that it should be encouraging wheelchair users or pedestrians onto the road here.

We are of course still looking for a way forward, but we have to be honest and say that for the time-being the ambition of establishing a traffic-free community path from Bourne Bridge to the top of Freston Hill does not look achievable. This is very frustrating as, after a lot of hard work by the committee, we had got to the point of being about to commission a Wildlife and Landscape Assessment, which Babergh District Council had informed us would be required to accompany the planning application for this part of the route.

So far as the Erwarton Walk to Shotley Gate section of the SP Greenway is concerned, you will remember that this is tied in to the future development of the HMS Ganges site.

There is better news on the Freston to Chelmondiston section: a very positive meeting was held with Woolverstone Parish Council earlier this year, and we will shortly be drawing up a number of options to discuss in greater detail with Woolverstone Parish Council about where it would be best to route the path through the parish of Woolverstone.

#### **And now for some other thoughts:**

Whilst the news above is mixed, to say the least, we have been very fortunate to have had some magnificent summer cycling weather here in Suffolk and there have also been those inspiring cycling successes in both the Olympics and the Paralympics.

However, what this country desperately needs is a proper infra-structure of cycle paths and routes, which might encourage a lot more people to leave their cars at home and make, at least, those shorter journeys by bike.

The authors of this newsletter have just had a 6-day cycling holiday in the Netherlands, and were astonished by the superb, dense network of paths for not just for bikes, but also separate pedestrian paths and even sandy paths for horses, all side-by-side. Where bikes have to share the road with cars, these are all either paved and traffic-calmed, or the tarmac is red to show that cyclists have priority, or the bikes have a lane either side of the road while the cars have to share one lane in the middle, and greatly slow down as a result. Not one instance of anger or impatience from car-drivers was experienced. Because of this, everyone cycles, including mothers with three children and a dog in a "bin" attached to the front of the bike, all the school children, the elderly on tricycles or electric assisted bikes, and the disabled on specially adapted tandems.

It can be done!