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CYCLISTS IN THE CITY RELEASE

Cyclists in the City

PRESS RELEASE: London's 10 most dangerous junctions for cyclists highlighted by bike ride this Saturday

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

London's 10 most dangerous junctions for cyclists highlighted by bike ride this Saturday

Cyclists in London will tour the capital's 10 most dangerous junctions for bicycles this Saturday to highlight what they believe is unnecessarily dangerous road designs where Transport for London's policy of "smoothing the traffic flow" has been put above people's safety.

The "flashride" has been organised by popular London bike bloggers Danny Williams (Cyclists in the City blog) and Mark Ames (ibikelondon blog), who have been overwhelmed by the response. News of what was planned as a ride between a few friends has spread via word of mouth and the internet; over 150 cyclists are now expected to participate and people have come forward to volunteer as marshals, ride organisers and to share their experiences of campaigning against dangerous junctions in their area.

The ride reflects high levels of anger in the cycling community following two cyclist's deaths in London in October. Min Joo Lee (Deep Lee), a 24 year old fashion student at Central St Martin's College was killed after a collision with a heavy goods vehicle in King's Cross[1]. Brian Dorling, 58, was the first cyclist to die on one of Boris Johnson's new Barclays Cycle Superhighways after being struck by a tipper lorry on CS2 at the Bow Roundabout - Mr Dorling was the 14th cyclist to die on London's roads this year. [2]

Last Friday a News International employee was struck by a left turning vehicle on the Highway - she suffered serious injuries and is now in intensive care at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel. [3]

Politicians have begun to recognise the issue. Leader of Islington Council Catherine West - writing in the Islington Tribune last week - said; "Mr Johnson needs to get a grip on his day job and take action to keep these new, and often inexperienced, cyclists safe. Take the dangerous King's Cross gyratory where Deep Lee lost her life. Transport for London (TfL) was warned back in 2008 that "casualties were inevitable" at the junction of Gray's Inn Road, York Way and Pentonville Road. Yet three years on nothing has changed. The Conservative Mayor controls TfL. Where has he been and why isn't he standing up for people's safety? ...Too many cyclists are dying on our roads each year. People have to become the priority." [3]

Camden Councillor, Paul Braithwaite, writing in the Camden New Journal said: "I think it is well justified that a case of corporate manslaughter is now being considered over the cyclist's death at King's Cross on October 3. I really believe we need something of that magnitude to get through to TfL's high command...Camden Road..Russel Square..Euston Road..In not one of the above examples has TfL actually made any of the improvements that have been agreed to be necessary." [5]

The ride on Saturday will depart St Mark's Church, Oval at 10.30AM. It will pass through junctions such as the Elephant and Castle, Parliament Square, Hyde Park Corner and Vauxhall Cross, before ending at popular bike cafe Look Mum No Hands on Old Street.

The 10 junctions were listed by Transport for London at Mayor's Question Time based on volume of cyclists killed or seriously injured at the sites, following a question by London Assembly Member Valorie Shawcross (PDF)

Preparing for the ride, Danny Williams from Cyclists in the City blog said: "It's abhorrent that in the 21st century we have junctions which are so poorly designed and aimed solely at squeezing as many vehicles through as possible that casualties at these sites are almost seen as inevitable. Transport for London can't keep on

encouraging people to walk and to cycle without addressing the serious issue of safety around these junctions first - it's completely irresponsible. These junctions are a hangover of 1960's style urban design; today they don't work for people who need to drive in central London, they don't work for people who use public transport and they are downright lethal for people on foot or on bike"

Mark Ames, from ibikelondon blog, said: "We came up with the idea for the ride to see for ourselves just how poor some of these junctions in our city really are and have been totally overwhelmed by the response. People from all over London have been contacting us to say they will be coming along too and that they want to express their anger at the inequality of these urban spaces. I think it is fair that there is a lot of anger on the streets amongst more vulnerable road users at the moment; 14 cyclists and many more pedestrians have been killed on TfL roads so far this year - the worst level for a very long time. Time and again people tell us that they want to be able to do the school run on their bikes with their kids on the back, or that now they are older and don't drive anymore that they'd love the liberation of being able to walk and cycle more - but they are only prepared to do it on people friendly streets. Junctions which are designed just to crush as much traffic through as possible are too much to manage for most people; splashes of blue paint and some positive marketing are just not enough"

Participants in the ride will take photographs, record their experiences, and rate each of the junctions for space for safe cycling, pedestrian friendliness, subjective safety, noise levels and air quality and will compile their findings in to a report which will be presented to Transport for London.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

This ride is being organised by Mark Ames and Danny Williams. London Cycling Campaign are providing logistical support and insurance for participants. A press call with participants will take place in the grounds of St Mark's at 10.30AM on Saturday, and the opportunity for photography of the ride will be available on Kennington Road when it sets off. Danny and Mark are available for further comments and interview before then on the following details:

Mark Ames maccant@hotmail.com 07903550037 <http://ibikelondon.blogspot.com/>

Danny Williams cyclistsinthecity@gmail.com <http://cyclelondoncity.blogspot.com/>

REFERENCES:

[1] Ghost bike for Min Joo Lee <http://ibikelondon.blogspot.com/2011/10/ghost-bike-for-deep-lee-min-joo-lee-at.html>

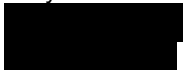
[2] Report on death of Brian Dorling <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-24004110-widow-fears-superhighway-victim-will-end-up-as-a-statistic.do>

[3] News International employee collision <http://cyclelondoncity.blogspot.com/2011/11/news-international-will-tell-mayor-to.html>

[4] Catherine West in the Islington Tribune <http://www.islingtontribune.com/news/2011/nov/give-people-priority-roads>

[5] Paul West in the Camden New Journal: <http://www.camdennewjournal.com/letters/2011/oct/tfl-need-action>

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