



MAYNOOTH CYCLING CAMPAIGN NOTES JULY 2018



Bikeweek 2018

The Tour of the Dead to historic graveyards around Maynooth took place on a day with almost perfect weather and we had a lovely cycle to Laraghbryan, Ladychapel and Taghadoo. We were delighted to have the opportunity to show the film *Why We Cycle* about the Dutch cycling culture and appreciated the attendance of Maynooth MD councillors Padraig McEvoy (Ind), Teresa Murray (Ind) and Tim Durkan (FG) but the general attendance was disappointing. On Bike to Work Day, we gave out chocolates to cyclists on their way to work. We were also involved in organising prizes for a number of the Maynooth primary schools. Some had taken part in a Biodiversity Visit to the Royal Canal with Karen Moore. Presentation Girls school deserves special mention for the way that the school was decorated with fantastic paintings and drawings for Bikeweek. The second weekend saw the Family Cycle to Kilcock with nearly 40 cyclists, young and old, cycling along the Royal Canal Greenway. At Kilcock the children, some young and some not so young, were rewarded with an ice cream. So that was Bikeweek 2018. Roll on next year!

Statement on Cycling from Garda Assistant Commissioner

A less enjoyable aspect of Bikeweek was the disappointing comments on cyclists and cycling from Assistant Commissioner David Sheahan of the Garda National Roads Policing Division. In a statement, he described cycling as a 'pastime' and went on to state that cyclists should have brakes, tyres and chain. For everyday cyclists, cycling is not a pastime - it is a mode of transport and it is doubtful that many cyclists take a bike out without tyres or a chain! The Assistant Commissioner also stated that cyclists should never cycle more than two abreast which demonstrates an ignorance of the Road Traffic legislation as it is not illegal to cycle three abreast. If a senior Garda officer has such a distorted view of cycling, it is hardly surprising that the Gardaí fail to prosecute drivers who park on cycle lanes and who endanger cyclists.

Royal Canal Greenway/EuroVelo Route 2

On 2nd July, Shane Ross, the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport will be coming to Maynooth to open a section of the Royal Canal/Eurovelo Route 2 between Maynooth and the Westmeath border - another piece of the jig-saw puzzle between Moscow and Galway. Cyclists will then be able to cycle all the way from Maynooth to Athlone. You can find out progress on the rest of the route at <http://www.eurovelo.com/en/eurovelos/eurovelo-2> .



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On the same day, the Glenroyal Hotel will host a Capacity Building Workshop to explore the opportunities in developing trails on and along the Royal Canal. It promises to be a bright future for north Kildare.

Climate Change

Another report pointed out the failure of government to live up to Irish commitments on reduction of greenhouse gases. In a ranking of EU countries' ambition and progress in fighting climate change by Climate Action Network (CAN), Ireland was ranked 27th out of 28.

Niamh Garvey, head of policy and advocacy with Trócaire (which is a member of CAN), commented "This report reaffirms what we know, that political leadership is urgently needed to turn Ireland's record around on climate change".

Vulnerable Road Users and Anti-Cyclist Bias

The vulnerability of pedestrians and cyclists on Irish roads and the 'normality' of road fatalities was once again demonstrated. In a recent week, nine people were killed including three pedestrians, two of which were hit and run collisions. On *The Journal* twitter account, eight news reports about the fatal crashes generated 65 comments. However, one article on cyclists generated 272 comments.

Kildare Gardai on Two Wheels

Hopefully, it wasn't just the good weather, but a member of the Gardaí has been recently seen cycling around Maynooth which is welcomed by Maynooth Cycling Campaign. It is proposed that more Gardai will be taking to the streets across Kildare on bike patrol.

Finally Good News on Infrastructure

Finally some good news on cycling infrastructure but not in Kildare. Due to increasing congestion in Dublin City, the National Transport Authority has announced major plans to improve bus services and at the same time to introduce



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the next generation network of cycling facilities in the capital. In time, this will lead to higher quality cycle infrastructure in Kildare - hopefully sooner rather than later.

And more good news - after their original design met with scathing criticism, consultants for Dublin City have redesigned the Clontarf-Amiens cycle corridor and the revised scheme has been warmly welcomed by cyclist representatives.

Maynooth Cycling Campaign is a non-party political cycling advocacy group. Further information on meetings and activities is available on our website.

We are affiliated to Cyclist.ie, the Irish Cyclist Advocacy Network and through it to the European Cycling Federation.