

CANALSIDE PATHS CONSULTATION MEETING MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 16th August 12 midday - 1.30pm

Present:

Sahena Begum- Hackney Housing

Barrie Cotton- Project Manager Hackney Housing

Daniel Rosen- TRA Secretary, Committee Member, Lanresse Court

Cheryl Begonzi- TRA Committee Member, St Helier Court

Laura Smith- TRA Committee Member, St Brelades Court

Terry Reynolds- TRA Committee Member, Granville Court

Irene, resident at St Helier Court, joined the meeting at the start to give her account of the situation.

1.

The area discussed was the green space and paths (Canal Cycle Path and Estate Links A, B, C) adjacent St Helier Court, Whitmore Bridge and the Regents Canal.

The group all had a good knowledge of the area, either through living adjacent to it or using it regularly as a through route or leisure space or both. Among them they used the paths as pedestrians, pedal cyclists, dog-walkers, push-chair users and mobility vehicle users.

SB and BC confirmed that it is illegal for a moped or motorbike or any off-road motor vehicle (except disability vehicles) to drive on a pedestrian or cycle path or pavement - ie any of the paths in question. The previous consultation document compiled after the meeting of 23/4/2015 had noted that this activity should be "discouraged" but not noted that it was "illegal".

2.

The discussion as to the extent and nature of the illegal use of the path by mopeds and motorbikes was wide ranging, but the following areas were clear:

a. People agreed that illegal misuse of the cycle path by mopeds and motorbikes took place but the extent of this varied from "constant" to "occasional". No illegal use of the path by mopeds or motorbikes was observed during the meeting.

b. It was not always possible to know why the illegal activity was taking place. During the meeting a moped was observed driving legally on an estate road that- in order to get to- they would have had to illegally mount a pavement. Opinions on the moped rider ranged from them being someone who had intended to drive on the pedestrian cycle path but had driven away when they saw a meeting taking place, to a resident wanting to park their moped near their house or to them being the Hackney Council parking attendant at work.

None of the above opinions could be proved/disproved without using CCTV or other investigations not available or practical during the consultation.

3.

All the group agreed on the following:

a) The illegal use of the cycle and pedestrian paths by mopeds and motorbikes should be stopped.

- b). Pedal cyclists should continue to be allowed to pass freely through these areas.
- c). Mopeds and Motorbikes using the path fell into two main categories:

- ii) Those using it as a quick getaway, possibly from the police

- iii) Those using it as a short cut to the estate, particularly food delivery mopeds, possibly also estate residents who want to park vehicles near their homes for security.

4.

There was no single "solution" to stopping the illegal use of the paths by mops and motorbikes, but there are number of things that could be employed in conjunction with each other to move towards a solution. They are:

- a) A "3 fence chicane style gate" as pictured on the document from the consultation meeting of 23/4/2015. Two positions were discussed and it was agreed by all that it would be positioned between Whitmore Bridge and the Estate Link B and C paths as shown on the attached diagram. This gate allows mobility vehicles, pedal bikes, pushchairs etc through although they will have to slow down/ negotiate. It will be a struggle for the mopeds to get through and larger motorbikes will find it impossible. It is likely that this gate will prevent the path being used as a "quick getaway" and reduce or possible eradicate it's use as a short cut to the estate.

- b) BC will contact any food delivery companies whose vehicle are seen illegally using the path to inform them it is illegal and they should stop. To do this he needs residents to come forward with the names of the companies whose vehicles they have seen.

- c) SB said she has been working with the police Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) already to combat this issue and this has included increasing the police patrols in the area. She will continue talking to them to help eradicate the issue further. She also agreed to ensure the SNT were acknowledging the problem as "illegal" and not just something to be "discouraged" as stated on the previous document.

5.

It was also observed that the paths in question had two distinct definitions:

- a) A designated Shared Pedal Cycle and Pedestrian Path- this is the one running alongside the canal as shown on the attached maps

- b) Three "Estate Link" paths which Hackney Council acknowledge are used by cyclists although they are not officially shared cycle / pedestrian paths.

To avoid confusion Hackney Council agreed to mark the paths as cycle and or pedestrian routes on the ground. This further classifies that they are not for moped and motorbike use. It also makes it clear to pedal cyclist and pedestrian users that they are sharing the area and that no one party has a right to be there over the other.

All the group agreed they were happy for all "Estate Link" A, B and C paths to be marked as Shared Pedal Cycle and Pedestrian Paths as well as the officially designated canal side Shared Pedal Cycle and Pedestrian Path.

At the very least the "Estate Link" A and B paths should be designated as a Shared Pedal Cycle and Pedestrian Path as without it the canal side Shared Pedal Cycle and Pedestrian Path would come to a dead end for cyclists.

BC will relay this to Hackney Council and arrange for the marking to be carried out.

6.

The consultation took 1 1/2 hours. There was some reference to the Chicane Gate on the previous document which was useful. However some of the previous document had caused confusion as it contained suggestions for gates that would be inappropriate for our residents eg ones that would stop wheel chairs. It also failed to acknowledge the problem as "illegal".

The previous consultation of 23/4/2015 had not included any pedal cyclist residents even though they had asked to be and the consultation involved a pedal cyclist area. It was pointed out that the consultation could have been quicker if a cross section of residents had been involved from at the start.

7.

Action Points:

a) DR to email TRA Chair Laurence Windle to ask if, as the consultation group all agreed on the outcomes, they could go ahead and action the installation of the Chicane Gate and other actions listed in (4) and (5).

b) Prior to the Chicane Gate being installed full written details including width (1200mm minimum) and position will be forwarded and agreed by the consultation group.

The meeting ended at 1.30pm.