



Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum

www.maidstonecycling.uk

Dear Party Leader / Candidate

The Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum, a registered charity, has been representing the interests of cyclists in the Borough of Maidstone for several years. The Forum's aims are to improve cycling conditions in Maidstone, encourage people to take up cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle, enable cycling as a practical environmentally friendly alternative to cars for short journeys and to reduce traffic congestion.

As a party leader for candidate(s) / independent candidate for election to the Borough Council, MCCF would be very interested to learn of your views in relation to the Walking and Cycling Strategy as published by MBC. We would also appreciate you forwarding this letter to your candidates so that they have an opportunity to make a personal response.

In particular:

Q1 Would you support the allocation of community infrastructure levy and section 106 money to implement Council approved cycle strategy?

yes

Q2 Would you be willing to work with MCCF to promote cycling and help the Council to meet its strategic aims of reducing traffic congestion and improving public health (through tackling air pollution and creating opportunities for people to exercise rather than using sedentary forms of travel)?

I would if I had the time!

Q3 Are you aware of the current poor provision for cyclists wishing to cycle east to west Maidstone and the difficulties for walkers and cyclists with the Maidstone Bridges Gyratory?

yes

Q4 Will you be supporting the recommendations made by Sustrans in their Audit of the Maidstone Walking & Cycling Strategy and review of the existing Walking/Cycling corridors (Sutton Road & Hermitage Lane) which has been commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council and funded by Kent County Council?

I have yet to see the recommendations, and I would expect to be supportive

Q5 MCCF has welcomed the investment made to deliver the Medway Towpath. Will you support them in their proposals to Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council to improve access to the towpath in Maidstone town centre and the links between the two sections as the Maidstone section of the towpath is currently very inadequate?

I have yet to see exactly what the proposals are and the cost; I would hope to be supportive

Q6 Are there any other comments you would like to make in response to our questions of you?

The Medway Towpath – the Marmite of Barming!

Some people think it's wonderful and a great improvement. Wheelchair users and cyclists can now enjoy the river whereas before they couldn't access it at all.

Dog walkers, families with kiddies on bikes / in pushchairs, elderly relatives can all now enjoy a safe, leisurely walk together along the river.

However,

1. local residents at the Riverside Park section at East Farleigh do not because of the noise and disturbance along what used to be a peaceful, quiet riverside. There is a particular problem with the 'cyclist dismount' section where the cycle path narrows to 1500mm and is not wide enough for mounted cyclists and other path users. Cyclists are not dismounting; they are sailing straight through without a thought for anybody else, and the situation has become extremely fraught.
2. In general, residents (including me) are highly irritated by cyclists who don't ding their bell to warn us they're coming. We're happy to move over to let cyclists pass. We are not happy to suddenly be 'whooshed past' by cyclists on steroids!
3. I would also like to add my – and a lot of other peoples' – irritation at cyclists who ignore traffic lights. It's bad enough with car drivers crossing the lights at red.

So do please encourage cyclists to consider other path users and to use their bells; and most importantly to take heed of signage and traffic lights.

That said, I do believe the Walking and Cycling Strategy is not only an integral part of our suite of strategies in meeting our transport challenges, but also in promoting and improving the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Our members and the general public will be very interested to learn of your response and so we will be publishing it on 28th April on our website www.maidstonecycling.uk

Please can you email your response to info@maidstonecycling.uk

Thanking you in advance for your kind attention,

The Trustees and Board

Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum (Registered Charity 1172691)