The continuing Shame of Llandudno
The anti-cycling Capital of Wales

THE 'GLODDAETH FACTOR' EMERGES FROM THE SHADOWS

Cyclists told to get on their bikes

By **JUDITH PHILLIPS**

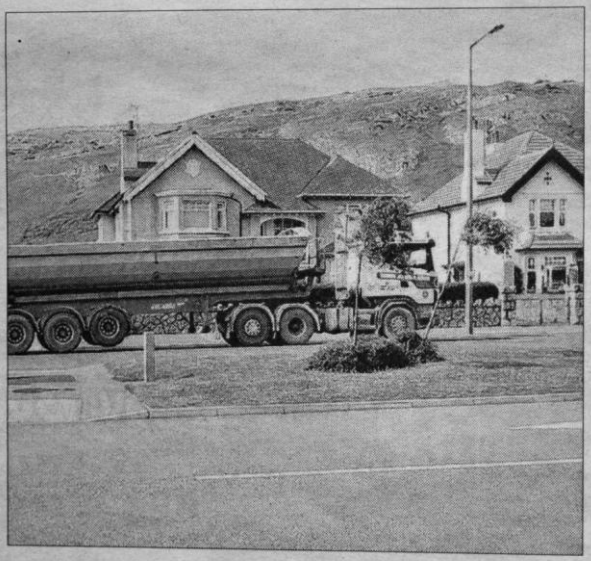
FURIOUS residents have vowed to fight a suggestion that a cycle path be routed along the road in front of their homes.

And Llandudno Town Council is to write a strong letter to Conwy County Council objecting to a suggestion there should be a cycle route along Gloddaeth Avenue which links the North and West shores.

Resident Mike Pritchard says he and his neighbours were shocked when they discovered that council officers were apparently looking at the viability of a cycle path on the dual carriageway.

"What we have established is that the proposal would reduce the dual carriageway to single lane each way, the residents' usual parking on the nearside lane, then a designated cycle lane, with the outside lane for all other traffic," he said.

"This would lead to all manner of problems, with more traffic congestion, increased danger to other road users, especially the elderly and infirm, residents' access to their properties, having to cross cycle lanes, not to mention the problems of slow progress following the road train between West Shore and the promenade," he said.



NO CYCLE PATH: Gloddaeth Avenue in Llandudno.

And when the issue was discussed by the town council's community services and tourism committee on Tuesday, councillors were vociferous in their opposition.

Gogarth ward councillor Margaret Lyon said: "This will not be tolerated by people who live along Gloddaeth Avenue.

"A cycle route is unnecessary and unneeded. I can't comprehend the logic behind this, we have discussed this so often and turned it down so many times.

"This is a hare-brained scheme and we must send out a message loud and clear that it is absolute madness and we will not tolerate it."

Cllr Linda Groom said the idea had come from cycle pressure group CTC Cymru.

"They have gained confidence because they have got temporary permission to use the promenade and now they want to use Gloddaeth Avenue. It would only be used by a few people, it's a total disgrace, " she commented.

Mayor Greg Robbins said: "There is no need for another cycle route across the town."

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Leading County players in this tragi-comedy

Cllr Philip Evans

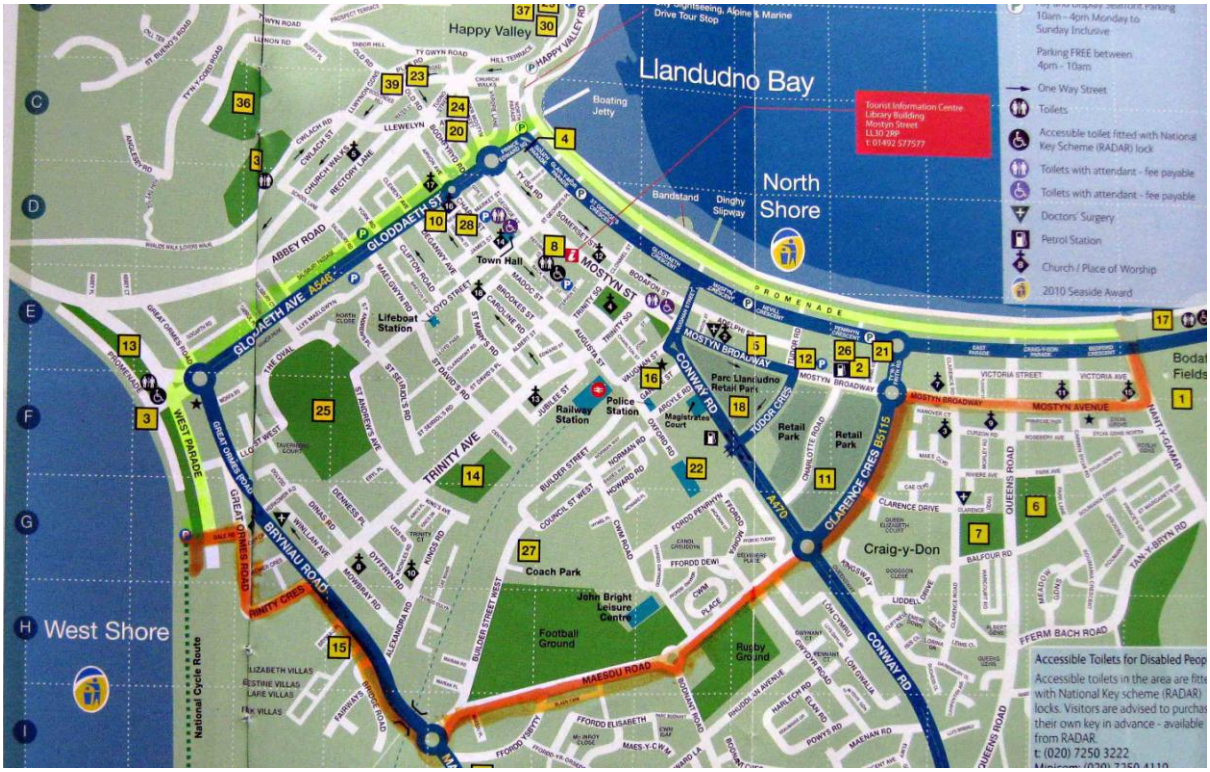
Cllr Margaret Lyons

Cllr Linda Groom

Judge for yourself the Town Council debate above at which County councillors were present. For the past six years the above three, and others, have vigorously opposed cycling access along Llandudno's north shore promenade despite it being self evident that the parallel Parade is too hazardous for other than the most experienced riders. However, after pressure by CTC Cymru, Conwy County has now lifted its opposition for a 'trial' period of 12 months.

Whilst the vested interests of Gloddaeth Avenue residents has never surfaced until now, it has always been clear that the Save Our Prom campaign was a proxy to prevent Gloddaeth Avenue becoming a cycle route providing a link between Llandudno's north and west shores.

The reader might think such a development would be welcomed by a county and a town council keen to adopt sustainable and carbon reduction policies. Not a bit of it. Conwy county invested c.£450,000 in a cycle route via the town perimeter Maesdu Road, which is not only unpleasant and traffic congested, but also unfit for leisure or cycle tourism and is unlikely to be used other than for essential local journeys. And In January 2011 the town council erected a procedural firewall against correspondence from CTC Cymru presenting the case for cycling. but seemingly not against the anti-cycling residents of Gloddaeth Avenue, or supporting the cycle route below which serves neither cyclists, nor the sustainable interests of the town.



Note- Anecdotal evidence points to Prince Edward's Square as the favoured axis for most cycle journeys to and from Llandudno. (Box 4) Towards the west we have the Gloddaeth corridor joining the Conwy estuary cycle path at the West Shore. To the east of the axis the promenade joins National Cycle Route 5 at the children's paddling pool, and thereafter follows the coast for about 20miles through Denbighshire and into Flintshire – with shared use the entire way.

The controversial Maesdu Road route is coloured orange. It is regarded by most cyclists as a sick joke to be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Strong reservations about this route were also evident in the Feasibility Study- but ignored by councillors misguidedly thinking that by creating a route, they could deflect cyclists away from the promenade in a direction not of their choosing.

EDITORIAL COMMENT CTC is both delighted and relieved that at long last sense has prevailed and cyclists may now proceed along the promenade without being harassed. However, hostility against cycling still prevails within the town, and the attitudes of the town councillors is but a hint of what progressive town planners have to deal with at both town and county level. With this in mind CTC Cymru will be seeking the support of the Welsh Assembly to have an in-depth study into what has gone wrong in Llandudno, and what lessons can be learned for other council's around the country confronted with similar irrational resistance to cycling.

To compare the hysterical debate in the town council with what it should be encouraging if it has any claim to serve the interests of its citizens, enjoy a few sublime and civilized moments at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrQ-d2PBUto

Roy Spilsbury CTC Cymru Editor www.cyclingnorthwales.co.uk

Llandudno – a town like Alice?

Llandudno prides itself on its association with the author Lewis Carroll, because the 'real' Alice of his books spent holidays there. Roy Spilsbury, CTC's local campaigner, wonders if the space and time distortions and playing card characters seen in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* has had a strange influence on decisions about cycling on the resort's promenade.

After a six year battle with campaigners, Conwy Council has suspended a byelaw which, they say, prohibits cycling on Llandudno's vast promenade – even though counsel's opinion of the byelaws is that there was never any intention that cycling should be forbidden in the first place.

Despite saying that it will support cycling on the promenade, the Council still does not want Llandudno included in the National Cycle Network. Instead, it has invested almost half a million pounds in an alternative route around the town perimeter, although there are concerns that this serves neither the commercial nor the social interests of the town.

The County has judged that the promenade should only be a 'destination in its own right' (sic). It must not be used as a cycle route. In other words, it follows that anyone who finds themselves cycling on the promenade must not have ridden from anywhere, nor must they be going anywhere. Odd when you consider that most of the town's tourism facilities and accommodation are to be found at one end of the promenade, and access to twenty miles of NCR5 coastal cycle path towards Denbighshire lies in the other direction.

Hope that sanity in Llandudno will prevail comes with the Welsh Government's *Active Travel Bill*. This proposes to compel local authorities to provide integrated cycle routes (see p4). But who decides where those routes will run? Will user research be the determining factor? Or will it be decided simply by councillors and officers, paying more attention to territorially sensitive anti-cycling pressure groups, than the views of cycle users themselves? Hopefully in Llandudno the inspirational light of Welsh government legislation will result in resistance to cycling collapsing just like an Alice-style house of cards.

For the latest on this and other news from North Wales, see www.cyclingnorthwales.co.uk/