

Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group is a volunteer not for profit group of local residents promoting cycling and improving the local environment.

## ANNUAL REVIEW

2007 - 2008



### Overview

This year was focussed on encouraging maintenance of and improvements to local cycle paths, developing new routes, and more secure parking.

A highlight of the year was organising a one day advocacy course for other bicycle user groups working on local issues. This was made possible through the financial support of the Cycling Promotion Fund and assistance of Marrickville Council. Twenty active bike users from across NSW attended the training. Participants enjoyed either learning new skills, sharing skills and meeting others facing the same issues. They went away knowing they were not alone, and keen to meet again.

Due to the hard work of Gilbert, we continued to develop speciality rides that introduced people to local sustainability projects, artists studios and landmarks and of course chocolate, gelato and cake outlets.

If anyone is interested in leading or planning rides we are always open to suggestions.

The Marrickville to the city Bike Bus continues to take on and develop new road riders into confident commuters. New riders always welcome on this daily ride.

<http://www.bikebus.org.au/>

### PLANNING

While Marrickville Council has an innovative bike plan, they are short on cash. Lack of funds and the need to resolve issues with State agencies like the RTA make the most simple solutions complex. For example, we continue (after several years) to encourage solutions to the Wilson, Mary and Erskineville Road intersection, where the contra flow ends.

MASSBUG provides a cycling perspective to planning issues, when we know about them. When we don't, we experience the poor

results such as the blackspot created by the Rail Infrastructure Corporation at Angel Street, Erskineville when they upgraded the bridge over the railway lines. They didn't take into account the need of drivers and cyclists to turn out of the street or people crossing the road.

**Submissions** we have made on planning issues:

**Marrickville Council Bicycle Plan** – we recommended more bicycle parking, integrating plan with public transport and close monitoring of its implementation.

**Steel Park Sustainable Water Project** – Marrickville Council was encouraged to maintain regional bicycle route on the Cooks River as part of this development.

**Roundabouts – Liberty, Trade and Kingston roads.** A difficult traffic issue for cyclists following the cycle route. We offered advice, even if they didn't always use it, to engineers on how to improve the traffic flow to make it safer for cyclists. We welcome feedback on your use of this roundabout.

**Alexandra Canal** - Sydney Water plan to build a ramp over the desalination pipeline which could interrupt north-south access to the cycle way along the Canal.

### **Bourke Street Cycleway**

An important border issue for Marrickville cyclists is the Sydney Council development of Bourke Street. We tried to counteract the wave of misinformation spreading in the community about this project.

**CBD Review** – the NSW Government sought views on how to improve CBD transport flow. We suggested to the Government that the success of the World Youth Day was not the result of removing bike paths. Instead they could continue to discourage car traffic, build more bike paths and slow traffic down in the CBD.

**North Eveleigh Development** – this development includes car spaces for over a 1000 cars. This has the potential to destroy the main cycle way in Wilson Street to the city. We ask

why car ownership is encouraged on a site that has the best access to public transport in the city and established local businesses offer car share arrangements. The potential to build a sustainable housing project is being lost.

We met regularly with Marrickville Council. Our work involved a combination of tasks such as commenting on Traffic Committee proposals, submissions to draft management and bike plans, and negotiations to get hazards fixed.

### **AUDIT: MENDING ROAD AND PATHS**

MASSBUG members did an audit of the area in 2002, listing and photographing broken paths, signs, blocked pathways and other obstacles. The audit was provided to the Council at the time, and some of the problems were fixed as part of the road work plan. This year we repeated the audit, checking which problems were fixed. We found the council had worked through most of the list. A revised list of work projects was forwarded to the Council.

### **SYDNEY PARK**

A **MTB BMX and skate park** would be a great facility for young people in the area. We made a submission to Sydney council and checked whether the community thought this was worth promoting by starting a petition. The petition will soon be submitted to Sydney Council.

### **INFORMATION**

Each year MASSBUG has information stalls at the Cook River Festival, Marrickville Festival and Newtown Festival. They are always very busy days answering every possible question about bikes and cycling. In the past year we have noticed more inquiries about safe cycling routes to get to work and less for social rides. We also seem to be getting inquiries from people of all ages, including retirees and older women. We can always use more help with these stalls.

We maintain an email list which provides reminders of events and opportunities to comment on activities. Contact massbug if you want to join the list.

### **ORGANISING**

MASSBUG is a very streamlined operation. We operate on next to nothing, manage to

keep meetings to a minimum, operate a website and spread the work so no one is overloaded. We know how to make a little go a long way. We meet at 7.30 pm the first Wednesday of each month at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre. Meetings each month discuss local issues and discuss our responses. Anyone interested in organising social rides is also welcome to come along to share and test ideas.

## **NEW PROJECTS**

### **SYDNEY GREENRING CONCEPT**

This project is at the concept stage. It is a 36 kilometre route incorporating Green Square, Sydney Airport, Darling Harbour and Callan Park. The idea is to create an active corridor for walkers and cyclists, incorporating public art and recreational activities. The corridor would be a resource for the increasing number of residents in the new developments within the 'ring'. The project would deliver infrastructure for access paths, safe cycling, guided tours, informative maps, social rides and tourism services. The current draft route requires the cooperation of Sydney Airport, Sydney Water, NSW Planning, the RTA and local councils to realise the concept. Preliminary rides have take place and ideas on how locals could use sections of the circuit developed. For example, sections which link schools and other public facilities would provide a safe commuting route. Email [massbug@massbug.org.au](mailto:massbug@massbug.org.au) if you would like more information on this project.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you to all our members who support MASSBUG through membership fees, meetings, volunteer at stalls, lead rides and of course cycle around Marrickville.

### **MORE INFORMATION: WWW.MASSBUG.ORG.AU**

