



Cyclescape for Richmond Cycling Campaign

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Background

Cyclescape is an online tool that provides cycling campaign groups with the ability to easily log and manage discussions about cycling infrastructure issues – it is available here: www.cyclescape.org.

Any member of the public can register themselves on Cyclescape and log issues, with photos. Other members of the public, and cycling campaign groups such as RCC, can then respond to those issues, and create a public discussion thread about the issue.

The tool has been designed to be inherently flexible; and is available to a wide variety of campaign groups. At the time of writing use of the tool is in its infancy but due to its powerful features it is likely to see increased use by many different groups over time.

Purpose of this Document

To get the most value out of it Richmond Cycling Campaign will need to adopt a standard way of working with Cyclescape to ensure that is complementary to RCC's other online tools (e.g. <http://www.richmondlcc.co.uk/>, twitter, etc) and that interactions with the public and RCC supporters are consistent with RCC's constitution / objectives etc.

This document will set out a way for RCC to use Cyclescape effectively.

Overview / Key Features of Cyclescape

The key elements of Cyclescape are:

- **Issues (& tags).** An issue is created by drawing a dot, line or area on a map; adding some text; a photo (optional) and then adding tags – which enable easier categorisation and searching. Anyone can log an issue. Anyone can see any issues logged. You can add any tags to an issue and the tags appear to be editable by anybody after you have logged the issue. When you go to the home page and start browsing you see the list of all issues logged by all campaigners in all areas of the country (and beyond – some french people have started using it). A standardized tagging regime is therefore helpful to help zoom in on issues relevant to RCC.
- **Threads (discussions).** Anyone can start a discussion about an issue. The discussion is public by default; however members of a group can also have private discussions about issues.
- **Locations.** Locations are areas on the map associated with a userid or group. The user or group is notified of any new issues/updates created within their specified area.
- **Notifications.** Users can set themselves up to be notified by email when new issues are logged in their area or people comment on the issues they have raised. You can also respond to posts by email and your response will be added to the online discussion. Users control their own notification settings through their profile, so can turn email notifications off.



- **Groups.** Groups provide a level of access control over discussion threads. Specifically; when a discussion is kicked off by a group member the visibility of the discussion can be set as either (a) public (b) group (c) committee – see the screen shot below.

A screenshot of a web form titled "New Thread on Wiggins Lane Ham - one way street". The form includes a "Title" field with the text "Wiggins Lane Ham - one way street", an "Owned by" dropdown menu set to "Richmond Cycling Campaign", and a "Privacy" dropdown menu set to "Committee". Below the privacy menu is a note: "Select if this thread should be visible to members of the group only or everyone." There is a large "Message" text area and "Create Thread" and "Cancel" buttons at the bottom.

- **Group Membership** is managed by designated group organisers. Group organisers can invite others into the group, via an email invitation from the website. The members can be set either as “members” or “committee”

Benefits

By using Cyclescape consistently, RCC will build up a body of detailed knowledge about specific cycling infrastructure issues in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.

Using this, RCC will be able to:

- Engage it's supporters more actively in flagging cycling infrastructure issues – e.g. the public, RCC members and RCC committee members will be able to publicly comment on the status of specific issues – improving engagement.
- Provide higher quality input to LBRUT, TFL and other authorities on the issues cyclists face in the borough; to inform their plans/strategies and investments. The simple ability to pinpoint issues on a map and discuss them is very powerful.
- Provide a very public audit trail of the issues the authorities need to address; which can in time be used to measure progress against; and hold the authorities to account.
- Provide a “single source of history” on each issue.



Costs & Risks

The Cyclescape tool is free to use. However the following risks need to be acknowledged and managed:

1. As with any public discussion forum there is a risk of abuse/flame wars breaking out that could be detrimental to our cause. This just the same as facebook / twitter / wordpress so I don't propose any particularly special mitigation other than common sense. There is currently no obvious way to take down other people's posts – see feature requests.
2. Being given a tool to log issues naturally leads the end user to expect that something will be done about the issue. Whereas anyone who has tried www.fixmystreet.com sees that has a direct reporting mechanism into the local authority, Cyclescape merely gives us a place to gather data; it does not report it to the authorities. **Mitigation:** We can manage this by explaining to our supporters how we will use the data gathered on Cyclescape to inform our submissions to LBRUT and TFL.
3. Without ongoing engagement and interaction on the issues, a number of our supporters are likely to log an issue or two, see nothing happen, and quickly tire of it. **Mitigation:** We should (a) commit to using Cyclescape ourselves as our primary means of discussing specific issues and (b) review and respond promptly to issues raised by our supporters – even with a holding statement. This will give our supporters visibility that someone is monitoring and using cyclescape in this area and that any effort spent by them logging issues has some value. See proposed usage below.
4. We intend to make use of specific tags to group and prioritise issues (see below). As anyone can add and modify the tags associated with an issue, there is a risk that other users can modify tags that RCC put on issues and in so doing disrupt our groupings of issues. **Mitigation:** We will have to accept this is possible, but communicate the purpose of our tagging scheme and ask people to respect it.



Proposed RCC Usage

Accounts & groups

- Richmond Cycling Campaign has a group and an individual login setup.
- RCC Committee members should setup their own logins; the group organisers can then add these to the RCC group with “committee” privileges.
- We should invite a subset of our supporters to join our group as ordinary “group members” - in time we could extend this to our entire email list but to start with suggest this is just the more active members. This requires their emails be added to the system. Alastair has data on who is active.

Logging Issues in LBRUT area

- Anyone can log issues – whether RCC member, supporter, member of the public. Wherever possible we will ask supporters to include photographs with issues logged since these make the data much more compelling.
- The RCC account has been setup to monitor the whole of the area covered by the borough and so will get an email alert when someone logs an issue in the area.

Responding to Issues Logged

- Where supporters log issues we should aim to
 - (a) respond and acknowledge the issue
 - (b) add the relevant tags as detailed below
 - (c) add any discussions as appropriate.
- At a bare minimum, an RCC member should respond and acknowledge the issue within 2 weeks (14 days).
- To ensure this happens, RCC should have a single accountable person who reviews the issues and either responds directly or delegates to someone else in the group.
- If this becomes too onerous for one individual, the proposal is that we sub-divide the work by dividing the borough up into – for example – 3 areas. A separate RCC login/email ID would be used for each area; and that login only deals with the issues raised in their area. The proposed areas would cover groups of electoral wards as per the table below.

Use of Discussion Threads

- RCC should respond to supporter’s issues with a **public discussion** in the first instance. This so we are fully transparent and continue to build engagement.



- **Private** discussion threads should be limited to “committee” are most appropriate for discussing how a particular issue or set of issues are going to be “handled” with the authorities – i.e. lines to take, local politics etc. To start a committee discussion start a new thread and choose the **Privacy=committee** option.

Tagging with Our priorities and Themes:

- RCC should set some priorities and themes to campaign around (these may change over time and indeed we may want to run concerted “sprints” on particular themes at various points in time – e.g. contraflows, major routes etc).
- As issues are reported we can and should respond to them and assign them to a theme; by adding appropriate tags. This then gives the user who logged the issue a sense of where the issue sits in our hierarchy of issues, and what may happen next; and gives RCC the ability to link to a subset of issues associated with a particular theme.
- Our proposed themes / priorities to start with are:

Priority	Theme	Rationale	Tag
1	Safety issues on major routes through the borough	Safe direct and convenient routes should be our no 1 aim.	<i>rcc_mainroute safety</i>
2	Other issues on major routes through the borough	Safe, direct and convenient routes.. after safety should come directness and convenience	<i>rcc_mainroute obstruction</i>
3	Permeability / quiet ways (a) contraflow opportunities (b) opening up paths to bikes (c) other obstructions	The borough has plenty of quiet residential streets and parks that make ideal quietways – however there are many small barriers that hinder their adoption. These are potential “quick wins” as many are probably cheap /simple to address	<i>rcc_quietroute onewaystreet pathshare obstruction safety</i>
4	Bike parking requests	Pinpoint where more bike parking is required	<i>rcc_parking</i>
5	Signage	Pinpoint where route signage should be improved	<i>rcc_signage</i>

For 20mph zones – we should adopt a blanket policy of requesting 20mph on all residential streets and shopping areas and do NOT log these on cyclescape for now.

Tagging by Ward

The borough is a relatively large area and for many supporters their interests lie in their immediate locality. I cannot yet see a simple way to sub-divide the area monitored by the overall RCC group into smaller units; except by creating additional logins or groups.

Instead we can add additional location tags to group issues by electoral ward as below. This gives supporters a very local view of their area and also gives us a way to categorise which local issues can be raised with which local councillors.

Richmond Cycling Campaign

Promoting and Encouraging cycling in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
www.richmondlcc.co.uk



The table below gives all the wards in Richmond Upon Thames; the cyclescape tags to use for each; and provides links to maps showing the boundaries of each ward.

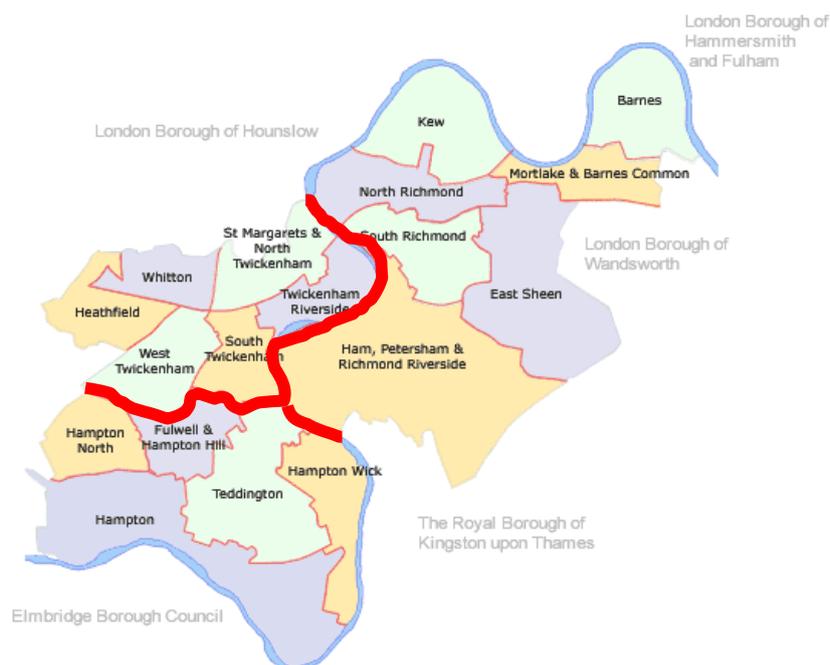
RCC Area	Ward	Tag	Ward Definition / Streetmap and profile
East of the River	Barnes	<i>barnes</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmbarnes.pdf
	Mortlake & Barnes Common	<i>mortlake</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmesheen_mortlake.pdf
	East Sheen	<i>eastsheen</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmesheen_mortlake.pdf
	Kew	<i>kew</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmkew.pdf
	North Richmond	<i>richmond_north</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmnorth_southernrichmond.pdf
	South Richmond	<i>richmond_south</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmnorth_southernrichmond.pdf
	Ham Petersham & Richmond Riverside	<i>ham_petersham</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmham_petersham_riverside.pdf
Central	St. Margarets & North Twickenham	<i>stmargarets</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmstmargantswick_twickenham.pdf
	Twickenham Riverside	<i>twickenham</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmstmargantswick_twickenham.pdf
	South Twickenham	<i>twickenham_south</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmsouth_westtwickenham.pdf
	West Twickenham	<i>twickenham_west</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmsouth_westtwickenham.pdf
	Whitton	<i>whitton</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmwhitton_heathfield.pdf
	Heathfield	<i>heathfield</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmwhitton_heathfield.pdf
South West	Fulwell & Hampton Hill	<i>hamptonhill</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmhampton.pdf
	Hampton North	<i>hampton_north</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmhampton.pdf
	Teddington	<i>teddington</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmteddington_hamptonwick.pdf
	Hampton Wick	<i>hamptonwick</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmteddington_hamptonwick.pdf
	Hampton	<i>hampton</i>	http://www.richmond.gov.uk/cenacmhampton.pdf

The overall ward map of the borough is available here:

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/ward_map_of_the_borough and i have sketched out 3 suggested RCC areas below as sub-divisions of the borough to sub-divide the workload.

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www.richmondlcc.co.uk



Linking to our Cyclescape Issues From Blog Posts, Twitter etc

Tagging issues as per the above regime means that groups of issues can be referred to from URL's; e.g. in emails, tweets and blog posts from the main RCC website and comms functions. Examples of how to do this are given below.

- Link to a single specific issue:
<http://www.cyclescape.org/issues/568-cumberland-rd-kew-one-way-street>
- Link to a list of items tagged with a particular tag (e.g. the tag “rcc” is used here)
<http://www.cyclescape.org/overview/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&query=rcc&button=>
- Link to a list of items tagged multiple tags (e.g. tags “rcc” and “onewaystreet”)
<http://www.cyclescape.org/overview/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&query=rcc+onewaystreet&button=>

Extracting Data for Submission to LBRUT

At key points in our campaigns we would want to extract snapshots of data from the cyclescape website to incorporate into documents/submissions to the authorities. At present the only obvious way to do this is to cut/paste the maps and text from the website into a word document; or print the pages out to a PDF printer.

Back Record Conversion

We have a wealth of previous material about known issues in our area that we have previously highlighted. We should gradually add this information to cyclescape as time permits or as supporters log new concerns about the same issues.



Feature Requests to Developers

- What is the process for removing any abusive postings anyone might post?
- *Response: If you're logged in as a group admin, if you hover the mouse next to a posting, you'll get a little cog icon that enables you to remove ('censor') a post.*
- Ideally we would sub-divide the borough area into wards on the map and cyclescape would automatically categorise issues by those sub-divisions. At present, a group or userid can be associated with multiple different areas but when you look at "Latest Issues Nearby" it creates you a single list of issues aggregated from all the areas you monitor; it would be better to give you a list per area; or some similar way to sub-divide the issues list.
- *Response: Searching from the group's page should limit the results to those within the group's area but that doesn't appear to be working at present. They will look into it.*
- Can't see a way to remove issues that are no longer required or were posted in error (eg duplicates of same issue etc.).
- Would be good to have some sort of export tool for extracting issues (including maps and associated photos) to a document format that can be topped, tailed and presented to the authorities.
- *Response: This has been logged as a feature request.*

V2.1, 10/5/2013 Andrew Woodward