

Improvements made for cycling on footpaths

Letter from Soh Chor Yin

General Manager/Secretary, Tampines Town Council

WE REFER to Mr Thomas Lee Chee Chee's letter "Have educational videos for cyclists" (Aug 26) and share his concern for the safety of pedestrians in Tampines.

Indeed, it was with pedestrian safety uppermost in our minds that Tampines decided to legalise cycling on footpaths in March last year after a 20-month trial.

Prior to this trial, residents had already been cycling on footways, although it was illegal to do so under the Road Traffic Rules, as in other parts of the island.

When we embarked on the trial in May 2007, it was a constituency-specific effort to tackle the problem head-on, rather than allow the situation to deteriorate.

After lengthy consultations with residents and relevant authorities, we decided that cycling on footpaths was feasible and sustainable only if three key features — infrastructure, education and enforcement — were implemented together.

We are pleased for the opportunity to give an update.

On infrastructure, we are working with the National Parks Board and the Land Transport Authority to build more cycling lanes and widen footpaths, wherever possible.

A stretch of about 4km of dedicated cycling lanes has been constructed, with

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another 5.3km on the way. The network of park connectors in Tampines — expanded to about 7km — is being lengthened further.

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For enforcement, Tampines Town Council by-laws were amended to allow us to take action against cyclists who flout the rules and endanger the safety of pedestrians.

Under the new by-laws, which took effect when cycling on footpaths was legalised,

cyclists are not allowed in common areas such as void decks and open spaces.

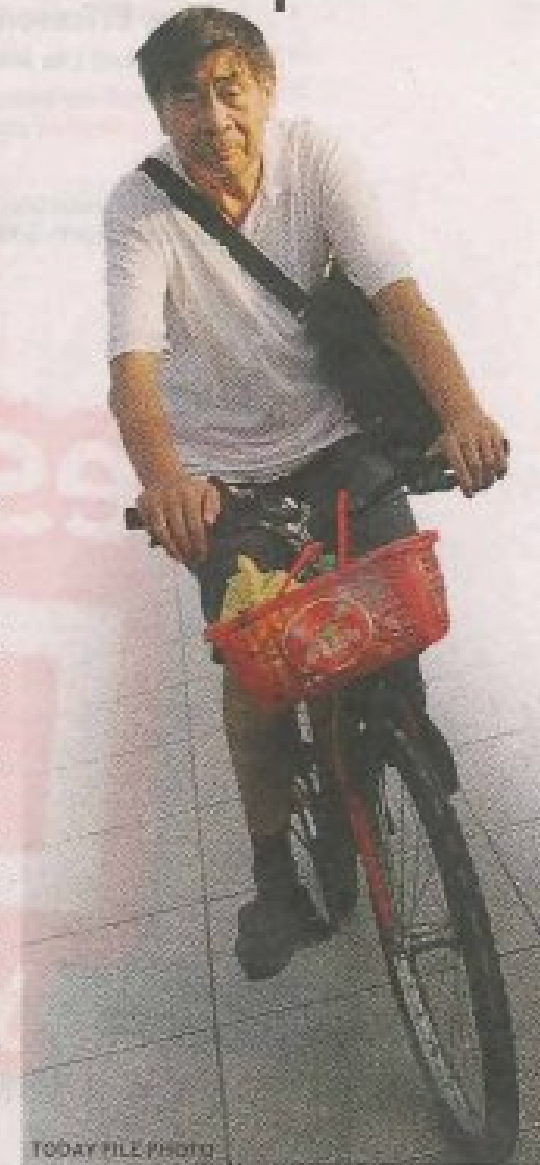
Enforcement blitzes by auxiliary police officers are conducted regularly. To date, 364 summonses and 566 warnings have been issued to errant cyclists, who can be fined up to S\$1,000.

The police will continue to investigate cases where injury is caused. This is important as we do not condone reckless cycling.

With the Road Traffic (Bicycles) (Exemption) Order 2010, Tampines is the first cycling town in Singapore. We have seen improvements since the above-mentioned measures were taken.

We will continue to explore more ways to improve safety for both pedestrians and cyclists in Tampines.

We thank Mr Lee for his suggestions.



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