

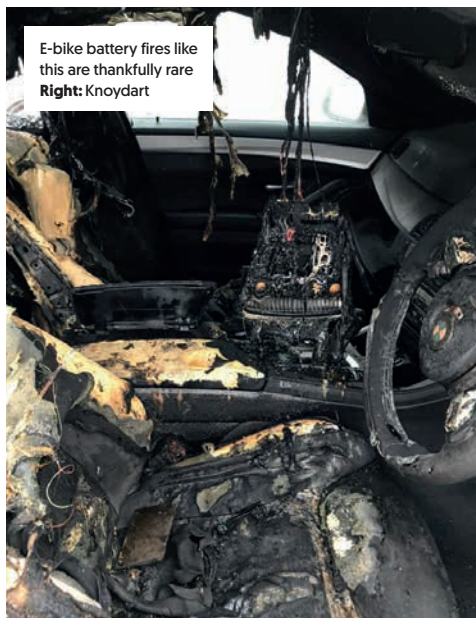
# Opinion Letters

**THIS MONTH** E-BIKE BATTERIES, DANNY MACASKILL'S RAILINGS, BIKES ON TRAINS, MAPS, GENDER BIAS, AND HI-VIZ TOPS

## Get in touch

**LETTERS** are edited for space, clarity and, if necessary, legality. The editor reads and acknowledges all members' letters but publishes only a selection and doesn't enter into correspondence. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 31 August. Please include your membership number.

**WRITE TO:** Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ or email [editor@cyclingsuk.org](mailto:editor@cyclingsuk.org)



E-bike battery fires like this are thankfully rare  
Right: Knoydart



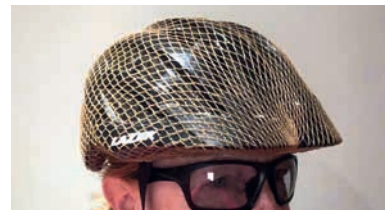
## Sticky situation

Every time my daughter Ula and I pass a particular set of railings in Edinburgh we think of Danny MacAskill. For 12 years we have pointed them out to visitors and replayed them Danny's video, now at 38 million hits. How could anyone ever cycle the tops of those railings?

Last week, we were sharing our pilgrimage with Savannah and, leaning against the rails, I felt a gritty patch on the very tips. Still there after 12 years are wee sticky grippers, like a skateboard surface, each the size of half a penny.

It's great to have discovered these pieces of cycling archaeology. We are writing to Historic Environment Scotland to have the site listed.

**Oliver Brookes**



## Wasp-proof helmet

Thought this might be helpful to members this summer. Weightless, simple to use, and costs pennies – it's the most effective wasp-proofing I've ever used: a hairnet over my helmet!

**Brenda Watson**

*Nice photo but... boring safety announcement: anything on a helmet's surface that can 'grab' the road can make neck injuries or rotational brain injuries worse in a fall. See also p58.*

## Letter of the month

### Burning issue

**A**fter three wonderful days e-biking in the wilds of Knoydart, I learned a salutary lesson about e-bike batteries. Back in Mallaig, my car burst in to flames and the interior was destroyed by fire.

The fire brigade concluded that the source of the fire was probably the three e-bike batteries, which I had placed on the floor of the car to reduce the load on the tow-bar cycle rack – something I have done many times, without any adverse effect.

Shortly before this, the bikes had been sprayed with sea water during a very rough ferry crossing from Inverie, in Knoydart, to Mallaig. The most likely explanation for the fire was that residual seawater on the battery terminals must have caused a short circuit, which would have been enough to make one or more batteries to spontaneously combust.

It seems that e-bike battery terminals should be coated with dielectric grease, which repels water (whether from rain or sea). In any case, I would always rinse off any salt water and thoroughly dry batteries in future. An expensive lesson learned!

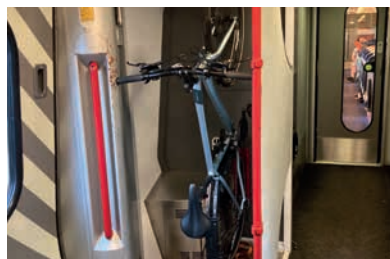
**Michael Fearneyhough**

### Win a Green Oil bike care kit worth £64.99

The letter of the month wins an Eco Rider Deluxe set, courtesy of Green Oil. Green Oil's plant-based lubes and cleaners are fully biodegradable and contain no PTFE. The kit comprises: Green Oil Wet Chain Lube; Ecogrease; Green Clean Bike Cleaner; Clean Chain Degreaser; FSC Drive Chain Brush; two Bike Armour cable-rub protectors; an EcoRag; a reusable plastic tub for water or storage; and some seeds to grow your own food! For details, or to order Green Oil products, visit [green-oil.net](http://green-oil.net)



Bike storage on CrossCountry train



## Bikes on trains – just

I suspect this will be one of many letters responding to Adrian Williams (Letters, June/July). I've just got back from cycling in Scotland with a friend. We travelled by train from Leicester to Aberdeen and back. Privatisation has split the journey into three companies, all releasing bike reservations at different times and limiting bikes to two per train. Booking was risky because some sections had to be booked before others were available.

On the trains, LNER required us to lift our bikes vertically and hang the them from a hook. I am reasonably fit and found this very difficult; what do older cyclists do? East Midlands Railways had a simple side-by-side solution but the restraining straps were frayed and would not pass through the buckles.

Irregular usage by cyclists? Usage by passengers is irregular too: some trains are nearly empty, others overcrowded. Seats are still provided. There is no case for making life so difficult for rail users with bikes, particularly now when we should be encouraging sustainable onward travel.

**John Morfey**

## Put routes on the map

I've been meaning to write for some time but the latest, otherwise excellent issue of Cycle was the last straw, and I can contain myself no longer. What have you got against maps?! Time after time you have these great articles on touring routes but no maps. This time, the Cantii Way: no map. NC500: no map. Paul Rogers' article is the one shining light (even if I need a magnifier to read it). Please make maps a standard for any article where a route or location is involved!

**Andrew Kelly**

## Gender bias

The April/May issue was another lovely edition of your fab magazine for me to read. But sadly, yet again, a cluster of features seemed to forget that women's bodies are a different shapes from men's. The gear review of shoes didn't give any women's options and nor did the zip-off trousers review.

It should be standard that you include 50/50 reviews of women's and men's gear, and reviews by women writers. Or that you put women's options in all of your reviews. C'mon, its the 21st century. Disappointed.

**Abigail Elce**

*Good call. We should include women's options. There is an XC1W version of those Shimano shoes and, while the Hummvee zip-off trousers only exist in a men's version, the Hummvee 3/4 shorts are available for women. In terms of the gender split of reviews in general, the aim is to balance them over the course of a year rather than within each individual feature. I still want us to be able to run reviews of, say, two women's-specific bikes or four pairs of men's or women's shorts.*



## Hi-viz tops

On page 31 of the June/July issue there is a letter by Elaine Wright showing a hi-viz top with "Give Cyclists 1.5m" on it. Please can you give me information on where to purchase one?

**Julie Bee**

*I asked Elaine, who replied: "Corporate Togs via Amazon (amzn.to/3Az1Ukj) did the hi-viz printing and we added 'thank you' in marker pen to make it seem more friendly. Glad people are asking because they really make a difference."*

### Obituaries

Are published online at [cyclinguk.org/obituaries](http://cyclinguk.org/obituaries). Contact [publicity@cyclinguk.org](mailto:publicity@cyclinguk.org)



## Photo of the month

### Space for cyclists

Among the various cycle-friendly pieces of infrastructure I came across in rural Brittany, this well-adhered-to highway measure worked well. If only we could develop such traffic calming on the many busy and fast two-lane B-roads in the UK.

**Robin Bevis**

## CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other members at [forum.cyclinguk.org](http://forum.cyclinguk.org). Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: [forum.cyclinguk.org/viewtopic.php?t=150880](http://forum.cyclinguk.org/viewtopic.php?t=150880)



### WHAT FIRST AID DO YOU TAKE ON TOUR?

**Psamathe:** In the past I've taken just a few plasters. But invariably I've needed to find a pharmacy to purchase stuff e.g. antiseptic cream (in NL), anti-histamine (in FR). What do others take on tour?  
**RickH:** I don't recall ever taking any sort of first aid stuff on tour. I don't recall ever needing anything either.

**VinceLedge:** I would always take some steristrips as well as plasters, handy for any slightly bigger cuts.  
**millimole:** A sensible approach might be to have water (to wash out cuts and abrasions), clean cloth strips (as covering & bandage), steristrips, and a smartphone to find a pharmacy or to call for assistance.

**axel\_knutt:** Elastoplast, Savlon, antiseptic wipes, bandage, paracetamol, nail clippers, scissors, Flecainide, Diltiazem, antacid tablets.

**foxyrider:** I was a boy sprout so I like to be prepared! I take antiseptic wipes, plasters, a small bandage, Savlon, paracetamol, and a bite/sting pen.

**rualexander:** triangular bandage, gaffer tape, gauze, painkillers, Immodium, small scissors, dental repair kit, iodine.

**Jdsk:** Things that might not have been mentioned, some of which are in the NHS list ([bit.ly/NHS-firstaidkitlist](http://bit.ly/NHS-firstaidkitlist)): tick remover; hydrocortisone cream; scissors/non-cycling multitool; prescription medications with official-looking letter if you're going anywhere relevant; note of medical conditions and contact details if relevant; appropriate antibiotic for those with a propensity for urinary tract infections.

**Bmb1bzzz:** So from the NHS list as above... who carries a thermometer with them?