

Julie Rand

From: Paul Tuohy, Cycling UK Chief Executive <unmonitored-inbox@cyclinguk.org>
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To: Julie Rand
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Clubshorts



As we move into the winter season, I hope you and your group have enjoyed another busy and enjoyable year of cycling. Volunteers such as yourselves provide activities week in week out, come rain or shine, for people to get on a bike, so thank you.

Around now, many groups will be thinking about the year ahead - amazingly 2018 is only a couple of months away! - so I thought I would remind you of some of the flagship programmes Cycling UK provided in 2017 to help attract more people into cycling. We'll also look ahead to 2018 so you can think about including some of our programmes in your calendars for next year.

In this letter, you'll also find some examples of the great work done by our groups, often in collaboration with our Community Cycle Clubs, Member Groups and other bodies, as well as a summary of our campaigning work on behalf of all cyclists.

May I take this opportunity on behalf of the members, the Board of Trustees and the staff of Cycling UK to thank you and your amazing volunteers for all the work you do for cycling.

With best wishes for another great year in 2018.

Kind regards

Paul Tuohy, Cycling UK Chief Executive

Picture above shows Torbay CTC enjoying an autumn ride, courtesy of Graham Brodie.



The Women's Festival of Cycling

July saw many of our groups: Member Groups, affiliates, Community Cycle Clubs and individuals [organise rides](#) aimed at increasing participation by women in cycling. Over 50 separate organisers put on around 70 rides and events, supported by a package of branded items from Cycling UK. For example, Hop.on (pictured above) put on a ride in the Greenway in West Yorkshire while The Adventure Syndicate organised 100-mile rides in England, Scotland and Wales, one of which was mainly off-road. We will be repeating the festival in July 2018 so make a note now to be part of it and attract more female riders, who are currently underrepresented in cycling.



The Big Bike Revival - the biggest and best yet

Now in its third year, funded by the DfT in England and Transport Scotland in Scotland, the Big Bike Revival (BBR) reached over 50,000 people and, at the last count, recorded 3,000 new instances of cycling (and rising)! Over 2,000 events were delivered throughout May and June, kicking off a truly memorable summer of cycling. Cycling UK groups, regardless of purpose and membership type worked together dedicating their time to supporting new cyclists.

For example, in England, Southampton Cycling Campaign and Southampton CTC, affiliate group and Member Group respectively, both organised their own rides and helped out with the various community events that took place. Their help and expertise were much welcomed and invaluable.

In Scotland, groups that participated in BBR included: Cycle Ayrshire, who put on some women-specific BBR events in East Ayrshire; Dumfries and Galloway LGBT Plus; Volunteering Hebrides in the Western Isles; South West Community Cycles in Glasgow; and the Telugu Association for Scotland.

We visited the [Highland Cycle Ability Centre](#) in the Scottish Highlands to see how BBR helped spread the joy of cycling by allowing people of all abilities to try out a range of adapted cycles.

Thanks to all the groups who took part in BBR 2017.



100 Women in Cycling

This initiative, which ran alongside the Women's Festival of Cycling, celebrated the huge number of women involved in all aspects of cycling who act as role models to encourage other women. The list included Becky Reynolds of Cycling UK-affiliated Brighton campaign group Bricycles (pictured above).

Many of the 100 Women accepted our invitation to attend our [100 Women in Cycling](#) reception in Birmingham in July. The event was also attended by many women from our Community Cycle Clubs, as well as female cycle campaigners, cycle instructors, ride leaders, event organisers, adventure cyclists, journalists, Trustees, staff and others. This was a wonderful example of people from within and outside the organisation coming together through their enthusiasm for cycling and commitment to encouraging others. Many enjoyed the opportunity to network with others and share experiences and best practice, so this is something we'll be looking at enabling further in the future.

Start thinking about who YOU would like to nominate for 100 Women in Cycling 2018! They don't need to be world famous or a household name, just somebody who inspires and encourages other women to enjoy cycling too.



Big Bike Celebration 2017

Our annual members' conference took place in Birmingham on Saturday 8 October. [The Big Bike Celebration](#) featured a range of fascinating speakers, including Joy Anibaba and Lorraine Dixon of the Joyful Bellas and Fellas Cycling UK Community Cycle Club, who both spoke passionately about their rediscovery of the benefits of cycling. The day was also an opportunity to showcase the wonderful work being done by many of our groups through our annual Volunteer of the Year Awards. Pictured above with their award are members of Best Community Project, 1st Step Bikes, run by volunteers who have mainly been affected by addiction but are using cycling to develop new skills and friendships. The group welcomes people from across West Lothian and Falkirk. Congratulations to all the winners!



How to get more publicity for your group

As you may know, all our groups have access to their own page on the recently revamped [Cycling UK website](#). That makes it easier for the thousands of unique daily visitors to our pages to find local people to ride with. Many groups have taken ownership of their pages and uploaded a nice photo, added information about the group and its rides and put in a link to their websites, for example [Yellow Jersey CC](#). However, many groups have not yet done so, which means that people looking for a local cycling group on our site may not find them. If you are not sure how to update your group's page, please [let us know](#) and we'll sort out admin rights for you.

You can also access a wealth of information and resources to help your group run more smoothly via the new volunteer toolkits on our [Support for Cycling Groups](#).



Bike Week 2017

Bike Week in June was another successful event, with many of our groups taking part and enabling half a million people to enjoy the thousands of the activities listed on the site. For example, hundreds of riders enjoyed the activities organised by Cycling UK Stevenage. An immense programme of activities included a “prologue” Friday Fling to Dane End; a Saturday afternoon starter ride to the Datchworth Fete; audax rides on the Sunday; six evening rides to different locations and a teddy bears' picnic ride. Incredible work! In Manchester, many of our Community Cycle Clubs put on Dr Bike events and other activities included bike art and social rides, while in Scotland there were the Pedal on Parliament led rides during Bike Week.

[Bike Week 2018](#) will take place from 9 to 17 June so save the date!



Campaigning in 2017

Of course, Cycling UK, as well as supporting hundreds of groups, has also had another busy and successful year of [campaigning throughout 2017](#), making cycling safer and being its voice wherever it needs to be heard.

We Walk, We Cycle, We Vote

Co-ordinated by Cycling UK and Pedal on Parliament, the event brought together over 50 organisations in Scotland for a collaborative campaign for the local elections in May. Focusing on the shared call for 10% of the transport budget to be spent on infrastructure to enable anyone to cycle safely, the campaign reached out to every local candidate across Scotland.

Space for Cycling

Over the last year we have taken our infrastructure campaign on tour around the country with a roadshow that hit ten cities. Since then, we have persuaded various political leaders to create Space for Cycling – including in the West Midlands, where the new mayor Andy Street has pledged a budget of £10 per head annually to build high quality cycling infrastructure.

Too Close For Comfort

Thirty-six police forces across the UK were inspired by this campaign to focus their attention on drivers overtaking cyclists too closely, with remarkable success.

Trails for Wales

The second stage of our Trails for Wales campaign has nudged the Welsh Government to the brink of legislative change and the relaxation of outdated access restrictions to allow cyclists to ride on most paths and tracks.



Building a network

As well as supporting national events, we've been working hard to help connect our network of varied groups and clubs so they can share experiences with each other and work together to encourage more people to take up cycling. Community Development Officers across the UK have been hosting local networking events. During one in Manchester, affiliate and Member Groups came together to share ideas, find solutions to common challenges, and to take part in training on using social media and applying for funding. Members thoroughly enjoyed meeting representatives from other groups, discovering their diverse activities and exchanging contact details to enable mutual support in the future.

Meanwhile, Cycling UK Member Groups joined forces with Cycling UK affiliate groups and Community Cycle Clubs to guide groups of female cyclists around the Wirral Circular Trail and coastal paths as part of the Women's Festival of Cycling flagship Wirral Celebration Ride (pictured above).

The Cycling UK network is growing and it is fantastic to see local groups supporting each other. Do [let us know](#) if you'd like to meet and support other groups in your area.



New Cycling UK support for your group

As well as supporting the above programmes, Cycling UK has appointed new members of staff who can support our cycling groups. [Lucy Watherston](#) is our new Digital and Social Media Officer and can give you advice on how to use new media to publicise group's activities, as well as writing features about the work that you do for our website. [Sarah Merrington](#) is our new Volunteer Network Support Manager who, working alongside [Julie Rand](#), will be writing a Volunteer Strategy for the organisation.

Sarah heads up the new Volunteer Network Team to support you in carrying out your valuable work providing cycling activities and encouraging others to get involved in them. She is keen to learn and understand more about our groups and clubs, and find out what further support you might need as local volunteers.

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Editor

Julie Rand looks after Cycling UK's Member Groups.

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