

Bike Lane Backlash Fact File

Why we need pop-up cycle infrastructure

What is the emergency active travel fund?

In May, the government in England [announced an emergency £250m](#) fund for councils to provide “pop-up bike lanes with protected space for cycling, wider pavements, safer junctions, and cycle and bus-only corridors” in response to the covid-19 crisis.

It followed unprecedented levels of walking and cycling seen across the UK during the pandemic and an attempt to encourage people to make healthier travel choices and to choose alternatives to public transport as they started to return to work.

The £250m emergency active travel fund was the first stage of a £2bn investment promised to boost greener, active travel.

What did the transport secretary say?

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said: “With public transport’s capacity severely restricted at this time, our trains and buses could become overcrowded and our roads gridlocked – holding up emergency services, critical workers and vital supplies.

“We know cars will continue to remain vital for many, but as we look to the future we must build a better country with greener travel habits, cleaner air and healthier communities.”

The case for widespread support for cycle infrastructure

[A YouGov survey](#) in July revealed:

- **77%** of people support measures in their local area to encourage cycling and walking – **that equates to 6.5 people for every 1 against**
- **80%** of people who expressed a preference want the UK’s streets redesigned to protect pedestrians and cyclists from motorists
- **51%** of people agree they would cycle more if these changes were made

(Note - #BikelsBest has united over 50 leading cycle brands, retailers and organisations into one powerful voice with a single mission - to get more people riding bikes more often.)

[A YouGov survey](#) carried out for Cycling UK in April showed similar results:

- Just under one in ten people (9%) agreed they were cycling more during the pandemic. If replicated across the UK that could mean six million more people cycling

- 36% agreed they could rethink their travel habits in the future to use their cars and motor vehicles less

Why are the vocal minority so persuasive?

The #BikeisBest YouGov data showed that while people were clearly in support of more cycling in the UK, at the same time they consistently overestimated other people's opposition to it.

Dr Ian Walker, Environmental Psychologist at the University of Bath, said: "Perhaps one reason negative voices find it so easy to sway things their way is that people have a tendency to misjudge public levels of support.

"The survey showed that, while most people think Britain would be a better place if more people cycled, they also guessed that other people were less supportive, and more hostile, to the idea than they were."

The data showed that 3.26 people support the view that "Britain would be better if more people cycled" for every 1 against. But when asked what they thought the opinion of their friends or the general public would be, many respondents drastically overestimated the negativity towards cycling.

How many more people have cycled during lockdown?

In June, the government in England released figures which showed cycling levels had risen by up to 300% on some days.

Meanwhile, Halfords, Britain's biggest bike retailer said bike sales had been double usual levels in May.

Other retailers have reported similar soaring sales with many running out of stock as demand rose.

What are the benefits of cycling – some useful stats

- **£6.1bn** - spent by NHS every year on obesity-related ill-health
- **36,000** deaths every year linked to air pollution in UK
- **33%** of UK CO2 emissions are accounted for by traffic
- **£7.9bn** cost to drivers of congestion on UK roads every year
- **7mph** average speed by car in London and Edinburgh
- **178** average number of hours lost by road users in congestion every year in the UK

- Before the coronavirus, **only 1%** of all vehicle miles in GB were cycled

Chris Boardman's case for support

If you're on Twitter, you might have seen Chris Boardman sharing his ITV4 film all about the benefits of the temporary infrastructure schemes:

<https://twitter.com/itvcycling/status/1305793410926882816>