

Introducing Cycling UK's Cycle Advocacy Network

1. Introduction

Cycling UK has championed the cause of cycling for over 140 years, advocating the interests of all cycle users, regardless of background or ability.

Campaigning is at the very heart of what we do. We represent the interests of our members, plus all current and would-be cyclists. Whilst our dedicated campaign officers work tirelessly to influence decisions made at the very highest levels of government, it's our network of volunteers who protect and improve cycling for their local community.

2. The Cycle Advocacy Network

The Cycle Advocacy Network brings together people with a shared interest in creating the conditions that enable more people to cycle, including better infrastructure for cycling and safer roads, to share information, support each other, and provide a louder and more effective voice for both those who cycle already and those who might, if it looked and felt safer to do so. The Network is intended to be a broad church, but the expectation is that people within it will reflect the values of Cycling UK and promote our policies and views as and when appropriate.

2.1. Resources for everyone

Anyone can access the network's publicly available resources by visiting <https://cyclinguk.org/cycle-advocacy-network>. These include

- Campaigner Handbook – packed with hints and tips for how to be effective in your locality
- Monthly e-mailings of Cycle Campaign News
- All of Cycling UK's Policy briefings and views
- Digital copies of Cycling UK's published reports

2.2. Volunteer network

However, we invite people to join the core network by volunteering in one of the following roles, which are open to members and affiliate members of Cycling UK. In doing so you will gain access to Cycling UK's Volunteer Forum, helping you to share experience and seek advice from like minds around the UK. Additionally, you may become accredited to speak on behalf of Cycling UK, representing us on local or regional groups and bodies.

2.2.1. Local Representatives

Local Representatives of Cycling UK choose how they can campaign most effectively in their community, according to their strengths, the local context and whether there are other Local Reps based nearby. Where possible, they will join informal working hubs of at least three Local Reps, to give and receive peer support. Local Reps may choose to organise themselves into larger groups - a county wide group, for example - to facilitate more effective campaigning. There could be more than one Local Rep in any given location. For example, one might focus on liaising with the Local Authority, responding to consultations; another may be a member of a local Cycle Campaign group, and another may liaise with local schools and community groups. This is not meant to be a prescriptive arrangement, as the intention is to support representatives to campaign locally. Ideally, they will keep in contact and support each other as part of a working hub, knowing they complement each other's work.

Local Representatives are registered at Cycling UK as an accredited member of the Cycle Advocacy Network and can be supplied with written proof of their status if needed. We can also help facilitate the introduction of new Local Campaigners to the relevant local authority or other statutory body.

2.2.2. Regional Coordinators

Regional Coordinators have a 'light touch' oversight of all the campaigning activities in a larger patch and are intermediaries between Local Representatives and the Campaigns Team at Cycling UK's national office.

Regional Coordinators are facilitators: oiling the wheels of campaigning, checking that individual concerns/issues are addressed, pointing out where campaigners in different places are facing similar issues and linking people together. Where possible, they will place Local Representatives into working hubs, check in with their progress from time to time and are the default first point of contact for Local Reps for queries their Working Hub are unable to deal with. They keep a watching brief to see that the Working Hubs in their patch are functioning smoothly.

2.2.3. Forum moderators

Cycling UK's Volunteer Forum requires several moderators to keep conversations flowing, ensuring that unanswered questions are brought to the attention of the Local Reps and Regional Coordinators most likely to be able to contribute. They will build a picture of where expertise lies around the network.

2.3. Representing Cycling UK

Participants in the core network will be representing Cycling UK, and so we ask that they should:

- Endeavour to actively promote cycling within their remit
- Work with and encourage co-operation with other groups with aligned interests
- Engage with other members in their working hub, and with the wider network using the online forum
- Get to know Cycling UK's headline policy on any issue they're working on and represent it accurately.
- Display appropriate and professional standards of presentation and behaviour
- Not bring Cycling UK into disrepute
- Not express or put forward personal political views when undertaking activities as representative of Cycling UK

The volunteer agreement between you and Cycling UK is a good faith agreement only, with no legal or contractual obligations, which does not establish any employment.

3. The journey continues

You may have heard of, or been part of, Cycling UK's Right-to-Ride network. The Cycle Advocacy Network is the evolution of this. We hope that our Right-to-Ride campaigners will continue with the Cycle Advocacy Network as Local Reps or Regional Coordinators, but we recognise that some of you will take the opportunity to finish your active involvement. We thank you and salute your achievements.