



It seems summer has suddenly decided to return, and hopefully you've been able to get out and make the most of the sunshine.

With more people likely to be out riding and taking trips in the UK this summer, we've got some top tips for leave no trace cycling, and the return of the #12nightsoutin1year challenge to inspire you to spend a night out under the stars.

In England, we've been asking awkward questions about large estates receiving tax relief without providing the public access they promised in return. Meanwhile, in Wales, we're edging another step closer towards new legislation to improve access to the countryside.

This weekend kicks off the [Women's Festival of Cycling](#). We're asking women to [show us your 'bicycle face'](#) and nominate others to do the same, and encouraging everyone to take a female friend out for a ride to help get more women cycling.

Read on to find out what bikepacker Hannah Collingridge learned when she took her partner on a ride for the first time.

Best wishes

Sophie Gordon, campaigns officer



Is this England's biggest bike ban?

Back in April, cyclists in Yorkshire were dismayed to find a well-established crossing to a popular cycling cafe on the Bolton Abbey estate had been [closed to people on bikes](#). This is despite the fact that the Duke of Devonshire, who owns the estate, receives generous tax relief for supposedly providing public access to the land.

This isn't just about one bridge at Bolton Abbey. Many large estates in England enjoy significant tax exemptions for allowing public access, but do the public really benefit?

To investigate the extent of the issue, Cycling UK asked HMRC how these access agreements are checked and enforced across the country, but answers are proving elusive.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



New bikepacking trail in west Cornwall to be launched in September

Cycling UK has unveiled plans for its latest long-distance bikepacking route, the West Kernow Way, which will give the cycling tourist a real taste and experience of Cornwall. The route has been test-ridden and finalised and the guidebook is in production, authored by MTB writer and history buff Guy Kesteven.

The 150-mile trail will be launched on 3 September, with pre-orders for the route guides opening a couple of weeks beforehand. We'll let you know as soon as they are available to order.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Welsh access reform: Minister to consider recommendations

During 2020 Cycling UK and OpenMTB joined other user groups and landowner organisations on [expert advisory groups](#) to discuss how the Welsh Government's commitment to improving access to the countryside could be delivered in practice.

The advisory groups outlined various options for increasing access on public rights of way and CROW access land, and the best ways to communicate these changes to the public. (Unfortunately we can't link to these recommendations yet – they were due to be published online by the end of June but have been delayed, so we expect to see them very soon.)

Following our [Trails for Wales campaign](#) the Welsh Government made a clear commitment to increase off-road access for people cycling. However, turning that into legislative changes was always going to take some time, so it's likely that Trails for Wales round three will be needed later this year and beyond to hold Ministers to their promises.



The return of the 12 nights out in one year challenge

[Cycling UK and OS Maps are teaming up in 2021](#) to help more people discover and enjoy the outdoors which exists right on their doorstep. Four months of lockdown at the beginning of the year put camping adventures on hold, but [the #12nightsoutin1year challenge is back](#) – and by starting in summer rather than in January, you've got an excuse to ease yourself in gently.

The challenge is simple: head out once a month with your tent, hammock or bivvy, share a photo of your overnight adventures, and be entered into a monthly prize draw to win some great kit.

Round-the-world record holder Vedangi Kulkarni [gave us her top tips](#) on sleeping out to get you started. Need a tent you can carry on the bike? We've got you covered with a [review of four lightweight tents](#) for cyclists.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



How to leave no trace when you're out cycling

The countryside is a bounty we all can enjoy, but it does need to be looked after. Whether you're riding, walking or wild camping in it, there are steps we can all take to minimise our impact – or even go one better and leave places cleaner than you found them.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Great Rides: Bikepacking in the Yorkshire Dales, and a family gravel bike gallivant

A night under the stars is an escape from day-to-day cares. Hannah Collingridge and Joolze Dymond persuaded their partners to join them for the first time on a local loop. After a frosty night out in a bivvy, would they do it again?

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

For a family-friendly off-road adventure with a bit of history and wildlife thrown in, Markus Stitz has created a great route and beautiful short film discovering the outdoor Cateran Ecomuseum just outside Blairgowrie.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Almost 2,000 people support Ridgeway riding route

A year-long survey by the Ridgeway Partnership has demonstrated strong public support for a rideable route along the whole of the Ridgeway National Trail.

Currently, only the western half of the trail from Overton Hill to Streatley-on-Thames is open to cyclists and horse riders, while much of the eastern half uses public footpaths.

The survey also showed the demand for traffic-free circular routes branching off from the Ridgeway.

Cycling UK has been helping to draft potential routes for the eastern half of the National Trail, which could eventually be adopted as the official riding route.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Rural active travel campaigners get together

Active travel campaigning in rural areas often throws up very different issues to in urban areas. In mid-June we held an online gathering for people campaigning for rural cycling provision, to share thoughts and ideas. If you live in a rural or semi-rural area and would be interested in joining a similar discussion in the future, please get in touch with Stephen Dominy stephen.dominy@cyclenguk.org. You can also join the [Cycle Advocacy Network](#) to connect with other local campaigners.

Cycling UK has also begun a new [Rural Connections](#) project which will support people in Scotland's most rural and remote areas to get more active for everyday journeys, leisure and adventure.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Get involved!

Our work to increase access to the countryside for everyone to enjoy is only possible thanks to our members and supporters.

If you want to play a part in helping more people discover the joy of cycling in our forests, glens and moors, we'd love you to get involved.

[HOW YOU CAN HELP](#)

cyclenguk.org/offroadcampaigns



Sophie Gordon
Campaigns Officer
Cycling UK