“Safety in numbers”

How to deliver More and Safer Cycling

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CTC, the national cyclists’ organisation
About CTC

• CTC the national cyclists’ organisation
  – 60,000 members, founded 1878
  – Cycling activities, membership services (legal, insurance, magazine)

• CTC charitable trust
  – Cycling development e.g. cycle training
  – Professional services (e.g. advice to local authorities: e.g. Local Authority Benchmarking project)
  – Campaigning nationally and locally
CTC’s New Vision for Cycling

• Benefits of cycling:
  – economy, climate, **health**, safety, equality of opportunity, quality of life and local environment

• Calls for a doubling of cycle use and a halving of the risks of cycling in 10 years

• Explains how:
  – Commitment, planning and design, **road safety**, promotion and incentives, public transport, recreational and off-road

Cycling in national policy: www.ctc.org.uk/newvision

Cycling in local policy: www.ctc.org.uk/calts
Health Benefits

- Cycling in mid-adulthood gives you a level of fitness equivalent to being 10 years younger...

  ...and a life expectancy 2 years above the average

A relationship between cycle use and obesity?
Cycling is healthy not dangerous

- Health benefits far outweigh risks, by c20:1
- Those who do NOT cycle to work have a 39% higher mortality rate than those who do (Copenhagen heart study)

It is dangerous NOT to cycle!
Health v safety?

• Cyclists have a very low rate of involvement in injuries to others.

• Cycling gets safer the more cyclists there are: the “Safety in Numbers” effect.

• e.g. London since 2000:
  – Cycle use up 107%, serious and fatal injuries down 21%
  – Many other examples from UK and Europe…

![Safety In Numbers Graph]
‘Safety in numbers’

Theory:
• A 100% increase in cycle use will result in just 34% increase in cycle casualties (Jacobsen)

Practice:
• The Netherlands: from 1980-2005:
  – 45% more cycling, 58% fewer cycle fatalities

• Germany: from 1975-98:
  – Share of cycling up from 8 to 12%, 66% fewer cycle fatalities

• Copenhagen 1995-2006
  - Cycle use up 44%, mode share for cycle commuting up from 31% to 36%, cyclist casualties down 60%

• Leicester, comparing 2001/3 with 2006/8:
  - 43% more cycling, 11% fewer cycle casualties
Places with high cycle use (right end of graph) have low risk

Those with low cycle use (left end) have high risk
Safety in numbers: European comparison

![Safety in numbers: European comparison graph](image-url)
Safety in numbers in English districts (not London)

English local authorities casualties per cycle commuter

Department for Transport/2001 Census

- **Calderdale:** 0.81% cycle to work, 158 KSIs per 10,000 cycle commuters
- **York:** 12.04% cycle to work, 10 KSIs per 10,000 cycle commuters
- **England:** 2.83% cycle to work, 34 KSIs per 10,000 cycle commuters
Safety in numbers in England

Safety in Numbers from 103 English local authorities

Average KSI (2003-2007) per 10,000 cycle commuters

% cycling to work


www.ctc.org.uk/safetyinnumbers
Safety in numbers in Britain
A time-based comparison (1950-2006)

Cycle fatality rate and kilometres travelled - 1950-2006

Cycling risk: fatalities per billion kilometres

1952 and 2006 cycle fatality rate: 32.4 deaths per bn kms
Why does it happen?

Three possible explanations:

1. Drivers become more aware of cyclists and better at understanding / anticipating them
2. A greater proportion of drivers will themselves be cyclists, improving their understanding
3. Increased political will to improve cycling conditions

www.ctc.org.uk/safetyinnumbers
More and safer cycling: Key points

• Cycling is good for our own health, and that of our communities and the environment

• Cycling gets safer the more cyclists there are
  • So “more” AND “safer” cycling can and should go hand in hand: complementary not contradictory aims

• Tackle the fears which deter people from cycling
  – Speed, irresponsible driving, hostile roads and junctions, lorries

• Set targets and indicators which encourage this
Tackling the fears: key issues for cycle safety

1. Speed
2. Irresponsible road use
3. Hostile roads and junctions
4. Dangerous vehicles (esp lorries)
5. Positive promotion
   - Imagery
   - Opportunities to cycle, esp cycle training
6. Measuring success
1. Traffic speeds

- Welcome positive noises on 20mph, but Government needs to “speed up on slowing down” in both urban and rural areas

- Benefits of 20mph
  - 90% fewer KSI in Hull’s 20mph zones, 56% decrease in collisions (1994 – 2001)

- Benefits health, road safety for all, quality of life, economy

- Popular!
  - 75% support 20mph limits, incl 72% of drivers
2. Irresponsible driving

- Better training and testing
- Tougher and better enforced road traffic law

CTC’s Stop Smidsy campaign to tackle bad driving and promote responsible road use (SMIDSY = “Sorry Mate I Didn’t See You”)

www.stop-smidsy.org.uk
3. Hostile roads and junctions

- Ensure Councils follow Government’s design advice
  - Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 2/08)
  - Designing Streets

- Hierarchy of Provision
  - Prioritises reducing traffic speeds and volumes

- Training and awareness raising needed
4. Dangerous vehicles

- **HGVs**: account for 20-25% of fatalities in GB, 53% in London (2001-5), 10 out of 13 fatalities in London in 2008

- **Solutions** relate to vehicles, driver training and awareness, routing, and fleet management

- **Motorcycles** also have a disproportionately high involvement rate in both pedestrian and cyclist casualties, especially serious and fatal injuries
5. Positive promotion

- Advertising / promotional campaigns
  - Positive image, cycling as normal / stylish
- Maps, journey planners
  - Cycling England, CycleStreets
- Individual Travel Marketing (e.g. Travelsmart)
  - Car use typically falls 10-14% in areas covered
- Incentive schemes
  - Gvt’s Cycle to Work scheme, bike breakfasts and other taxable benefits.
  - Vouchers and reward schemes
Cycle training
and other opportunities to try cycling

Known to increase cycle use:
- c2 hrs training will encourage people to make more trips, longer trips, to cycle all year round and to feel more confident when doing so
  - Safer cyclists?
  - Safer drivers?
  - Link to driver training?

Other opportunities
- BikElt (Sustrans) for schools
- Workplace challenges (CTC)
- Champions projects for health patients, hard to reach groups etc (CTC)
Avoid scaring people!

- Telling people to wear helmets puts people off cycling (especially teenagers and women)…

- …apparently without improving cyclists’ safety

- Many possible explanations, including cyclists or drivers being less cautious (“risk compensation”) or loss of “safety in numbers” benefits

- For more info see www.cyclehelmets.org
6. Measuring success

- The RSS should set rate-based targets – e.g. the Whitehall Gvt’s target to halve the risk of ped and cycle KSI per 100,000 miles travelled - to encourage “more” as well as “safer” cycling.

- “Perception-based” indicators - could be monitored as an add-on to survey on perceptions of PT safety, would avoid data problems at local level, and would end tendency to scare people off cycling!

- This will encourage local authorities to tackle the fears which deter people from cycling: speed, irresponsible driving, hostile roads and junctions, dangerous vehicles (especially lorries).

- Fewer deterrents => more cycling => safer cycling

- [www.ctc.org.uk/calts](http://www.ctc.org.uk/calts) (Cycling: A Local Transport Solution)
Transport Secretary Lord Adonis

Two recent quotes:

- “Nothing we are doing is more important than promoting cycling at the local level.”

- “I believe we could be seeing a doubling, trebling or even a quadrupling of cycling in the not-too-distant future.”

Let’s make sure more and safer cycling go hand in hand!
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