



FROM THE EDITOR

FOR CYCLING to be accessible to all, it requires an accessible network. That's as true for would-be off-road cyclists as it is for would-be utility cyclists. The former need to be able to piece together local rides on rights of way, just as the latter need to be able to make joined-up journeys on cycle tracks and/or quiet roads. When that's not possible, cycling gets sidelined into a sporty niche that requires a car.

Years ago, I spent a few weeks in upstate New York in the United States. I never saw anyone going anywhere by bike. The cyclists I saw exclusively used a lakeside road nearby, a pleasant oval no more than a couple of miles around. Cars would arrive at the weekend, then disgorge roadies who'd go round and round and round. I was baffled – and glad that cycling wasn't like that in the UK.

Except it is, if you're an off-road cyclist who only rides at trail centres. I'm not knocking trail centres. They're great pre-packaged fun that doesn't require planning, and they've done a lot to raise the skill level of the average British mountain biker. Yet if you look at a trail centre car park on a typical weekend, the only diversity on show is among the trail bike brands that the 30/40-something middle class white blokes are taking down from their VW Transporters or Audis.

If we can open up the rights of way network in England and Wales, like Scotland has, it won't just give you and me more places to ride off-road, it will help give *everyone else* the opportunity to try it too.

DAN JOYCE
Cycle editor



Clockwise from far left: Laura Moss, Mark Somerville, Dan Joyce

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ON THE COVER
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By Steve Thomas



Founded in 1878



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