

Chief Executive

WIDER HORIZONS

Our survey said you support us championing cycling for all. **Paul Tuohy** reflects on where Cycling UK is heading – and why



PAUL TUOHY
Chief Executive



Right: Joaze Dymond. Below: Chris Spray

79%
agree that Cycling UK's purpose is to campaign for the rights of cyclists

Cycling UK champions cycling for everyone...

NOW, I DON'T WANT to come across all doom and gloom, but the number of people in the UK using any kind of bicycle is still stubbornly low, despite the clear benefits to society on so many levels. More has to be done, by Government and not just us, if we are to succeed in our mission. All charities have a mission that drives their work and focus. Ours is: 'to make a lasting difference to the lives of individuals and communities across the UK by championing cycling for everyone.'

It's two years since Cycling UK rebranded. Alongside touring cycling, which remains our heartbeat, we've now fully embraced cycle campaigning and cycling development projects, in order to advance the view that society needs an organisation that can support and promote cycling for all. In doing so, we have been on a journey of change.

We changed the way we govern ourselves

“The number of cyclists in the UK is stubbornly low”

to reflect that we are an important national charity. We changed the way we target our work towards helping people from diverse communities discover cycling. We changed the way we try to bring cycling to more people with projects like the Big Bike Revival, Play on Pedals, and Cycle for Health.

With these changes, we've established a reputation as an authoritative voice for cycling. We've combined our unrivalled heritage with a modern approach, so that we can build on the work we did for decades as the Cyclists' Touring Club. Our fire still burns.

PLANNING AHEAD

Meanwhile, the rates for cycling remain largely unchanged, so I am now working with our Trustees and staff on a new five-year plan. I know the work we have been undertaking recently has not been in vain. Quite the contrary: our reputation with key stakeholders and power-brokers has soared. We are ready for the next stage in our grand tour.

To help us shape our future direction, we carried out a membership survey – and 5,300 of you responded. The results make fascinating reading. More than a third of you

told us your primary reason for cycling was for leisure or fun. More than half own a road bike, and a third a mountain bike. A third of you sometimes ride with a Cycling UK group. An impressive 88% said you were likely to help us with our campaign work, and 79% agree that Cycling UK's purpose is to campaign for the rights of cyclists. We're listening.

In just the last year, thanks to your support, we have had great success with our campaigns to improve people's propensity to cycle. Our Too Close For Comfort campaign on close passing provided police forces across the UK with the tools needed to make us safer. Over 9,500 cyclists used our webform to object to Highways England's proposed ban on cycling the A63. Our new Beyond the Green Belt Report aims to rid us of the archaic laws in England and Wales that make 80% of our green spaces inaccessible to cycling.

Our new five-year plan should be finalised by the summer. We'll then communicate its aims to all supporters and members of Cycling UK, so you can actively support our work more and get involved as a volunteer if you wish. We may have a smaller budget than British Cycling or Sustrans, both of which receive substantial Government funding, but this isn't just about money: it's about bringing about change with a membership that is independent and committed. With 65,000 of you supporting us, we are the rich ones! If we can give you a more powerful voice in your towns and cities, we can genuinely help bring the local and national changes that matter on behalf of all who want to cycle.

That's why we are cycling. That's why we are Cycling UK.



...including tourers like young Erin Spray