



The report addresses the piecemeal approach to access in England & Wales

Countryside access

BEYOND THE GREEN BELT

Cherry Allan introduces Cycling UK's new campaign – and recently published report – on improving rural cycling

FOR 140 YEARS, Cycling UK has been shouting about the joys and benefits of cycling in the countryside. Building on this, we're proud to announce our new campaign and report, 'Beyond the Green Belt: the vision for rural cycling'.

Imagine what it would be like if cyclists could ride on some of the 80% of the network we can't use now in England and Wales; if we were able to access more of the National Trails; if we could enjoy recreational rides linking cycle-friendly, quiet roads to rights of way; and if we were welcomed to National Parks that appreciated the benefits of promoting cycling.

Off-road cycling is hugely significant to thousands of people. We know that from the 11,500 responses to our Rides of Way survey, published last year. Two-thirds told us they'd been enjoying the activity for over a decade, with 90% ranking it 'very' or 'fairly' important both to their physical health and mental wellbeing.

We also know, however, that even regular off-roaders find the experience far from trouble-free. Problems include: hostile rural roads to negotiate before they can even get onto the trails; an incoherent, poorly signposted rights of way network in England and Wales; and difficulties in putting 'legal' routes together.

Our report points to visionary advances in Wales and Scotland, such as the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, which, if implemented properly, could create truly

coherent and comprehensive networks, making it easier to travel by bike within urban areas and out into the countryside. Our ongoing Trails for Wales campaign has been inspiring the public to engage with government plans to improve outdoor access for responsible recreation. Then there's the ground-breaking Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, which gives people access to most land and inland water without distinguishing between walking, cycling and horse riding.

Our new report highlights mechanisms that some local authorities already have to make a difference, such as Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans. It shows how National Parks and Trails could make a contribution. And it suggests financial incentives for landowners to plug gaps in the off-road network, such as providing future agricultural subsidies to farmers who open up their land more to the public.

To bring our vision to life, we'll be working to influence national governments, major landowners, local authorities, and other stakeholders. But we need your help too. If you share our vision and want to get involved, please email campaigns@cyclingsuk.org. You can also sign up for our new rural and off-road cycling newsletter: bit.ly/cycle-ruralnewsletter.

Watch our video, and download our 23-page report, 'Beyond the Green Belt: The Vision for Rural Cycling', here: cyclingsuk.org/beyond-greenbelt.

Quick releases



Left: Graham Brodie

CHALLENGE YOURSELF IN 2018

From the rolling Devon hills to the coast of Ayrshire in Scotland and the rugged beauty of North Wales, Cycling UK's Challenge Ride Series takes in some of the best of Britain. After a successful inaugural year in 2017, four new rides have been added in Cheshire, Essex, the Lake District, and Devon. All rides are affordable, sociable and great fun. The routes have been handpicked by Cycling UK's Member Groups. They cover manageable distances and the events are noncompetitive. For details, see bit.ly/cycle-challenge2018.

CARELESS PLAN FOR CYCLISTS

Cycling UK has criticised suggestions to introduce new laws of dangerous or careless cycling, saying they would be a missed opportunity unless they were introduced as part of a comprehensive review of all road safety laws. We responded when the Government published an independent report into whether there was a gap in the law in light of the case of Charlie Alliston, who was jailed after knocking down Kim Briggs while he was riding a fixed-wheel bike without a front brake in London. Separately, the Government has launched a call for evidence as part of its cycle safety review, and we're pleased with the scope of that review and the stated aim to deliver more and safer cycling.

COXWOLD MEMORIAL SERVICE

The 92nd annual Cyclists' Church Service will be held at 1.30pm at St Michael's Church, Coxwold, on 13 May. See cyclingsuk.org/event/coxwold-church-service.



The A63 near Brough, where all cycling would be banned

Left: Leew (Wikimedia commons)

Cyclists' rights

BATTLING THE A63 BAN

Highways England is seeking to ban cyclists from an A-road in Humberside. **Duncan Dollimore** explains why Cycling UK is fighting it

IN LATE JANUARY, without consulting cycling organisations, Highways England quietly applied for a traffic regulation order (TRO) on the A63 in Humberside. If you'd pulled your car over, or stopped while cycling down the slip road, you could have read the A4-size obligatory notice fixed to the sign, but otherwise you'd have been hard pushed to discover that the Government-owned company tasked with responsibility for operating England's major A-roads planned to ban cyclists from a 15-mile stretch of the A63, east of the North Cave junction.

The catalyst for the proposed TRO was probably a degree of annoyance and frustration about the number of time trials on the A63, but this isn't a ban on racing or other organised events: it's a complete ban on cycling, not just along the A63 but across many of the junctions. A vicar who lives just south of the A63, whose church lies just to the north, would be unable to cycle from home to work because the TRO also covers the slip roads on and off the A63, which he would ride on to access the bridge across the road.

So why is Highways England seeking this order? According to the TRO notice, it's because cyclists can't keep up with the

motor traffic, though they're not banning tractors or horse-drawn vehicles. Of course, if that logic is followed, cyclists could be banned from most A-roads and many B-roads. That's why opposing this order is so important, because banning cyclists from roads for being too slow would set an extremely dangerous precedent.

Highways England's notice is misleading. It states that Hull City Council supports the proposal, when in fact a freedom of information request revealed the Council wasn't consulted. The casualty figures referred to are absolute numbers, with no rate-based analysis or comparison to motor vehicle casualty rates, or indeed with other roads. The proposed TRO is in breach of Highways England's own cycling strategy and guidelines. Oh, and the company won't answer questions about where it got its traffic-count data from, whom it's consulted, or what its alternative proposals for cyclists are.

Highways England hasn't made it easy for people to object, as it wouldn't accept email objections. So we set up an online tool for people to email their objections to us. And on 13 March, we delivered over 9,500 written objections to Highways England's offices in Leeds – by bike, of course.

Quick releases



ENJOY YOUR TRIPSTER

Sarah Millest from Derby is the winner of our adventure bike prize draw. Sarah was one of 5,600 people who entered the draw to win a Kinesis Tripster AT, courtesy of Upgrade Bikes, after taking part in our survey of members and supporters. You can find out more about this versatile bike next issue, as we're getting one for review.

Details of the survey can be found on pages 12-13.

FILL THAT HOLE (AGAIN)

Since we launched Fill That Hole in 2007, our pothole reporting web tool and app has been very popular. Unfortunately, late last year after an update to Apple iOS, the iPhone version of the app began to crash when potholes were reported. We're pleased to announce that, thanks to the hard work of our volunteer developers, the app is back up and running.

CYCLISTS GO FORTH

The Forth Road Bridge in Scotland has been reopened – for cyclists, pedestrians, buses, and taxis only. The Queensferry Crossing alongside now carries the rest of the traffic (i.e. cars and HGVs) and is due to become a motorway. Staff and supporters of Cycling UK in Scotland attended the opening event. Cycling UK's Claire Connachan said: 'With the bridge now closed to almost all motor vehicles, cycling over it is much more enjoyable. With no fumes, vibration or noise to contend with, could the route over the Forth Estuary now be one of the most impressive in Scotland?'



Visit bigbikerevival.org.uk for updates on events and recycling centres near you

Cycling development

BIG BIKE REVIVAL IS BACK

Cycling UK's programme to get people back on their unused bikes is returning for a fourth year. **Adrian Wills** reports

CYCLING UK'S BIG Bike Revival has been given the go-ahead for a fourth year after the Department for Transport announced a £500,000 grant to secure its future into 2018. The announcement was made as we revealed new research highlighting the cost-effectiveness of the project, which aims to get more people on their bikes.

Last year, around 18,500 people started cycling more regularly thanks to the Big Bike Revival, at a cost of less than £24 per person. By contrast, more than £5bn is spent on treating illnesses directly attributable to obesity. That works out at around £77 per person.

Paul Tuohy, Cycling UK Chief Executive, said: 'The Big Bike Revival represents incredible value for money, and I'm delighted that the Department for Transport has recognised the significance of the project by funding it for another year so we can get more people cycling every day. It's not only the health benefits. More people cycling can only have a positive impact on our environment. Every year, it's estimated that air pollution costs the UK economy up to £10 billion, so it also has a big environmental and financial impact.'

Cycling Minister Jesse Norman confirmed

the funding announcement as part of a £7m Government investment in projects to improve road safety, helping create more bike-friendly areas.

He said: 'While Britain has some of the safest roads in the world, we want to encourage more people to take up cycling. This funding, as part of our overall cycling and walking strategy, will help local councils to make their roads safer for everyone.'

Physical inactivity in England causes around 37,000 preventable premature deaths every year among people aged between 40 and 79, but cycling accounts for only 2% of all journeys in England, according to the Government's latest walking and cycling statistics.

'The Big Bike Revival is an important project precisely because it encourages those people who are not necessarily naturally inclined to get on their bikes,' said Mr Tuohy. 'We not only enable people to get their unused bikes back into working order with free cycle checks, servicing and cycle maintenance, but we provide training and accompanied rides to help people build confidence cycling.'

In 2017, Big bike Revival events were held in 136 locations, with 37 per cent of people taking part coming from the most deprived areas of the country.

Quick releases



Left: Andy Whitehouse

WELSH FESTIVAL OF CYCLING

Ruthin Rugby Club is the venue for the Welsh Festival of Cycling from 19-24 July. Camping is available on site and there are B&Bs in town. There are usually four rides each day, which form part of Cycling UK's Tourist Competition. For details, contact Emrys Jones: **01952 257522**, demrys2jones@hotmail.co.uk.

CYCLE TOURING FESTIVAL

The fourth Cycle Touring Festival is on from 4-7 May at Waddow Hall, Clitheroe, in Lancashire. It's billed as 'a weekend of talks, camping, planning and all things bicycle touring'. Cycle's Dan Joyce and Richard Hallett are among the speakers. Tickets are £90 per adult for the weekend, including camping and food. See cycletouringfestival.co.uk.

GRAND DRAW WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners of Cycling UK's 2017 Grand Draw: 1st prize, £3,000 cash, Robin Padbury from Surrey; 2nd, Orbit Velocity Nine tandem, Peter Wheeldon from Cheshire; 3rd, Spice Roads Cycling Holiday voucher, Julia Norcross from Cheshire; 4th, Cycle Bordeaux 4-night tour, Alison Hilton from South Yorkshire; 5th, Satmap Active 20 Platinum, Sue Griffin from Wales; 6th, Cycliq Fly12, Dave Blyth from Cheshire; 7th, Continental Contact Plus tyres and kit, John Barham from Kent; 8th, Eyepod cycling glasses, Paul Mattingly from Berkshire; 9th, five Cicerone guidebooks, Richard Somerset from Hampshire. Thanks to our sponsors for providing these prizes.