

## Your opinions

## LETTERS

**THIS MONTH** TRICYCLES ON TRAINS, CAR-DOORING, EXPENSIVE BIKES, NORTH EAST OVERLOOKED, REDISCOVERING CYCLING, PEDALLING, AND MORE

Near right: Dave, Flickr Creative Commons. Far right: Alamy



Cycle carriage is always limited



Letter of the month

## Transport

## TRIKES ON TRAINS

**A**s a cyclist and a train guard I see both sides of cycling-by-train issues. Bikes are allowed on trains to the maximum that particular train can carry. Any more would be at the discretion of the guard, who would be concerned about not blocking doors etc. Mobility scooters are not permitted unless they are folding lightweight scooters, and the user needs a permit.

When it comes to trikes, most are too large to load onto a train and be safely stored. Barry's letter stated that he was out with a group, which suggests that more than the permitted amount of bikes had been allowed on the train already. I recommend that Barry contact a manager at Merseyrail, if that is the local operating company, take the trike for them to see, and ask if they can issue him with a letter allowing him to take it onto trains where space permits.

Zoë Horler

Robert Nolan from Liverpool wrote to say that he uses Merseyrail and Northern Rail services with his trike, which unlike Barry's is an upright: 'I use the disabled person space allocated, with my disability pass to back me up.'

## Write to Cycle

Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. Or email

[cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk](mailto:cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk)

The star letter wins a pair of Compass tyres, courtesy of Sven Cycles, worth up to £116! These lightweight, supple tyres will transform the ride feel of your bike. They're available in a range of designs and widths in 700C, 650B and 26in diameters, and particularly suit touring bikes, gravel bikes, and road-plus bikes. For more information about these plush, easy-rolling tyres, or to purchase a set of your own, go online to [svencycles.com](http://svencycles.com)



## CAR-DOORING CLAIM

Last year a car passenger flung open his door, knocking me to the pavement. The young man apologised and a passer-by asked if I needed help. I asked her to take down the man's details.

I did not think to ask her to take down the car registration, and I turned down the offer of a request for an ambulance; adrenalin floods your system. A day or two later, I contacted Cycling UK about a claim and was put through to Slater + Gordon.

The car passenger refused to give insurance details of the car he was in (that's why you need the registration number!) and eventually Slater + Gordon put in a claim to the Motor Insurers' Bureau, the organisation established in 1946 to compensate the victims of uninsured and untraced motorists.

Today I received a payment of £1,800. I've become a life member.

Richard Scrase

## HOW MUCH?!

Cycling UK has an important role in promoting cycling, and has frequent editorials about the need to get more people cycling. However, reading the pages of Cycle magazine one could easily imagine that cycling is a very expensive activity.

In the April/May edition, various frames and complete bikes were reviewed, with average prices of £1,306 and £3,190 respectively. Cycle is aimed at enthusiasts, but I know of no one with machines in this price range.

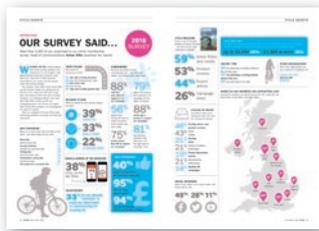
Why not 'Get cycling on a tight budget' or 'Best bikes under £200' features? This would also provide a stimulus to the providers at the bottom end to improve their products.

Nic Dickson

**The bikes in the April/May issue are handbuilt in the UK, so are inevitably relatively expensive. We have done the kind of review you mention. See [bit.ly/cycle-bikesunder250](http://bit.ly/cycle-bikesunder250).**

£230 B'twin, Feb/Mar 17





**NORTH EAST OVERLOOKED**

Your article about the membership survey was fascinating. But are we to believe that no members live in the North East of England? As your total only comes to 92%, are there actually 8% of members here?

An apology, together with a note of the true representation, would be welcome.

**Tim Lambert**

**Apologies. Here are the correct figures, rounded to the nearest percentage point (which makes the total 101%): East Midlands 7%; East of England 8%; London 6%; North East England 4%; North West England 12%; Northern Ireland 1%; Scotland 8%; South East England 19%; South West England 13%; Wales 4%; West Midlands 8%; Yorkshire and the Humber 9%; Other 2%.**

**RECHARGING MY CYCLING**

In my late 70s, I have returned to cycling after a four-year break, which I thought would be permanent. I fractured my pelvis in a bike accident in 2013, so I sold my solo bike. However, I saw the advert in Cycle for the Circe Helios tandem. I was attracted by

the smaller wheels, the saddle's height range (I am only 5ft), and the lack of a cross bar at the back, which I could no longer manage on our old tandem. We had a test ride and chose one with electric assistance – no more pushing up steep hills.

We were out almost every weekend last summer, and I felt liberated. I can no longer walk far, but on the back of the tandem I feel like a normal cyclist again.

**Pat Halifax**

See p52 for another version



**PEDALLING DYNAMICS**

Some observations on the article about pedalling dynamics in the last issue. Off-road, an aspect other than efficient use of effort, becomes significant when we are faced with limited traction or very steep climbs. Maximum grip is found by applying just the right amount of torque to the rear wheel as continuously as possible. Surges of torque on the down strokes and none at the other stages can lead to loss of grip or lifting of the front wheel.

The fact that maximum effort is generally applied after the three o'clock position is probably down to limited leg movement while seated. Getting out of the saddle and shifting position and body weight allows more downward force to be applied earlier. It's probably a more efficient use of energy than remaining seated when extra power is required.

**John Johns**

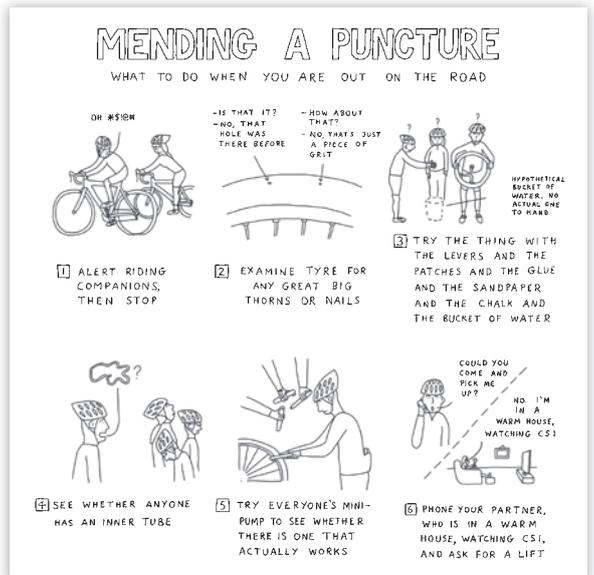


Traction is key off-road

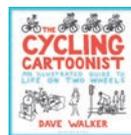
**OBITUARIES**

Are now being published online at [cyclinguk.org/obituaries](http://cyclinguk.org/obituaries). Send obituaries, with a digital photo if you wish, to [publicity@cyclinguk.org](mailto:publicity@cyclinguk.org).

**The Cycling Cartoonist**



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The Cycling Cartoonist, An Illustrated Guide to Life on Two Wheels by Dave Walker, is published by Bloomsbury ([bloomsbury.com](http://bloomsbury.com)), priced £10.99.

**Join the conversation**

**CYCLING UK FORUM**

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: [forum.cyclinguk.org](http://forum.cyclinguk.org). Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: [bit.ly/cycle-forum-bents](http://bit.ly/cycle-forum-bents)

**WHY DON'T MORE PEOPLE USE RECUMBENTS?**

**1982john:** It seems like they are more comfortable, quicker, and safer. Yet it is very rare I see one. Is it just that they look a bit daft? Too expensive?  
**david7591:** You are sat quite low, which would be unpleasant in an urban environment with exhausts etc, and annoying in the countryside – more difficult to admire the view.  
**Tangled Metal:** Poor visibility? On my Streetmachine, my head is at the same height as a driver of

a normal car.  
**[XAP]Bob:** Comfort is unparalleled. Much more respect from motorists. Speed is basically as good. Better view since you aren't perpetually staring at your front wheel.  
**Cunobelin:** Out on the Catrike, I was stopped by two lads in their teens who were 'doing a project about my bike at school'. It soon became obvious it was about the Paralympics, and they had assumed that I was a para-athlete out training.  
**JakobW:** Cost, a steepish learning curve to balancing and steering, and



because it's trickier to use infrastructure (bike parking, silly Sustrans gates, etc)?  
**pjclinch:** Catch-22: there's no mass market so they're expensive and hard to find; because they're expensive and hard to find, there's no mass market. And the mass market is conservative.  
**NUKE:** I use mine every day, except for the really short stuff. It comes into its own as the distances get longer. 300k is the longest so far. It is the comfort on auxdaxes that shines through.

**How to contact Cycle**

**LETTERS** are edited for space (especially if above 150 words), clarity, and, if necessary, legality. Please note that if you have specific complaint or query about Cycling UK policy, you should address it to the relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the August/September issue must arrive by 29 June. Write to: [cycle@jamespembroke.com](mailto:cycle@jamespembroke.com) or **Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ**

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 Tell us what you think on Cycling UK's Facebook page: [facebook.com/CyclingUK](https://www.facebook.com/CyclingUK)

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