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Lots of could-be, would-be, should-be cyclists have taken the leap during lockdown

Photo: Joolze Dymond

PUMPED UPS THE VOLUME

Cycling numbers have surged during the lockdown.

Adrian Wills reports on Cycling UK's campaign to keep new and returnee cyclists riding

Since we went into lockdown, the country's gone cycling crazy. The number of people riding bikes has doubled during the week and gone up by 200% at the weekends, according to the Government. Meanwhile it was reported that 1.3 million people in the UK have bought a new bike since the start of the Covid-19 crisis, and shops and manufacturers say they're struggling to keep up with demand.

But what happens when the lockdown is lifted and people returning to work try to avoid using public transport? There's a danger they'll drift back to using their cars rather than their bikes – and with more traffic, cycling is going to be far less appealing for many people who'd been enjoying the empty roads. That's why we're launching an energetic, fun, new campaign to encourage people to keep cycling beyond the pandemic – and we need you all to get involved.

'Pumped' is all about creating a big buzz around the benefits of cycling, while encouraging people to change their

behaviour to use their bikes more.

Funded partly by the Department for Transport and by pooling resources across the organisation, it's a cost-effective campaign that we're rolling out in stages over the summer and early autumn.

Plans include Pumped Profiles, a collection of portraits and stories of genuine cyclists who are 'pumped' to be on their bikes. We'll also be recruiting you into Team Pumped: members and supporters who'll be out on the roads and trails, giving advice and encouragement to others on bikes. You'll be in Team Pumped colours with Team Pumped t-shirts, badges, bike pumps, and repair kits. Plus we'll be using Team Pumped to roll out pop-up mechanics across England as we extend our Big Bike Revival project.

There will be plenty of other ways you can get pumped for cycling too, whether it's encouraging friends and family to ride, making a donation, buying our summer raffle tickets, or taking part in our World's Biggest Bike Ride.

We're pumped about cycling. Are you?

Equality

CYCLING UK & DIVERSITY

Cycling UK has restated its commitment to diversity in cycling after the death of George Floyd in America sparked international protests. People from a BAME background, women, the LGBT community, and people with disabilities are significantly less likely to cycle than white, adult men. We're looking at what we can do to make sure the cycling population better reflects the diverse make-up of the UK.

Campaigns

POP-UP BIKE LANES

With public transport's capacity limited, cycling will be integral to an effective Covid-19 recovery. We've called on local councils and national governments to provide safe space for cycling and walking. Over 11,000 of you wrote to your council to ask for pop-up bike lanes and widened pavements. All four UK governments have now announced funds for this, but more needs to be done. Visit cyclinguk.org/space-for-distancing



Photo: Ride Leicester

£6.1bn
Spent by the
NHS every year on
obesity-related
ill-health



Jacqui Ma of The Cycling Store is a nominee for this year's 100 Women in Cycling

Active travel

BIKE BOOST FOR YOUR TOWN?

To help towns in England recover economically from online and out-of-town shopping, and lately Covid-19, the Government has created a £3.6bn Towns Fund. Councils are bidding for up to £25million each, which can be spent on cycling and walking if they're earmarked in the bid. Get your council on board: cyclinguk.org/article/how-new-towns-fund-could-improve-cycling



The regeneration funds can be spent on cycling

Governance

CYCLING UK NEEDS YOU

We're recruiting three trustees to our 12-person board for 2021-24. You could help in directing Cycling UK's new strategy, enabling millions more people to cycle. You must be a member and be able to offer one or more of the skills the board needs. Closing date is 9am Monday 24th August 2020. Visit cyclinguk.org/about/cycling-uk-board/how-to-become-a-trustee or email recruitment@cyclinguk.org

Online

AN EVENTFUL YEAR

Summer is Cycling UK's busiest time in terms of events, so you'd be forgiven for thinking that during lockdown we'd have to abandon a lot of our plans. Yet despite being more than 140 years old, Cycling UK adapted to the times and delivered a suite of online events for both old and new supporters.

Bike Week showed that Britain was in the middle of a cycling frenzy, as tens of thousands of people embraced our call to take up #7daysofcycling. While

we'd have loved to have seen mass cycling events up and down the country, the pictures participants shared of their cycling activities during the week made up for it.

By the time you read this we'll be coming to the end of our Women's Festival of Cycling, which began on 11 July and continued until the end of the month. In previous years we celebrated women's cycling with events across the country and a mass ride in Westminster. This year that couldn't be, but



we're still launching our 100 Women in Cycling – a list of those inspirational women who are, through their actions and examples, helping other women take up cycling.

The future is uncertain, but at least one thing is for sure: Cycling UK will keep on helping others to enjoy the great and simple gift of riding a bike.

Diversity

PRIDE RIDE

For the first time Cycling UK celebrated Pride Month with a series of events focused on increasing the visibility and availability of cycling within the LGBTQ+ community. We distributed rainbow laces to over a hundred people in our volunteer network and then, on Saturday 13 June, we promoted #OurPrideRide, an event dreamed up by Emily Chappell. Cycling UK also hosted a panel



discussion with some of the leading lights in LGBTQ+ cycling groups to showcase how they are working to improve diversity and inclusion within cycling. cyclinguk.org/news/our-month-pride-rides



The new trail links with the Ridgeway, South Downs Way, and North Downs Way riders' route

Photo: Sophie Gordon



Facilities and support for cycling are inexpensive

Off-road

KING ALFRED'S WAY

Cycling UK's plan for a network of long-distance off-road trails takes a step forward in August with the launch of a new loop in southern England. **Sophie Gordon** reports

This August Cycling UK launches King Alfred's Way, a 220-mile off-road trail around the heart of historic Wessex. The route traverses ancient landscapes and 5,000 years of history, from Neolithic monuments and Iron Age hill forts to remnants of WWII defensive structures. It passes through the quintessentially English countryside of Wiltshire and Hampshire, where thatched-cottage villages sit among rolling green hills.

Many of us have been exploring close to home during lockdown, but for some a lack of off-road routes means it's not so easy to cycle from the door. The beauty of King Alfred's Way is that you could set off from Winchester or Reading and, within a few miles of pedalling, be surrounded by open countryside.

Cycling UK wants to make it easier for people to find new adventures off-road. Our 2016 survey revealed a demand for more long-distance rideable trails; currently only two of the 15 National Trails in England and Wales can be cycled end-to-end (although our North Downs Way riders' route is in the process of being adopted as an official route).

The original vision for the National Trails, set

out in a 1947 report by Arthur Hobhouse, was "continuous routes which will enable walkers and riders to travel the length and breadth of the [National] Parks, moving as little as possible on the motor roads". Seventy years later it's clear there is work to be done to realise that vision.

That's why Cycling UK is working to piece together a network of long-distance off-road routes across the length and breadth of Britain. King Alfred's Way will be a central hub in this network, linking with the Ridgeway, South Downs Way, North Downs Way riders' route, and the Thames Path to create miles and miles of routes to explore.

cyclinguk.org/kingalfredsway

85%
Percentage of
women in the UK who
say they never cycle



Commuting

CYCLING UK'S NEW EMPLOYER MEMBERSHIP

Cycling to work is more important than ever in the wake of the pandemic. Our new Employer Membership package provides peace of mind that your employees can ride to work protected by £10m third-party liability insurance, and with access to our legal advice line. Also included are a range of benefits to support employers in encouraging staff to cycle. For more, email workplaces@cyclinguk.org.uk

Touring

BADGE OF HONOUR

Last year marked the 70th Anniversary of the Cape Wrath Fellowship (CWF). To help commemorate this, Cycling UK commissioned CWF member Stefan Amato to design a new certificate and sew-on patch. It celebrates Cycling UK's shared history with the Fellowship by combining elements of the winged wheel and the famous lighthouse. cyclinguk.org/capewrath

