When it comes to using bikes instead of cars for short trips, experienced cyclists like us are outliers. It’s easy for us. Heading into town? Put shoes on. Get on bike. Go. No thought required.

We can even use bikes for utility trips that others wouldn’t register as rideable. Last summer I was going to York Rally – about 40 miles away as the crow flies and close to 50 by any route you’d want to ride. I’d normally take the train but it wasn’t running. (Thanks, TransPennine!)

“No problem,” I thought, “I’ll take the bus.” The timetable said two hours for the journey. Factoring in walking and waiting at each end, it’d be around three. I figured I could ride there in that. So I did (2:52 there, 3:05 back). It was a nice day out.

Most trips made in the UK aren’t this kind of length: 71% of them are under five miles. You don’t need to be capital-C cyclist to ride that. Most people could do it, if they chose to.

We know there are lots of reasons why they don’t. Two of the biggest are the perception that cycling is dangerous (“roads too busy”), and the idea that cycling is hard.

Better infrastructure is a long-term project that won’t be fixed overnight. Making cycling easier? That’s instantly achievable with an e-bike. If we (as a country, not as cyclists) are serious about getting people out of cars, e-bikes are surely part of the solution. They make everyday cycling more accessible for people who aren’t lifelong cyclists like us.

Welcome

DAN JOYCE
Cycle Editor