



**THE UK'S NATIONAL  
CYCLISTS' ORGANISATION**

# CTC'S NEW VISION FOR CYCLING

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CTC has been promoting cycling at national and local level since 1878 and, after well over a century of campaigning and lobbying, we believe that cycling has never been more relevant than it is today.

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**Doubling the Benefits**

## Why cycle?

Cycling is fun, fast, flexible, free (well, almost!) and it keeps you fit. You don't have to pay for a gym and you can save time by getting from A to B while you're exercising.

But cycling also has many wider benefits. It helps improve not just our own health but also that of our streets, communities and the environment. It helps tackle everything, from congestion, pollution, noise, road danger and the school run to the twin crises of climate change and obesity. In fact cycling is a "best buy"!

## Why now?

While cycling can help meet many of today's challenges, there are two that we need to tackle urgently:

- We're living under the threat of climate change and transport emissions are a major contributor. Cycling is one of the best ways of replacing the 60% of car trips that are under 5 miles.
- More and more people are suffering from health problems caused by being overweight and not exercising enough. If things don't change, 60% of the population will be obese by 2050. Cycling for everyday journeys, such as the daily commute or school run, is one of the best ways to increase physical activity.

We must get to grips with these issues, or we'll be leaving our children to deal with the serious impacts of climate change and the financial burdens of treating more and more patients for obesity through the NHS. A renewed boost for cycling is the answer.

## Why do we need a 'New Vision'?

If we want people to cycle more, we have to make it much easier and safer. That means we must tackle the fears that stop people from cycling, or allowing their children to do so. These include too much traffic travelling too fast, irresponsible driving, hostile roads and junctions, and dangerous vehicles, especially lorries.

We also need roads, streets and neighbourhoods to be planned and laid out so that cycling is an obvious and straightforward transport choice – and a more convenient one than the car for short, local trips.

We want it to become easier for people going on longer journeys to combine cycling with rail travel and other forms of public transport.

And we don't want anyone to forget that cycling is a fun activity too and a good way of getting out and about into the fresh air of the countryside.

## CTC is calling for a doubling of cycle use in ten years. This would deliver:

- Economic benefits of around £3.5 billion
- A one third reduction in the risks of cycling
- A saving of 0.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year

[www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns)



## The case for cycling

### Cycling supports competitiveness and productivity

- Cycling makes extremely efficient and economical use of road-space. One lane of a typical road can accommodate 2,000 cars per hour – or 14,000 cycles.
- Encouraging cycling also makes workers more productive and reduces the costs of absenteeism, ill health and air pollution. It also frees up pressure to provide valuable urban land as car parking space.

### Cycling tackles climate change

- A person making the average daily commute of 4 miles each way would save half a tonne of carbon dioxide if they switched from driving to cycling per year.
- If we doubled cycle use by switching from cars, this would reduce Britain's total greenhouse emissions by 0.6 million tonnes, almost as much as switching all London-to-Scotland air travel to rail.

### Cycling improves health

- Cycling contributes to weight loss, burning about 5 calories a minute.
- A regular cyclist in mid-adulthood is typically as fit as someone 10 years younger and can expect to live 2 years longer than the average.

### Cycling makes life safer for all

- Cycling gets safer the more cyclists there are. Research has shown that a doubling in cycling makes cycling 34% less risky. See also box on the right.
- Mile for mile or trip for trip, cyclists are involved in far fewer injuries to other road users than motorists and the consequences are far less likely to be serious or fatal. Getting people out of cars and on to cycles would therefore improve road safety for all.

### Cycling promotes equality of opportunity

- The wealthiest 20% of people typically travel 4.5 times farther by car and rail than the poorest 20%. However, when it comes to cycle use, this gap is more than halved – the wealthiest cycle just twice as far as the poorest.

## Cycling is good for our quality of life and the natural environment

- As zero-emission vehicles, cycles reduce levels of harmful pollutants such as oxides of nitrogen. Cycles also make little noise.
- Instead of streets filled with cars, cycle-friendly town centres are far more attractive both for shopping and relaxing. You can park 10 bikes in the space required for one car.

## The political scene

### Delivering on cycling?

Sixty years ago cycling made up a third of all the miles travelled by vehicles in Britain.

Per mile travelled cycling was as safe then as it is today.

By 1970 the number of miles cycled collapsed to its current level, around 2.75 billion miles per year.

Over the same time period, however, total mileage travelled by other forms of transport has increased by 150%, while driving has become 4.5 times less risky. This has created busier roads that are less attractive to cycling.

Since then there have been flickers of a cycling renaissance in the 1970s and 1980s. However Government targets to quadruple cycling by 2012, set in 1996, were quietly shelved when it became clear these would not be met. It is now vital to build on the recent resurgence of cycling in towns and cities around Britain.

## Why CTC believes we could double cycle use in 10 years

We believe evidence shows that a doubling of cycle use in 10 years is entirely achievable, given sufficient political will:

- In London, cycling increased by 91% in 8 years, with a corresponding decrease of 33% in cycle casualties. The capital now plans to more than quadruple cycle use by 2025.
- Leicester has increased cycle use by 43% in 4 years, with an 11% reduction in cycle casualties.
- Western Australia increased cycle use by 82% in 7 years during the 1980s, while reducing hospital admissions by 5%.



## CTC's New Vision for Cycling

We call for action on the following 6 themes:

### 1. Commitment to cycling

- **The Government must commit to doubling cycle trips in 10 years, whilst halving the risks.**

- All Government departments and other organisations in all relevant sectors, nationally, regionally and locally, need to recognise the benefits of cycling and support it effectively.

### 2. Cycle-friendly planning and design

- Local authorities must ensure that new developments are easily accessible by cycle and other sustainable transport modes.

- We need safe and attractive cycling conditions throughout the road network, together with quality cycle parking and well-designed off-road facilities where they enhance cycle travel.

- This in turn means ensuring that planners and engineers have the guidance, training, procedures and, crucially, the understanding of how best to make good provision for cycling.

- Roads and routes should be properly inspected and maintained, so that potholes, defects, obstructions and other hazards stop putting cyclists at risk.

### 3. Safe drivers and vehicles

Cycling gets safer the more cycling there is, so encouraging cycling must be central to national and local road safety policies. This should be backed by indicators that measure "more" as well as "safer" cycling. These twin objectives can be achieved through:

- Making 20 mph the speed limit on most urban streets
- Lowering speed limits wherever possible elsewhere and tackling speeding
- Making 'Bikeability' cycle training available to everyone
- Better training for motorists that includes an understanding of cyclists' needs
- Strengthening road traffic law and its enforcement
- Addressing the disproportionate threats from lorries
- Improving the cycle-friendliness of vehicle design
- Setting targets based on individual risk of injury, rather than on total injuries
- Monitoring the perception of danger that prevents people from cycling, instead of simply recording casualties alone

### 4. Better provision for combining cycling with public transport use

We need:

- Good access to, from, through and within stations and interchanges for cyclists
- Safe and secure cycle parking, storage and hire facilities at stations and interchanges
- Provision of adequate space for carrying cycles on public transport
- Better information and publicity about combining cycling and public transport

### 5. Promotion, encouragement and incentives for cycling

- We need promotional activities and marketing and information campaigns to influence attitudes and behaviour so that more people feel inspired to take up cycling in the first place, or cycle more often – and know how to go about it.

- Financial incentives, including the removal of VAT from cycles, would also boost cycling.

### 6. More and better opportunities for recreational and off-road cycling

- We need more places opened up for off-road cycling e.g. through parks and open spaces, alongside the coast, rivers, canals and other waterways, on rural lanes, on the rights of way network and on Forestry Commission land. They should be well signed, maintained and publicised.

**We believe that a doubling of cycle use within 10 years is entirely achievable and would bring great benefits to our own health and that of our streets, communities and the environment.**

**For a more detailed, fully referenced briefing on CTC's New Vision see: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns)**



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