Welcome

Another of the great things about cycling is that it can be an escape from everyday problems, things that are churning over in your mind. Pedalling through green places, feeling the breeze, you can focus on the here and now instead of things like – oh, I don’t know – the state of British politics and the anger, despair or weary acquiescence that this engenders.

That last one most of all. “They’re all the same, politicians,” people say. “Nothing changes.” Wrong. They’re not. It does. Look at how the cycling environment has and is changing in parts of the UK.

Take London. When I started on Cycle in late 2000, I’d ride across the capital and see handfuls of other cyclists. Sometimes I’d pull alongside a fellow pedaller at the lights and give a nod. We brave few! Now there are rivers of cyclists on segregated cycle lanes. It’s a better city for cycling.

How about Wales? Just last year the Welsh government introduced a default speed limit of 20mph in built-up areas. This is huge for cycling, making it safer and more appealing. Then there’s Scotland. The spend there on active travel has climbed to £41 per person. In England, for more than 40% of English local authorities, it’s less than £2 per head...

These differences are political decisions playing out. And they’re why Cycling UK’s campaigning to win support from candidates and parties ahead of the general election is so important. It won’t turn the UK into the cycling equivalent of the Netherlands overnight. But anything that turns the political dial in favour of cycling is a win for everyone who cycles – and anyone who could, would or should.

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