

CYCLOPEDIA

Questions answered, subjects explained – Cyclopedia is your bimonthly cycling reference guide



Left: Rob Spanning Above right: velo-orange.com

Legal

Q & A

E-bike charging issues

Q Cycle touring with electric-assist bikes is becoming increasingly popular. Who would be liable for any damages to property arising from a fire created by a malfunctioning charger or battery? At home one might imagine household insurance policies may be a source of recompense, but what about when we are not at home? Would the property owner be expected to look to their own property insurance cover, or the owner of the cycle/battery that caused the fire?

Paul Fenton

A We covered charging safety in the last issue of Cycle in the Power Points article, which is now online at cyclinguk.org/living-with-e-bikes.

In terms of specific insurance cover, it is worth checking to see what exclusions or exemptions are in place. If you run a business such as a cycle café or a campsite, then it is probably advisable to involve your insurer in any decision you are taking about whether you will allow charging on your premises. Seek advice from the fire service about the relevant extinguisher you should have – for example, Class D for metal fires.

Your Experts



DR KATE BRODIE
Retired GP
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This summer my partner had difficulty with e-bike charging on campsites we visited on our bike tour. There was an assertive and immediate 'no' from one and a handing over of a policy document from another which similarly contained a hard 'no'. At home, check the risks that are covered on your insurance policy and check whether accidental cover is in place. When away from home, you should also check whether you have any personal cover in place and make sure you follow the requirements of the place where you want to plug in.

The responsibility would fall where fault is found, and this is potentially a complex issue as there might be problems with the battery, the charging cable, the person in charge of the bike or the premises. The best advice is to ensure that you buy a reputable brand of bike with a factory-installed and tested battery and that your charging cable is in good order. You should also ensure that you are following the instructions for charging.

When used properly, lithium batteries are not dangerous. Many people are now able to cycle because of e-bikes and they then benefit from all the health benefits of doing so.

Nadia Kerr

Technical

Mixte message

Q I would like to have a mixte frame built for my wife, but no one can source the necessary lateral tubes. Framebuildersupply.com had the lugs needed, but it doesn't seem to have the tubes. Does anyone know where I can get some?

Daddyduca, on the Cycling UK Forum

A A mixte cycle frame, which has a much lower step-over height than a conventional diamond frame of the same nominal size, is generally considered to have two small diameter tubes running side by side from the top of the head tube and either side of the seat tube to reach the rear wheel dropouts or the seatstays