

Membership

YOUR YEAR IN CYCLING

With spring just around the corner, **Sam Jones** looks at how your Cycling UK membership can inspire and support your cycling aspirations for the year ahead

“In February there is everything to hope for,” wrote poet Patience Strong, and such words ring true for cyclists. After the post-New Year blues, rides cancelled due to the weather, and the acceptance that winter still has some weeks to run, that hope turns into preparations for the year ahead.

You might have already settled on your 2025 plans, whether they were long in development or sparked by off-the-cuff encounters or conversation. Maybe you're committing to commute by bike (most of the time)? Maybe you'll be embarking on a long-distance tour in far-flung lands?

If you've yet to be inspired – it's only early February, after all – and don't have plans beyond knowing that 2025 will involve cycling in some form, Cycling UK can help. Here are some suggestions for the year ahead, with pointers on how you can make the most of your membership and all that the charity has to offer.

“Cycling UK's adventure routes are perfect for summer trips. They're not just bike rides but journeys into the history, culture and natural landscape of the UK”

Ride ideas

We've listed 15 more ride suggestions for spring on the website. All have GPX files. cyclinguk.org/article/15-great-cycling-routes-spring

Spring

March-May

They say April is the cruellest month but it's the winter just past that will have been worst for your bike – especially if, like me, you're not on top of your post-ride cleaning regime. With the weather finally improving, show your steed some love with a service. If you're not sure where to go for that tune up, make the most of your 10% discount at Halfords, which has 385 stores across the UK.

Spring could also be a good time to find some new riding companions. If you've not given it a go before, try group riding. Cycling as an activity is a great unifier of strangers who might otherwise have nothing in common. It's a comfort for me knowing that wherever I may end up in the UK, I'll always be able to find a group of like-minded souls under the Cycling UK group structure (cyclinguk.org/local-groups) and have someone to ride with.

As the weather perks up, so too might your cycling ambitions. While others might kick themselves for missing out on winter sales, those discounts continue all year round with our travel partner and cycle touring specialist, Saddle Skedaddle.

And if you're the kind of person who likes to give something back, you might choose one of Saddle Skedaddle's trips on a Cycling UK route. For every mile you pedal, the company will donate 5p. That might not sound much, but from just two trips in 2024, Saddle Skedaddle raised more than £700. This has gone back to support the charity's work to make the UK a better place for cycling.

Right: Spring into action by joining a group ride

Summer

June-August

If organised tours aren't your thing, Cycling UK's adventure routes like the award-winning King Alfred's Way and Traws Eryri (cyclinguk.org/routes) are freely available to members, along with GPX files and online route guides. Guidebooks, with a discount for members, are also available. These routes are perfect for summer trips. They're not just bike rides but journeys into the history, culture and natural landscape of the UK. Why not try our latest route, Marcher Castles Way, which crosses the border between England and Wales eight times (cyclinguk.org/marcher-castles-way)?

It doesn't hurt to make sure you're insured on

