

Opinion Letters

THIS MONTH MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS, CYCLE SAFETY,
POTHOLE REPAIRS, CYCLE-FRIENDLY COUNCILS AND MORE



Left: Michael Taylor. Right: Joolize Dymond

Letter of the month

TROUBLES-FREE CYCLING

It's 50 years since I first joined CTC and started cycling with the Belfast branch. That year, 1974, was a very dark time in Northern Ireland. For a 16-year-old living in a troubled part of Belfast, life had become very restricted.

One evening my father suggested we go to a hobbies and holidays exhibition at King's Hall. By good fortune, CTC had a stall manned by local members. I spoke to them, then joined the club run the following Sunday. I was immediately hooked.

Apart from the joy of cycling and getting out into the countryside, it was refreshing, at a time when Northern Ireland was becoming ever more segregated along religious lines, to be able to mix with a diverse group of people who found a common joy in cycling and the outdoors. Joining CTC opened up a new world to me.

Eventually work and family resulted in me cycling less and less with CTC, but I continued to ride. Since retiring in 2018, I've been cycling more than ever with a few friends. I also began volunteering with Sustrans. I rejoined Cycling UK in 2020, and I've enjoyed reading the magazine and reconnecting with the world of cycle touring. Many of the older members I knew went on to cycle well into their 80s, and a couple into their 90s; at 66 I hope I have many more years of cycling ahead of me.

I feel I owe a great deal to CTC. It changed my life, perhaps even saved my life. Many, many thanks.

John Lucas

Win three Hiplok JAW+ bike racks worth £113.97



The letter of the month wins three JAW+ bike racks, worth £37.99 each, courtesy of Hiplok. These wall-mounted racks are adjustable to fit tyres from 20-75mm wide, and can be used in or outdoors. Each is supplied with all fittings plus a lightweight Z LOK COMBO, which can double as your café lock. For more about Hiplok storage and security, visit hiplok.com.

Get in touch

LETTERS are edited for space, clarity and, if necessary, legality. The editor reads and automatically acknowledges all letters but publishes only a selection. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 28 February. Please include your membership number.

WRITE TO: Letters, Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Rd, Guildford, GU2 9JX or email editor@cyclinguk.org



SAFETY CATCH

In your Dec 24/Jan 25 issue, I was delighted to read John Franklin's answer when asked "What single thing would improve matters for UK cyclists?", which was "More self-confidence among cyclists and less exaggeration of danger. Cycling on roads is actually a very safe activity."

It is something that I agree with as an urban cyclist with decades of experience. However, as a campaigner for better cycle infrastructure, this does present a difficult problem. It is so easy to campaign on the need for safe cycling routes but the inference from this is that without these changes it is unsafe. This perpetuates the perception of danger that is a barrier to cycling.

I would be interested to know how you approach this friction between campaigning for better cycle infrastructure, while not feeding the perception of it being dangerous to cycle.

Rob Barry



FILLED THAT HOLE

The revised Fill That Hole reporting tool using photos is great. After several months of complaint, I used it yesterday to send in my third report regarding a hole in the road outside my house. Today North Yorkshire Council came and repaired it.

Bill Burns