



Right: Joolze Dymond

CYCLE-FRIENDLY COUNCILS?

As Cycling UK heads for a rebrand, I am hoping it will lead to more than just a new logo but to a greater public profile with non-cyclists and those thinking about being cyclists. One way of achieving this is would be to compare the performance of each of our local authorities in meeting cyclists' needs and improving road safety.

Which council provides the most cycle lanes per head of population? Which one has the best road signs? Which county has the highest and lowest incidence of collisions involving cyclists? And why? Locally to me, it is plain that some councils (for example, Fareham and Gosport) provide a great range of safe cycle lanes, while my own council, Winchester, is frugal, to put it politely.

If cycling clubs around the country were to compile a few stats on their own area, we could look forward to Cycling UK publishing the results and handing out awards and raspberries. This is the sort of news that the national newspapers love, and I think it would drive improvement.

Andy Crowe



CYCLE MAINTENANCE COURSES

I am Cycling UK member and enjoy reading the magazine. I try to do my own bike maintenance, with varying degrees of success and failure. YouTube videos always

make things appear to be simple and straightforward but this is not always the case.

I am looking to improve my skills and knowledge and gain some qualifications – possibly to become a bike mechanic or to do some extended cycling trips. But it seems like there is no real pathway or accepted standard to gain hands-on training and qualifications. Would you be able to advise on the best route?

Martin Brookes

If you want to become a bike shop mechanic, Cytech qualifications (cytech.training) are the mostly commonly recognised – although there are other options. For extended cycling trips, you only need to be able to fix your own bike, which you can learn with practice and, yes, online videos; try Park Tool's on YouTube and also cyclinguk.org/maintenance. Additionally, Cycling UK offers two maintenance courses: Basic and Trail Side Maintenance; and Advanced Maintenance. See cyclinguk.org/training.



Left: Robyn Furtado

MARCHER CASTLES CORRECTION

I have cycled various parts of Marcher Castles Way over the last 45 years. Note that there has never been a railway station at Ironbridge due to its geography. The station on the opposite bank of the River Sever to Ironbridge, called Ironbridge and Broseley, was closed in 1963.

The nearest stations to Ironbridge are Wellington, Telford and Oakengates; all require a climb out of the gorge. There are cycle routes part of the way to these stations. There also stations at Craven Arms, Welshpool, Bucknell, Hopton Heath and Brooke, some of which are on cycle routes.

Charley Nash

Photo of the month

THREE WHEELS GOOD

This picture is from my commute home over the relatively new Stockingfield Bridge near Mary Hill, Glasgow, on an icy day in December. It shows my George Longstaff tricycle when I stopped for a minute in the freezing fog. I bought the tricycle secondhand.

The original owner's name was so faded I couldn't figure out who they were. Maybe one of your readers will recognise the tricycle and be assured it is being used?

Anthony Crimin



CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other members at forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: cyclinguk.org/forum-winter-socks



WINTER SOCKS – SUGGESTIONS SOUGHT

ymfb: I've been wearing Assos 3/3 winter socks for the last few winters, and they are wearing out. Excluding heated socks, what other brands can people recommend?

geocycle: I tend to go for wool walking socks when it's cold. I also find waterproof Sealskinz socks quite warm.

BobSweet: I buy one-size larger shoes and have thick socks. I usually use Heat Holder socks.

axel_knutt: I used to wear Thorlo Trekking Crew walking socks in winter. Pogies over the toe clips work wonders, too.

crossy: I've just invested in a pair of Sealskinz. I got them as I've started wearing sandals.

TrevA: Walking/hiking socks for me, and I also wear builder's work socks (CAT brand). I've given up on cycling-

specific socks.

pjclinch: In my experience as a touring cyclist, unless you're having a blazered commissaire measuring their height, I don't really see anything in cycling-specific socks that make them worth differentiating from walking socks.

AndyK: I'll take up that challenge. Technical walking socks tend to be thinner and more loosely woven over the top of the foot. On a bike, there's just as much heat loss through the upper. My favourite winter cycling sock, the Defeat Woolie Boolie, is as thick on top as it is on the sole.

Nearholmer: Thick wool walking socks when it's cold and dry, Sealskinz when it's cold and wet. **mattscem:** Ultimately, socks your mum knits will be just as warm if they are woolly enough, fit and don't make your shoes too tight.