

Clockwise from left: The Eden Project, not a Dutch paradise. Barriers to progress in a housing estate (not part of the NCN). London is an outlier, with new cycle routes built and cycle usage rising. An NCN gem: the Exe Estuary Trail



Below & centre: Getty Images. Other photos: Laura Laker

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network's charitable custodian, prints thousands of these stickers to send out to volunteers up and down the country, marking out what is, in theory, a piece of national infrastructure. Sometimes it is little more than those blue signs.

Then there's the quality level: if a UK cycle route takes you all the way from A to B with consistently good-quality infrastructure, that's rare. At the latest reckoning, just 64% of the NCN was deemed good or very good by Sustrans, leaving 36% poor or very poor: bits with barriers, shared with too many vehicles, ►

