

Over to you

became involved in the purchase of the land and rights, about 30 to 40 years ago, this anomaly would be corrected. As far as I know, there appears to be little chance of change.

We have the absurdity of motor vehicles travelling at relatively high speed through the forest, killing wildlife large and small, while cycles cannot use the off-road trails. The article may result in a wasted journey that ends in a confrontation. **Eddie Collicot**

Piping up

I'm impressed at the cycle carriage of bass viol, trombone and viola. As another lifetime cyclist, my sole contribution to the debate are my bagpipes.

In 1974, my wife and I, plus three-year-old son, went on our tandem to Colonsay for two weeks, with the boxed pipes strapped to the top of the rear carrier. This arrangement served us well the following year on Rum and Eigg, and then again in 1975 on Coll.

These days, the pipes occasionally travel by bike to pipe-band practice, carefully wrapped in a large bath towel and secured in a pannier. I've decided that in my next cycling life, any musical instrument will be confined to something the size of a mouth organ.

Gordon Casely



Get in touch Letters are edited for space and clarity. The editor reads and automatically acknowledges all letters but publishes only a selection. Please include your membership number. Write to: Cycle Letters, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Rd, Guildford, GU2 9JX or email editor@cyclinguk.org.



Cutting bike theft

The letter from John Heathcote (Feb/Mar 2026) raises a point I've never seen in Cycle magazine before about cutting a Sheffield stand to steal a bike. It's already happening in London. A large pipe cutter can be used to cut a Sheffield rack without electrical power, sparks or noise.

If a lock is only used to hold the frame, the bike can be lifted and the lock dropped through a short gap between two cuts in the top tube of a rack. The bike can then be ridden away with the lock dangling loose, to be cut later.

To help prevent this, follow advice from Cycling UK and use two locks. Both of them should lock the frame and a wheel to the stand.

Adrian Williams



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Loads better

Yes, bike trailers are great (Apr/May issue, p56). Mine's paid for itself many times over in the last 15 years. I can take items to the tip (sorry, 'recycling centre') such as mattresses, furniture or fridges, avoiding hefty council collection charges. From my experience, a kickstand is essential when towing. Without one, it's hard to lean the bike safely against anything with the trailer attached.

Rob Ainsley

Far left: Getty Images. Above left: Rob Ainsley

Cycling UK forum

Get feedback from other members at forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: cyclinguk.org/forum-new-bike-ideas.

NEW BIKE IDEAS

Thehairs1970: My wife is struggling with her drop-bar road bike due to neck issues. (Her flat bar tourer doesn't give her any issues.) We'd like to replace the road bike with a gravel bike. Budget is £2k absolute max.

Nearholmer: Isn't her flat-bar tourer the bike for the job? If a flat-bar gravel bike might be her thing, I can speak well of the Genesis Croix de Fer FB20.

al_yrpal: Why not just fit some butterfly bars and fatter tyres before spending shedloads? Gravel bikes are marketing hype.

fatmac: I ride my Brompton on fire roads, bridleways and woodland tracks – at a sensible speed, almost any bike will do.

JohnR: If weight is a key consideration and the size is OK, then the Boardman ADV 8.9 carbon is a gravel bike that's currently £1,400 at Halfords.

AndyK: Maybe look at the flat-bar versions of the Sonder Camino? "For B-roads and bridleways" as they put it.

mig: Old-school question: what are the defining features of a gravel bike?

pjclinch: It's a hybrid design compromising between an MTB and a road bike, but not a hybrid as that term's already taken.

Nearholmer: It's a catch-all term, a shorthand way of referring to bikes biased to off-road use which fit between CX bikes and hardtail MTBs.