



Quick releases

Cycling news and views from around the UK

CAMPAIGNS



Election cycles

Thanks to you sending messages to thousands of candidates in Wales and Scotland ahead of the May elections, we had lots of positive responses from candidates confirming their support for making cycling the easy choice. At our online hustings events in April, there was cross-party consensus on the need to give people better choices about how they travel, but with different approaches on the best way to do it. With big changes in both Holyrood and the Senedd on 7 May, we'll be working to hold the new governments to account on their manifesto promises.

Safer streets for Northern Ireland?

Northern Ireland's Department for Infrastructure has made some bold proposals to reduce speed limits and improve road safety. These include changing many 30mph roads to 20mph and reducing the national speed limit to 50mph on single-carriageway rural roads. The changes are much needed: Northern Ireland is the only country in the UK where road deaths and serious injuries are rising, not falling. Thanks to those of you who responded to the consultation.

25 years defending cyclists

Looking back over the last 148 years, there's many moments and achievements which define Cycling UK. But one always stands out for me, writes *Duncan Dollimore*, and it started 25 years ago.

Darren Coombes was nine and riding his bike when a driver crashed into him. He suffered brain damage and his life changed forever. Then things got worse. The insurance company accepted the driver was responsible but sought to reduce the compensation they paid, claiming that Darren was partly to blame because he wasn't wearing a helmet.

CTC (as Cycling UK was then known) set up the Cyclists' Defence Fund (CDF) in response, so that we could step in and stand up for cyclists when needed.

Blaming a child rather than the driver didn't land well with our members. Donations flooded in, the insurer's claim was defeated and we've been using CDF to fight for cyclists and cycling ever since.

When teacher Michael Mason (pictured below with his daughter) died after being hit from behind while cycling on a clear, straight road, the police declined to prosecute the driver. We again stepped in, using CDF to bring the UK's first private prosecution for causing death by careless driving.

We've also challenged councils' infrastructure changes, like removing cycle lanes, and have won two judicial review cases in the last five years. We've used CDF to secure more off-road access for cycling: after the government announced plans to create a new national trail across the Wainwright Coast to Coast route, but only for walking, we sought legal advice through CDF.

Along with British Horse Society, we threatened legal action. The government backed down and agreed to consult with us. The new national trail, which launched in March, now has increased access for cycling along or parallel to parts of the route.

But legal action comes at a cost, and the work of CDF depends on donations from supporters. CDF was there for Darren, Mick's family and many others. If you'd like us to carry on standing up for cyclists, please consider donating today to ensure we can make a difference tomorrow. bit.ly/donate-CDF



Top: Getty Images Right: Mason family Top right: John Wellings