



The federation of cycle campaign groups

# CCN NEWS

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Cycle Campaign Network  
the UK federation of cycling  
campaign groups

[www.cyclenetwork.org.uk](http://www.cyclenetwork.org.uk)

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## Insurance company calls for lower speed on rural roads

Direct Line, one of the UK's largest car insurers, has called for the speed limit to be reduced to 40mph on rural roads due to the high number of fatalities now occurring on country lanes which, it says, as being used as a racetrack.

Every year, more than 15,000 crashes result in fatalities or serious injuries on country roads and close to a quarter (23 per cent) of all motorists have had a near miss on a rural road in the past five years.

Among all road fatalities, 64 per cent take place in rural areas and Direct Line's findings indicate that one of the main causes of accidents on rural roads is speeding with over a quarter (26 per cent) of rural drivers admitting to exceeding the 60mph limit\*.

'Rural speeders' gave a number of reasons for exceeding the limit with many believing that less traffic (38 per cent) and fewer pedestrians (33 per cent) makes speeding safer in the country. Lack of police presence (13 per cent), few speed cameras (14 per cent) and less speed bumps (12 per cent) were also cited as acceptable reasons for drivers to put their foot down.

Speed limit knowledge on rural roads also proves a mystery, with two out of three motorists saying they did not know the speed limits. Over half (51 per cent) say there should be more speed signs on rural roads so motorists are aware of the limit.

Consequently, 63 per cent of motorists are in favour of the driving test being revised to include tuition on how to drive on rural roads and 74 per cent believe the current speed limit is too high for some or all country roads. One in three (36 per cent) rural motorists find driving on rural lanes difficult - a figure which rises to 48 per cent among female drivers.

Emma Holyer, Direct Line's Motor spokesperson, said; "The majority of motorists on the country roads in summer are likely to be unfamiliar with them and they can be extremely dangerous - especially when approached at high speeds. We are reminding motorists to drive safely and watch their speeds on all rural roads in a bid to reduce the number of accidents. We're also calling on the government to reduce the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph as we feel the current speed limit is too fast for narrow rural lanes."

### Book Now for Autumn Conference

The CCN/CTC autumn conference takes place in Cheltenham on **Saturday 25th November**.

The agenda includes: Local Partnerships; Worcester: A Sustainable Town; Cycling Maps; BUGs; Rights of Way; Climate Change; Sustainable Schools and Bikeability, together with the 2006 National Cycling Project Awards.



**Book now on-line or download a booking form at**  
**<http://www.cyclecheltenham.org.uk/conference>.**

Booking enquiries: 01242 512881

## EU consults on daytime running lights

The European Commission (EC) has launched a consultation on proposals to require motor vehicles to display lights during the day. The EC says that using daytime running lights (DRL) increases the visibility of vehicles and would reduce road deaths by 3%-5% per year, resulting in some 2,000 fewer fatalities each year across Europe.

The idea of mandatory DRL is not new, and 14 EU countries already have legal requirements to use DRL in particular circumstances. Only Canada requires DRL to be fitted to all vehicles. However, DRL has many critics, including the European Cyclists Federation, which has long opposed DRL because it might reduce the relative visibility of cyclists, for whom daytime lights are not a practical proposition.

The AA Motoring Trust also has concerns about DRL, including the possible negative effect on motorcyclists and cyclists. They would prefer less bright LED lights to be fitted to new vehicles. The Association of Drivers against Daytime Running Lights (UK) has been formed to fight the proposal and also gives voice to concerns about the effects on vulnerable road users.

The EC says that its own research has found that pedestrians, cyclists and mopeds do not become less conspicuous with DRL, that dipped headlights do not cause glare, and that there is no conclusive evidence that the visibility of motorcyclists (who already use DRL) would be reduced. The Commission admits that the proposals would lead to an increase in fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions of around 1.5%.

- Consultation paper:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/library/consultations/consultation\\_paper\\_drl\\_20060727.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/library/consultations/consultation_paper_drl_20060727.pdf)  
Response by Drivers against Daytime Running Lights:  
[http://www.safespeed.org.uk/~dadrl/docs/DaDRL\\_Daytime\\_lights\\_](http://www.safespeed.org.uk/~dadrl/docs/DaDRL_Daytime_lights_)

## Green wave for cycles

A string of synchronised green lights promises to cut travel times on one of Europe's busiest bike lanes. Cyclists travelling along one of Copenhagen's most congested thoroughfares can now say goodbye to red lights and the stop-and-go of rush hour traffic. City officials unveiled the first 'green wave' lane for bikes in the Nørrebro neighbourhood Wednesday.

The green wave bike line times eleven traffic lights to match bicyclists average speed. Travel times on the 2.5 km stretch are expected to be reduced by three minutes.

Reducing travel time makes sense, according to civil engineer Troels Andersen, but the psychological effect of not constantly seeing red is even more important. 'If cyclists have to stop at every traffic light, they get fed up and feel unappreciated. In the worst case, they make the switch to cars,' he told daily newspaper dato.

A 'green wave' sign with a cyclist logo helps direct two-wheeled commuters from side streets to their express lane. As morning traffic streams into the city, the green wave flows toward central Copenhagen. From noon until 6pm, the wave shifts directions and gives cyclists a speedy exit out.

Some 30,000 cyclists are expected to benefit from the system every day. Klaus Bondam, deputy mayor for environmental affairs, hopes the path will cement the Copenhagen as the world capital of commuter cycling. 'Copenhagen is going to be the world's best cycling city. And Nørrebrogade is probably one Europe's busiest bike lanes,' said Bondam.

The new lane requires cyclists to adjust their biking habits, however, according to Harry Lahrmann, a traffic researcher at Aalborg University. 'In order for a green wave to work, cyclists will have to ride at basically the same speed as everyone else. That's probably more difficult than for cars. A number of cyclists race ahead at 25 km per hour, so they won't get much out of the lane.'

Motorists, meanwhile, will have to grow used to the sight of cyclists overtaking them in rush hour traffic.

*Copenhagen Post*



### ACTION POINTS

**This symbol indicates items for action  
by groups, to which they should give  
particular attention**

## RESEARCH

### Risk not a deterrent to commuting

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Research at the University of Bolton has concluded that whatever puts commuters off cycling to work, it is not their perception of danger on the road. And, the study, conducted by John Parkin, has discovered cyclists-only road markings, such as cycle lanes, do not make any difference to people's view of any potential hazards. He concludes more road markings are not going to convince the public to get on their bike. Other solutions must be found to attracting people out of their cars.

Dr Parkin of the university's Department of the Built Environment interviewed a sample group of workers from his own university, Bolton Council and the Royal Bolton Hospital. He asked individuals within the group to think about the various stages of the journey to work and assess the possible hazards they might encounter on a bike. Showing them a video of clips from a cyclist's viewpoint, he asked the study participants to assess the risks involved in a range of scenarios, including junctions and roundabouts with and without road markings for cyclists. Of the total sample, 72 per cent said the overall journey as represented by the scenarios shown in the video clips showed acceptable risks.

Says John Parkin: 'What this research shows is that in terms of promoting cycling there is little we can do to the roads in terms of minor infrastructure works such as signing and road marking. Off-road cycling was seen to offer a lower risk than cycling on the roads, but within the group of respondents there were very high levels of acceptability for both on and off-road situations on the basis of perceived risk.

'What keeps people in their cars - is it that they are just so much more comfortable and require little effort? Issues that need to be addressed include comfort, the attractiveness of the journey, and making cycling journeys more direct, and importantly more direct than the car alternative particularly in urban centres which exhibit a lot of traffic management, for example one way streets.'

The paper has been accepted for publication and is due to be published in Accident Analysis & Prevention in 2007. The sample group was made up of 144 people working in Bolton, Greater Manchester. Of the group, 24% were age 34 and under, 36% were age 35-44, 40% were 54 and over. 35% did not normally cycle but could, 39% cycled occasionally, 26% cycled 1-3 times a month or greater.

♦ University of Bolton press release

### Children misperceive traffic danger

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The peak age for pedestrian casualties among school pupils in the UK is between 12 and 14 years, following the transition to secondary school, and after children have apparently become relatively competent at interacting with traffic. Research for the Department for Transport suggests that these children adopt risky behaviour because they misperceive traffic danger and because of pressure to behave like their peers whom they see as acting riskily. On the other hand, parental pressure to behave more cautiously is also influential.

Secondary school children are as good as adults in recognising the hazards posed by road layout and in adjusting crossing routes to deal with these hazards. Most are also as good at visual timing – the ability to co-ordinate road crossing with vehicle movements. However, young teenagers remain poor in their perception of drivers' intentions, lacking an awareness of different types of clue to drivers' impending actions and using this information to adjust their own behaviour.

The research authors note: "Contrary to popular belief, there is little indication ... that young adolescents are bent on courting danger, but they do appear to suffer from systematic misperceptions, both social and traffic-related, which bias them towards carelessness within potentially hazardous environments".

### Environmental audits

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Environment Minister David Miliband gave a commitment to the Labour Party conference that every transport decision is to be audited for its environmental consequences.

# Wearing a helmet increases risk, suggests research

Cyclists who wear protective helmets are more likely to be struck by passing vehicles, new research suggests. Drivers pass closer when overtaking cyclists wearing helmets than when overtaking bareheaded cyclists, increasing the risk of a collision, the research has found.

Dr Ian Walker, a traffic psychologist from the University of Bath, used a bicycle fitted with a computer and an ultrasonic distance sensor to record data from over 2,500 overtaking motorists in Salisbury and Bristol. Dr Walker spent half the time wearing a cycle helmet and half the time bareheaded.

He found that drivers were as much as twice as likely to get close to the bicycle when he was wearing the helmet. Across the board, drivers passed an average of 8.5 cm closer with the helmet than without.

"This study shows that when drivers overtake a cyclist, the margin for error they leave is affected by the cyclist's appearance", said Dr Walker. "We know helmets are useful in low-speed falls, but whether they offer any real protection to somebody struck by a car is very controversial. Either way, this study suggests wearing a helmet might make a collision more likely in the first place."

Dr Walker suggests the reason drivers give less room to cyclists wearing helmets is down to how cyclists are perceived as a group. "We know from research that many drivers see cyclists as a separate subculture, to which they don't belong," said Dr Walker. "As a result they hold stereotyped ideas about cyclists, often judging all riders by the yardstick of the Lycra-clad street-warrior. This may lead drivers to believe cyclists with helmets are more serious, experienced and predictable than those without".

The study also found that large vehicles, such as buses and trucks, passed closer when overtaking cyclists than cars. The average car passed 1.33 metres away from the bicycle, whereas the average truck got 19 centimetres closer and the average bus 23 centimetres closer. However, there was no evidence of 4x4s (SUVs) getting any closer than ordinary cars. Previously reported research from the project showed that drivers of white vans overtake cyclists an average 10 centimetres closer than car drivers.

To test another theory, Dr Walker donned a long wig to see whether there was any difference in passing distance when drivers thought they were overtaking what appeared to be a female cyclist. Whilst wearing the wig, drivers gave him an average of 14 centimetres (5.5 inches) more space when passing. In future research, Dr Walker hopes to discover whether this was because female riders are seen as less predictable than male riders, or because women are not seen riding bicycles as often as men on the UK's roads.

The research has been accepted for publication in the journal *Accident Analysis & Prevention*.

### COMMENT

Walker contends that motorists believe helmeted cyclists are more predictable. But this contention doesn't explain the greater distance given female cyclists (unless female cyclists were less predictable). Might it be more plausible that motorists worry about harming a cyclist they are overtaking, and are more protective of females and bareheaded cyclists?

## Helmet ventilation claims challenged

According to a research paper published in the *Journal of Sports Sciences*, manufacturers' claims for the ventilation provided by cycle helmets are often ill-founded. The ventilating ability of helmets was found to vary by up to 30 per cent and in some cases some of the vents provided made the head hotter rather than cooler.

According to the study, helmet holes are not enough, they have to be correctly shaped holes. Only a very few helmet manufacturers use laboratory testing methods to measure air flow which means that many of the ventilation claims may be without basis. The paper says that "the wide variation in ventilation performance ... serves to emphasize the lack of systematic understanding of the principles behind bicycle helmet ventilation". There is, however, "significant optimization

potential within the basic helmet structure".

Helmet ventilation is also compromised by the wearer's hair and by the pads that are often added to make helmets more comfortable to wear. Hair reduces heat transfer by approximately a factor of eight. The research highlights the conflict between helmet effectiveness and the need to make them sufficiently comfortable for people to wear.

This research is likely to add to criticism that helmet standards are worthless as independent tests show that helmets frequently do not meet them.

- Bruhwiler PA, Buyan M, Huber R, Bogerd CP, Sznitman J, Graf SF, Rosgen T. Heat transfer variations of bicycle helmets. *J Sports Sci*, 2006 Sep;24(9):999-1011.

## Stiffer penalties for dangerous drivers?

Drivers who kill cyclists could face a jail sentence of up to five years after a call from the Director of Public Prosecutions for harsher sentences to be given to motorists who cause fatalities.

Ken Macdonald is set to advise the Crown Prosecution Service to fully exploit laws coming into effect next year that will introduce an offence of "causing death by careless driving", which will carry a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment. The present charge of careless driving incurs only a fine, and this is often weak.

Macdonald said: "If you are driving at 40mph in a 30mph limit and you go within a few inches of a cyclist, that is dangerous in my opinion and we should prosecute accordingly," he said.

♦ *Independent*, 27th Oct 2006

### £800 fine in latest death verdict

Meanwhile tractor driver Matthew Mackie has been fined just £800 for causing the death of cyclist Brenda Kerry. Mackie's tractor, towing a trailer, clipped Brenda's handlebar when overtaking with a clearance of just 50 cm. The cyclist was thrown into the road and suffered fatal injuries. Mackie had not been trained to drive a large tractor and held only an ordinary licence, but this is currently legal, an anomaly upon which the judge commented.

### Judge concerned at lenient sentences

Some judges are becoming concerned at how little scope they have for making sentences match the crime. Commenting at York Crown Court, after being able to sentence a show-off drink driver to jail for only 2 years, Judge Ashurst said: "It goes to show, however serious injuries that may be caused by dangerous driving, the punishments available to the court are woefully inadequate."

The driver had been found guilty on two charges of dangerous driving, drink-driving and having no insurance, but two years is the maximum sentence that can be applied.

♦ *Times*, 24th Oct 2006

## Travel trends

The 2005 National Travel Survey shows that, compared with a decade earlier, the average distance travelled by residents in Great Britain increased by 3% (to 7,200 miles) and the average length of trip rose 7% (to 6.9 miles). The average number of trips per person, however, fell by 4%.

The proportion of households without car access fell from 30% to 25%. While the proportion of men with driving licences stayed the same at 81%, licences held by women increased from 57 to 63% and for people aged over 70 they increased from 38 to 51%.

Both walking and cycling declined by 16% (there was some increase in cycling in 2005) and the proportion of children walking to primary school fell from 53 to 49%, most of the decline being taken up by car trips.

♦ [http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft\\_transstats/documents/downloadable/dft\\_transstats\\_612469.pdf](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstats/documents/downloadable/dft_transstats_612469.pdf)

## Marketing success

A personalised marketing scheme run in Peterborough and Worcester by Sustrans and Social Data claims to have reduced car trips by as much as 13%. In Peterborough, there was a 21% increase in walking, 25% cycling and 13% use of public transport. In Worcester, walking rose 17%, cycling 36% and public transport 22%.

In both towns, the overall changes were achieved at the individual level by switching an average of around 60 car trips per person per year to other forms of transport, or a little more than one car trip per week across the population. The reductions in car use were concentrated during peak times in the morning and afternoon.

The work is taking place as part of a £10 million Department for Transport programme to show how better travel information and marketing, together with other measures to boost the alternatives to the car, can help reduce traffic. In April 2004, Peterborough, Worcester and Darlington were selected as 'Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns'; they have until 2009 to prove what can be achieved by combining their 'smarter choices' schemes with traditional local transport programmes.

## More bikes and more roads in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service is inviting applications to deliver a complete Cycle to Work package.

Figures just published show cycle usage in Belfast has increased by 65% between 2000 and 2005. The data was collected at 11 automatic counter sites. Over the same period, use of the National Cycle Network in Northern Ireland is up by 31.4%.

The population of Northern Ireland takes the least exercise in the UK and has the highest rate of obesity; the province is also the most car dependent region of the UK apart from the Scottish Highlands. However, another £400m is to be spent on the highway network – way and above what is to be spent on cycling and public transport.

## Climate road map seeks speed cuts

The Government has only four years to implement a major new programme of action to cut carbon emissions if the UK is to play its part in keeping global temperatures below danger levels warns a report by The Co-operative Bank and Friends of the Earth.

Lower speed limits, a massive rail investment programme and restrictions on flights will be needed in the short-term to achieve the carbon cuts required.

The report, 'The Future starts here: the route to a low carbon economy' is based upon research commissioned from The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of Manchester. It is the UK's first comprehensive roadmap to a low carbon economy that would deliver on Government commitments to keep temperatures from rising beyond a critical point.

[http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/low\\_carbon\\_economy.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/low_carbon_economy.pdf)

### Use driving test for quick-hit reductions in emissions

The UK Energy Research Centre at Oxford's Environment Change Institute is urging that the driving test should be modified to place greater emphasis on energy-efficient driving as a 'quick-hit' way of reducing carbon emissions. Less aggressive driving and easier road sharing would follow.

## Training requirement for Pedicab licences

The London Assembly has endorsed recommendations to introduce a licensing system for pedicabs, which are common in London's West End. Pedicab riders would need a National Standard for Cycle Training Level 3 qualification as a requirement for getting a licence.

The Public Carriage Office (PCO) wants local authorities to establish pedicab ranks, but these should be separate from taxicab ranks because of the "strained relations between the two groups". The PCO also proposes regulating pedicab fares.

## Climate-friendly MEPs

To demonstrate climate-friendly mobility, a group of Green MEPs and their assistants travelled, at the end of the European Mobility Week, the 450 kilometres from Brussels to Strasbourg by bike and train. The whole journey was headed by the German MEP Michael Cramer.

Annick Roetynck joined in for the European Cycling Federation, travelling on an electric bike. On seeing the performance of the vehicle on the Ardennes' slopes, one participant suggested that "turbo bike" is a more appropriate name. The MEPs agreed that electric bikes may be a solution to persuade die-hard car drivers to cycle shorter distances.

The bike plus train journey proved to be a comfortable, easy and fairly cheap way to travel. In Luxembourg and France bikes are allowed on trains for free. In Belgium train passengers have to pay € 8,8 for a return trip for their bike. In some Belgian stations, one has to carry out daredevil feats to get one's bike on the train. In other stations however, there is at least a ramp instead of stairs to the platform. And the floor of the newest trains is at the same level as the platform.

On the fourth and last day of the journey, the party cycled over the Europa bridge, reserved for pedestrians and cyclists, into Strasbourg. They rode straight to the entrance of the European Parliament, leaving behind other MEPs and their staff queuing for a parking place.

The journey sparked off so much enthusiasm that it will probably be repeated next year. The Greens hope, on that occasion, to rally MEPs from other parties too.

♦ ECF

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**UK Cycling Alliance:** Andre Curtis, *see above*.

**European Cyclists' Federation:** John Franklin:  
*see above*.

**Bike Week:** Andre Curtis, *see above*.

**Transport 2000:** Andre Curtis: *see above*.

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**Deadline for next CCN News: 23rd December 2006**

**[news@cyclenetwork.org.uk](mailto:news@cyclenetwork.org.uk)**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Bike Week media coverage worth £1.81m

Bike Week events in June generated positive press coverage in more than one thousand publications with a combined circulation of 60 million, according to information released by Nick Harvey, the national co-ordinator of Bike Week and the Bike2Work campaign.

"We tracked press coverage worth more than £725,000 in advertising terms" said Harvey, "and that's not including electronic media. The total value is estimated at £1.81M, more than 12 times our total £150,000 budget, of which only £28,000 was spent by Bike Week HQ on PR activity."

Continued Harvey: "Local organisers have got the message that not only must their cycling events attract participants, they need media appeal too. There was widespread local newspaper and radio interest in cycling this summer, partly as a result of the excellent pre-Bike Week coverage in The Independent."

This year 1,717 Bike Week and Bike2Work events were run by 1,171 local organisers, ranging from cycling clubs and campaign groups to local authorities, NHS trusts and other major employers. There were 147 charity fundraising rides, many for Leukaemia Research, Bike Week's national charity partner. The total number of participants was estimated at 221,226, of which half were novice, lapsed or occasional cyclists.

Bike Week will be 16th to 24th June in 2007. Further details will be available on the Bike Week website, <http://www.bikeweek.org.uk>.

### New bike standards

The European Commission has published four new standards for bikes:

EN 14764: 2005 Trekking and city bikes

EN 14766: 2005 Mountain bikes

EN 14781: 2005 Racing bikes

EN 14781: 2005 Load carriers for bikes

According to the Directive 2001/95/CE "General Product safety" (art. 3, par. 2), this has the consequence that products meeting the said Standard safety requirements, automatically have the presumption to meet also the requirements of the Directive itself.



### Light-up initiative in Cambridge

With the onset of darker nights, Cambridge Cycling Campaign has issued its latest cycle lighting poster, updated for the latest regulations and available for free download. This poster is a top hit on Google for 'cycle lighting', and it has been used by Cumbria Police to inform cyclists of their legal requirements.

Campaigner member, Simon Nuttall says: " Each year new cyclists come to Cambridge to buy bikes at the end of the summer. They are often caught out by the time the clocks go back in October. Our poster shows the minimum legal requirement and has been updated to show that non-flashing LED cycle lights are now street-legal. We encourage members of the public and businesses and organisations across Cambridge to print off copies of our poster."

- <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/resources/lights>