

Opinion Letters

THIS MONTH BARRIERS TO CYCLING, TRAINS AGAIN, FIRST AID FOR CYCLISTS, LONG COVID, SADDLE COMFORT – AND MORE

Get in touch

LETTERS are edited for space, clarity and, if necessary, legality. The editor reads and automatically acknowledges all letters but publishes only a selection. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 31 August. Please include your membership number.

WRITE TO: Letters, Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Rd, Guildford, GU2 9JX or email @ editor@cyclingsuk.org

Right: Hardy Saleh. Top right: Alarmy



Letter of the month

REMOVING BARRIERS

At Wheels for Wellbeing, we were really pleased to see your 'Dangerous Bollard' response (in Cyclopedia in the June/July issue) emphasise the hazard created by unnecessary bollards and other barriers on cycle paths.

A single pinch-point can be journey ending for a disabled person. For example, in the photo published with George Wormald's letter, the smooth tarmac widths to either side of the bollard appear to be less than 75cm wide. This is too narrow for many tricycle, handcycle, wheelchair and mobility scooter users to negotiate without risk of tipping over – and is less than half the 150cm minimum access width that is required by both the Scottish Cycling By Design (2021) guidance and the UK Government's Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance LTN 1/20.

Using the Equality Act, disabled cyclists have had chicanes, A-frames and bollards removed. Only disabled people and people indirectly affected by disability discrimination can use this option – but it's time consuming, emotionally draining and expensive.

Non-disabled people could help by:

1. Assisting with paperwork;
2. Publicly supporting barrier removal;
3. Helping fundraise to cover costs;
4. Providing practical and emotional support.

Our Guide to Inclusive Cycling has more details: wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/campaigning/guide/.

All disabled people and non-disabled allies are welcome to join the Disabled Cycling Activists Network. Contact kate@wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk. Together, let's #BashTheBarriers.

Kate Ball



RAILING AGAINST TRAINS

What a nightmare it has become taking bikes on trains! I have just completed a coast-to-coast route, and it was stressful taking the bikes on the train. Firstly, you cannot book on Northern so you do not know if you will be able to catch connections and complete your journey. If you can't (like me), you then have the stress of getting on another train. When a train is cancelled (which also happened), it's the same problem, plus you have to rebook the bikes.

Although one TransPennine train had good space for four bikes, the bike spaces were generally poor. Some were wheel hangers with no support for the rest of the bike. Unless things improve there is no encouragement for combining train and bike travel. What a shame.

Joanna House

PASS KEY

Grüezi! Being from mountainous Switzerland, the latest issue of Cycle was a treat. Sam Jones's account of tackling the Wayfarer Pass satisfied the history geek in me, and Andrew Sykes climbing Swiss Alpine passes is definitely something I can relate to. However, not so much so since our offspring came and my fitness went. I am too timid to try the big passes again. Fortunately, the Cyclopedia Knowhow section has showed me a way out. After refitting my drop-bar bike, I will give the Furkas and Gotthards a go once more and gradually start climbing back into shape.

Martin Buehler

Win a set of Exposure lights worth £85

EXPOSURE LIGHTS



The letter of the month wins a set of Trace and Tracer Mk2 DayBright lights, courtesy of Exposure Lights. These small (35g), rechargeable lights are ideal for urban riders or any cyclist wanting to be seen easily: the front emits up to 125 lumens, the rear up to 75. Conspicuity is boosted by excellent side visibility and an optional DayBright pulse pattern. The casing is durably made from CNC'd aluminium and is waterproof to IP65. For details, or to purchase Exposure lights, visit exposure-use.com/Brands/Exposure-Lights.

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