

FROM CTC'S CHIEF EXEC

# BETTER TOGETHER



*CTC aims to Get Britain Cycling and to turn casual cyclists into club cyclists, with more Member Group support. Chief Executive **Paul Tuohy** explains*

**AFTER A** busy working week, I treasure my weekend rides with a group of cycling friends in Kent. Even in winter, it's a great way to unwind and clear the head. But on the first beautiful frosty morning in December, I reluctantly cancelled. It was slippery underfoot, and some of the local lanes see little sunlight at this time of year, staying icy all day. The group went anyway. I said I'd join them for a post-ride pint.

I got to the pub early and was surprised to find them already there. Their ride had come to an abrupt end after seven miles. There was black ice on the lanes near Sevenoaks: one rider went down, followed almost immediately by two more. Rear derailleurs were broken and there were a few bruises. Needless to say, at the next sign of ice we were all enjoying the mud in Farningham Woods for some welcome off-road riding instead.

## MANAGING PRIORITIES

CTC is undoubtedly the most diverse cycling movement in the UK. I'm reminded of this by my chats with members, and visits to the Birthday Rides, Member Group AGMs, and local cycling projects. This diversity is something that all 67,000 of us should be proud of.

The challenge is how we can best support and inspire all our members with their different needs, and how we can make cycling safer and more attractive for everyone. With more people out cycling than ever, we want CTC to really make our mark for today's and tomorrow's cyclists.

To ensure that we're getting best value from our limited budget, we've looked at how members are now calling on our services. With very low demand, we have decided to stop our dedicated Technical and Touring Helplines. Instead, we'll be reinvesting this resource. Our technical and touring features and reviews in this magazine and on the CTC website will be unaffected, and will continue to inspire and inform.

To get more cyclists riding with CTC groups, we will put additional staff resources



● Whatever the weather, riding bikes is better in groups than alone

into supporting our Member Group and affiliate network, with training and promotion to attract more riders. One of the most striking benefits of having 67,000 members is that the breadth of our members' experience is vast. So in an age of social media and 'crowd sourcing', we'll also be looking into how CTC members can best share our collective experiences via the CTC Forum.

## MAKING THE CYCLIST'S VOICE HEARD

This general election year, it's crucial to ensure the cyclists' voice is heard. We'll be investing in staff to help us champion all UK cyclists in campaigning for MPs to Get Britain Cycling. Meanwhile, we're also at the top table lobbying government departments. Part of my

job at CTC is to be a member of the Active Travel Consortium, leading the fight with British Cycling, Sustrans and Living Streets to influence government to get Britain moving a bit more.

As CTC supporters, we know the benefits that cycling brings us, but part of our role as a national charity is to get more people active on bikes. We've got some exciting plans to do this, which I hope to tell you more about in the spring. Very modest levels of investment, to the tune of £1m, if directed towards CTC, could help get 50,000 people back onto their bikes and deliver over £6m of economic value in terms of transport and health benefits. More about how I get on next issue... ●

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