



GOING DUTCH

My husband and I recently took a short trip to the Netherlands to test out our ageing bodies after missing out on cycling holidays for a number of years. I would very much recommend such a venture to those who may doubt their capacity to cycle all day and enjoy it.

Rolling along smooth-surfaced, dedicated paths, through the dunes up the sandy North Sea coast was splendidly relaxing and almost totally traffic free. In the towns, motorised vehicles give way to cyclists at drives and junctions. In a country with more bikes than people, even cool teenagers cycle, elderly ladies chat as they pedal along, racing cyclists time trial and slick business types rush to their meetings.

The only hazards for us as tourists were the rapid streams of city riders, manoeuvring with speedy and practised ease. But we also picked up a bike parking ticket in The Hague for innocently and illicitly locking our bikes round a tree! That probably wouldn't happen in the UK.

Clare Hawkins

ON THE CARDS?

Many thanks for the new membership card you sent me. It's probably the 31st that you've sent to me. I write because I wonder at the value of plastic membership cards of this kind? I have never presented my card anywhere, although, for reasons that defy quick explanation, I do carry it in my wallet.

Why not transition to an electronic membership card that I can install on my phone? It would cost a bit of money to develop, but would then save a considerable sum because of all the cards and postage that would no longer be needed. You needn't make it compulsory. No doubt you have a few members who are older than me who don't care for smartphones.

It would have other advantages, too. If you created a card around an

app with the ability to send push notifications, it could be the start of a whole new connectedness between Cycling UK and its membership.

Tim Dawson

CRASH COURSE

It's a bit late but I just wanted to say thanks to Paul Darlington for the useful article in the June/July issue, Crash Course. I've been fortunate not to have been involved in many 'accidents', despite cycling for many years for both leisure and commuting, but the article contains a lot of great and practical advice. And as Paul advised, I grabbed my phone straightaway and put in the Cycling UK incident line number into my phone.

One further tip with regards to road defects: if the road defect has been there for some time, there is the chance it will show up on Google Street View, and the image will be date stamped. It helped me on one occasion; and to be fair to the council, they paid for the damage without any quibbling.

Neil Scarse



INSPIRING CYCLING

I just received the first issue of your magazine since joining and enjoyed it immensely. I don't identify as a cyclist but I do care about taking a radically long-term stance towards life – and cycling happens to support that agenda. It was only after reading the book *Copenhagenize* recently that I came to appreciate the potential of the cycling community beyond promoting close-fitting sports clothing.

As a Canadian living in the UK, the ways in which this country is ahead of North America in active and public transport amaze me – and it is a source of continual frustration that it never seems to take the steps needed to capitalise on its lead. I look forward to seeing more constructive inspiration in your future issues.

Andrew Dunning

Photo of the month

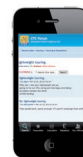
DELIVERING THE GOODS



It was heartwarming to read about the inspiring volunteers promoting cycling. Here's a twist on this: volunteers on bikes. The Botley Bikers deliver food, toiletries and smiles to people experiencing homelessness in Oxford. We use all kinds of bikes, from fancy e-bikes to bangers, and carry the food in backpacks, panniers and trailers. **Riki Therivel**, foodforcharities.com

CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other members at forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: cyclinguk.org/kirkpatrick-C2C



KIRKPATRICK C2C

TrevA: I believe it's been mentioned before but there's a new C2C route in southern Scotland, from Stranraer to Eyemouth: scotlandstartshere.com/kirkpatrickc2c/.

MrsHJ: Looks promising as a nice break for a week or so, at 250 miles with a bit of travelling to get there and back. That's where the butt-numbing CrossCountry train from Penzance to various Scottish cities comes in useful.

honesty: I was looking at this earlier today. Eyemouth seems easy to get to (train to Berwick), but for me the easiest way to Stranraer is flight to Belfast and then catch the ferry...

Paulatic: There is no easy way to get to Stranraer for most people.

AlanInBangor: Train to Glasgow then Glasgow-Ayr-Stranraer or train to Carlisle and Carlisle-Kilmarnock-Stranraer. Return on the East Coast

Main Line from Berwick. Main issue is getting three bikes on the trains. **geomannie:** We have just completed the first 100-mile stretch from Stranraer to Dumfries before heading north up to Sanquhar. Some lovely and varied scenery, quiet roads and lots of interesting wildlife.

irc: I did a coast-to-coast in this area in 2007, Stranraer to Dunbar. Keeping close to the line of the Southern Upland Way. Lovely tour. Trains either end. Over four days using two hostels and a B&B.

PM999: An alternative [overnight's accommodation] for Castle Douglas: ernespiehouse.com. Just outside of town and very quiet. Decent rooms, good food and safe cycle storage.

Richard Fairhurst: I misread that as Ernie's Pie House and thought that sounded like a good place to stay...