

# Cycling and pedestrians

## THIS BRIEFING COVERS

- Headline messages; CTC's view
- Key facts and arguments: cycling and the risk to pedestrians; red light jumping and cycling on the pavement (footway); sharing space
- Footnotes and references

## HEADLINE MESSAGES

- Cyclists are perfectly able to mix harmoniously with pedestrians and, contrary to popular belief, are not a major danger to them.
- Pedestrians are more likely to be injured or killed in collision with a motor vehicle than in collision with a cycle, even if they are walking on the verge or footway (pavement). This is all the more surprising because, unlike driving, most cycling takes place where there are high levels of pedestrian activity.

## CTC VIEW

- Cyclists should behave responsibly and within the law.
- Cyclists do very little harm to other road users, including pedestrians.
- Unlike driving, most cycling takes place in areas of high pedestrian activity, but it poses far less risk to pedestrians than motor vehicles. This is the case even for pavement cycling and red light jumping, neither of which CTC condones.
- Cyclists and pedestrians are able to interact far more harmoniously, even in crowded conditions, than is often thought.
- People who are frail or who suffer sensory or mobility impairments are often understandably reluctant to share space with cyclists. Trials, however, usually prove that cyclists very rarely put any pedestrian in a hazardous situation. Codes of practice - backed up as required by policing - are preferable solutions, rather than undermining the promotion of safe cycling for fear of the actions of a minority.



### KEY FACTS AND ARGUMENTS

#### 1) Cycling and the risk to pedestrians

**CTC view:** Cyclists do very little harm to other road users, including pedestrians

- In 2012, the vast majority - 98% - of serious or fatal pedestrian injuries in urban areas (i.e. where pedestrians are most likely to be) - were due to collisions with motor vehicles;<sup>1</sup>
- From 2008 to 2012 (inclusive), out of the total numbers of pedestrians killed in single vehicle collisions with vehicles *in any location/area* (i.e. in the road or on the footway, urban and rural), cycles were involved in about 0.4% of fatalities and around 1.4% of serious injuries, while cars were involved in about 68% of pedestrian fatalities, and 81% of pedestrian serious injuries:<sup>2</sup>

Pedestrians killed/seriously injured by cars or cycles 2008-2012 (all locations, single vehicle collisions)		
	Number	% of collisions with all vehicles
Pedestrians killed by CYCLE	9	0.4
Pedestrians seriously injured by CYCLE	359	1.4
Pedestrians killed by CAR	1,361	67.8
Pedestrians seriously injured by CAR	21,005	81.2
Pedestrians killed in collisions with ANY MOTOR VEHICLE	1,999	—
Pedestrians seriously injured in collisions with ANY MOTOR VEHICLE	25,500	—

- In the period 2008-12, cycles accounted for about 2% of all urban, non-motorway vehicular traffic, but were involved in 0.5% of pedestrian fatalities and 1.5% of serious pedestrian casualties (single vehicle collisions):<sup>3</sup>

Motor vehicle and cycle involvement in pedestrian fatal and serious injuries, annual average 2008-12 in URBAN areas (excluding motorways)		
	By all motor vehicles	By cycles
Pedestrians killed	287	1.4
Pedestrians seriously injured	4,411	66
% of pedestrians killed	99.5%	0.5%
% of pedestrians seriously injured	98.5%	1.5%
Pedestrians killed per bn vehicle-km	1.6	0.4
Pedestrians seriously injured per bn vehicle-km	24	18
<i>Billion vehicle-km</i>	184	3.6

- Mile for mile in urban areas, therefore, from 2008-12, motor vehicles were about 1.3 times more likely than a cycle to seriously injure a pedestrian, and 4 times more likely to kill them.<sup>4</sup>

**London:** Between 2000/01 and 2010/11, cycle flows on the TLRN (Transport for London Road Network) increased by 150%<sup>5</sup>, yet the number of pedestrians injured in collision with a cycle each year remains very small indeed. London's mayor Boris Johnson said that in the 12 months to 31 August 2010, the total number of reported casualties in which a pedestrian was injured by a pedal cyclist represented less than 0.3% of the total number of pedestrian casualties within Greater London.<sup>6</sup>

## 2) Cycling on the footway (pavement) and red light jumping

**CTC view:** Unlike driving, most cycling takes place in areas of high pedestrian activity, but it poses far less risk to pedestrians than motor vehicles. This is the case even for pavement cycling and red light jumping, neither of which CTC condones.

- **The risk that cyclists pose to pedestrians on the footway/verge**
  - In Great Britain between 2008 and 2012, there were 2 pedestrian deaths involving cyclists on pavements or verges, whereas on average, 39 pedestrians each year were killed by motor vehicles on pavements/verges.<sup>7</sup>
  - In London (1998-2007), just 2% of pedestrian collision injuries on the pavement involved cycles; the other 98% involved motor vehicles.<sup>8</sup>

**Note:**

**Footways are not footpaths!** 'Footways' (pavements) are *not* the same as 'footpaths' and their legal status differs. A footway runs alongside the carriageway; a footpath is located away from it.

**Converting footways to shared use:** highway authorities, of course, may convert footways into shared-use facilities - signs and markings should make this clear (see 'Sharing Space' below).

- **The risks of red light jumping to pedestrians**
  - Between 1998 and 2007 in London, where cycle and pedestrian flows are high and signalled junctions ubiquitous, just 4% of pedestrian injuries due to red light jumping involved cycles; the other 96% involved motor vehicles.<sup>9</sup>

See CTC's campaigns briefing on *Cyclists' behaviour and the law* for full tables on the above: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cyclists-behaviour-and-law](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cyclists-behaviour-and-law)

- For more on cycling offences and their safety impacts on pedestrians, see: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cyclists-behaviour-and-law](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cyclists-behaviour-and-law)
  - For more on public footpaths, see: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/public-footpaths-england-wales](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/public-footpaths-england-wales)



## 3) Sharing space

### CTC view:

- Cyclists and pedestrians are able to interact far more harmoniously, even in crowded conditions, than is often thought.
- People who are frail or who suffer sensory or mobility impairments are often understandably reluctant to share space with cyclists. Trials, however, usually prove that cyclists very rarely put any pedestrian in a hazardous situation. Codes of practice - backed up as required by policing - are preferable solutions, rather than undermining the promotion of safe cycling for fear of the actions of a minority.

CTC supports the underlying principle of the Government's 'Hierarchy of Provision'<sup>10</sup>, which prioritises measures to reduce the volume and/or the speeds of motor traffic (i.e. to tackle the sources of the dangers that deter people from walking and cycling in the first place). In other words, pavements should be for pedestrians while safe cycling conditions should be engineered either through low traffic volumes and speeds, or else by providing dedicated space for cycling, free of conflict with pedestrians.

However, where the decision is made to allow cyclists to share space with pedestrians, it is important not to assume automatically that conflict will be a problem or, indeed, happen at all. Surveys show that 'perceived' conflict is often much worse than 'real' conflict.<sup>11</sup> They also show that the majority of pedestrians are not much concerned about sharing with cyclists - those who raise strong objections to shared use are very much a minority voice.<sup>12</sup> This has been well established by research in the context of pedestrian-priority areas (see below).

### a) Shared use cycle tracks

While converting paths away from the roads to shared use often provides cyclists with useful links (see park, canals and footpaths below), converting footways alongside the carriageway should only be considered as a last resort. It is never an ideal solution and, in urban streets, it is usually the wrong one. In some situations though, it may be the best solution available, e.g. alongside inter-urban trunk roads where both pedestrian and cyclist flows are light. Local circumstances should dictate whether or not this is an acceptable option, but the following criteria should be considered:

- **Pedestrian and cyclist flows:** these are often light along inter-urban roads, where an off-road facility is likely to be most beneficial for cyclists
- **Priority:** to avoid hazards/loss of priority to cyclists, there should be few, if any, side turnings (around two thirds of reported crashes involving cycles occur at or near road junctions).<sup>13</sup>
- **The on-road alternative:** if cycling along the carriageway is likely to be far more dangerous and unpleasant and this cannot be improved, or if there are no other alternatives, a shared route alongside may be the best solution.
- **Decent width, sightlines, surface quality and maintenance:** these factors are important design criteria for all off-road paths. If they cannot be provided, cycling on the carriageway might be a better alternative.



**Segregation:** Separating cycles and pedestrians on shared use tracks by some means is not necessarily helpful. Whilst blind and partially sighted users may value ‘harder’ forms of segregation (e.g. height differences or physical barriers), these will hamper movement onto, across or away from the path by others, affecting not only cyclists, but wheel-chair users as well. Moreover, segregating narrow paths can make it difficult for users to keep to their ‘own’ side, creating conflict which would not arise if the facility were left unsegregated. Without segregation, users become more reliant on eye contact etc. - a good way of interacting safely.

Having their own section may also encourage cyclists to ride faster, something that is less likely to happen when they mix with other users and naturally modify their behaviour for their own and others’ safety. Finally, tactile lines and markings used to demarcate segregation can be hazardous to cyclists especially around corners, and all the more so in wet weather.

‘Hard’ segregation should therefore be regarded as the preferred solution only:

- (a) Where there is sufficient width; and
- (b) Where movement patterns are mostly (if not wholly) linear, i.e. where there are few or no reasons for people to want to join, cross or leave the path.

Where segregation is introduced, it is best to mark it with a raised white line that can be detected by blind or partially sighted users. Whilst this may not be as reassuring as a ‘harder’ form of segregation, it may in fact be equally safe for them, and it is certainly a better way to reconcile the needs of different disabled groups (as well as cyclists). Where tactile lines and paving are used, they should be set back from any path or other junctions where cyclists are likely to be cornering.

**Width:** Shared use tracks should be at least 3 metres wide, although sometimes this might be not be enough (e.g. if very large, concentrated flows of pedestrians are expected at times). Equally, there will be occasions where narrower widths are acceptable, e.g. where predicted flows of both groups are relatively light and/or for relatively short sections of a route that otherwise provides significant benefits for cyclists and only minor disbenefit to pedestrians. In the latter case, design solutions (e.g. appropriate surface materials) and signing may be used to create a sense that the space is primarily for pedestrians and that ‘leisurely-paced’ cycle use is called for.

- See also CTC’s comments on the DfT’s guidance on shared use routes (issued 2012): <http://www.ctc.org.uk/article/campaign-article/new-guidance-on-shared-use-routes>

### b) Town centres with pedestrian priority/vehicle restricted areas (VRAs)

Many town centres prohibit motor traffic, usually between certain times of the day. Exempting cycles from bans is unlikely to undermine the benefits of doing this.

- **Time restrictions:** if there are valid concerns about inconvenience to pedestrians at peak times, restricted access for cycles may be considered during certain hours, as long as they can use the route when it is most useful to them, e.g. at commuting/school run times.
- **Trials:** if there are local objections to plans to allow cyclists to use a VRA, a trial may help alleviate concerns. This can be done by introducing an experimental traffic regulation order (TRO) to permit cycling on a temporary basis, restricting it to certain hours if necessary.
- **Road markings:** markings on the road surface (e.g. cycle logos) will help alert pedestrians to the presence of cycles.

For more on CTC’s views on cycle-friendly design and planning, including segregation, see: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cycle-friendly-design-and-planning-overview](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cycle-friendly-design-and-planning-overview)

“It can be contentious to reintroduce cycling into vehicle restricted areas (VRAs) but, as these areas are often prime destinations where shops and services are located, good cycle access is desirable. Where new vehicular restrictions are to be introduced, serious consideration should always be given to retaining cycle access. Traffic conditions on unrestricted routes may be unattractive to cyclists, and the routes can be indirect. Maintaining formal cycle access needs to be considered against the likelihood of cyclists using the VRA regardless of any restrictions.”

*Cycle Infrastructure Design, DfT, 2008.*

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/local-transport-notes/ltn-2-08.pdf>

A Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) published by the Department of Transport in 1993, summarised research from the Transport Research Laboratory on cycling in pedestrian areas.<sup>14</sup> It said that:

- Observation revealed no real factors to justify excluding cyclists from pedestrianised areas, suggesting that cycling could be more widely permitted without detriment to pedestrians.
- A wide variety of regulatory and design solutions exist to enable space to be used safely and effectively in pedestrianised areas.
- Pedestrians change their behaviour in the presence of motor vehicles, but not in response to cyclists.
- Cyclists respond to pedestrian density, modifying their speed, dismounting and taking other avoiding action where necessary.
- Collisions between pedestrians and cyclists were very rarely generated in pedestrianised areas (only one pedestrian/cyclist incident in 15 site years) in the sites studied.
- Where there are appreciable flows of pedestrians or cyclists, encouragement to cyclists to follow a defined path aids orientation and assists effective movements in the area. At lower flows, both users mingle readily.

For further advice on VRA design, see:

- *Vehicle Restricted Areas* (Cycling England)  
[www.ciltuk.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/The%20Hub/Design%20Toolkit/A07\\_Design\\_portfolio\\_vehicle\\_restricted\\_areas.pdf](http://www.ciltuk.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/The%20Hub/Design%20Toolkit/A07_Design_portfolio_vehicle_restricted_areas.pdf)
- *Cycle Infrastructure Design* (DfT, 2008), section 4.3  
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/local-transport-notes/ltn-2-08.pdf>

### c) Parks, canals, promenades and footpaths

Allowing cycling in parks, along canals, promenades and converted footpaths helps enhance the network of motor-traffic free routes and often provides useful links in utility journeys (e.g. going to the shops, work or school).

Again, shared use in these settings can meet with opposition because of concerns about the impact on walkers. Research carried out by the Countryside Agency, however, suggests that conflict between non-motorised users on off-road routes is more perceived than real, and often ‘talked up’ after the event.<sup>15</sup>

As in the case of all shared facilities, design criteria should cover: width, sightlines and user flow. Design improvements can help minimise potential conflict (by, for example, providing surfaces to instil a greater sense of the need for leisurely speeds), as can codes of conduct and enforcement against people who persist in riding in a manner that intimidates or endangers pedestrians.

The surface of off-road routes like these may need upgrading to make sure that cyclists can use them.

For more on surfacing see:

- *Surfaces* (Cycling England)  
[www.ciltuk.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/The%20Hub/Design%20Toolkit/C02\\_Design\\_portfolio\\_surfaces.pdf](http://www.ciltuk.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/The%20Hub/Design%20Toolkit/C02_Design_portfolio_surfaces.pdf)
- *Cycle Infrastructure Design* (DfT, 2008), section 8.8  
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/local-transport-notes/ltn-2-08.pdf>

- For more on towpaths, canals and riversides, see:

[www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/towpaths-canals-and-rivers](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/towpaths-canals-and-rivers)

- For more on promenades, see:

[www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/seaside-cycling-coast-promenades-and-sea-fronts-england-wales](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/seaside-cycling-coast-promenades-and-sea-fronts-england-wales)

## FURTHER READING

- **CTC's briefings** ([www.ctc.org.uk/campaignsbriefings](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaignsbriefings))
  - Cyclists' behaviour and the law
  - Public footpaths
  - Towpaths and canals
  - Seaside cycling: the coast, promenades and sea-fronts
  - Cycle-friendly design and planning: Overview
- DfT. *Shared use routes for pedestrians and cyclists* (Local Transport Note 1/12). Sept. 2012.  
[www.ctc.org.uk/files/shared-use-routes-for-pedestrians-and-cyclists.pdf](http://www.ctc.org.uk/files/shared-use-routes-for-pedestrians-and-cyclists.pdf)
- Sustrans: *Cycling code of conduct on shared use paths*.  
[www.sustrans.org.uk/change-your-travel/get-cycling/cycling-code-conduct-shared-use-paths](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/change-your-travel/get-cycling/cycling-code-conduct-shared-use-paths)



### FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> DfT *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2012*. Sep 2013. Table RAS40004 (urban areas) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

<sup>2</sup> DfT. *Road Casualties Great Britain Annual Reports 2003-2012*. Table 23 (2003-2004); Tables 23c (2005-2009); Table RAS40004 (2010-11). All at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics#publications-released-during-2013>

<sup>3</sup> Casualty figures from DfT, *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: Annual Reports 2008-2012*. Table 23a (2008 & 9); RAS40004 (2010-12), (urban areas) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>; road traffic figures from DfT, *Road Traffic Estimates in Great Britain: 2012*. June 2013. Tables: TRA0204 and TRA0412 (pedal cycles). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-traffic-estimates-in-great-britain-2012>

<sup>4</sup> *Under-reporting*: It is clear that DfT's statistics on injuries due to pedestrian/cyclist collisions do not provide the full picture. Although DfT's definition of 'serious injuries' is supposed to include hospital omissions, there is a significant mismatch between the police-recorded number of serious pedestrian injuries due to cycle collisions (as reported in DfT's statistics) and the number of hospital admissions recorded in Hospital Episode Statistics (HES). There are several reasons, though, why a hospital admission might not be recorded by the police. Many of these incidents occur in places other than on public roads (e.g. in parks or open spaces, or on the rights of way network), hence they are outside the scope of police reporting. In other cases, the parties involved may conclude that the injury is too slight to call the police or to attend a police station; or the police themselves may decide (sometimes wrongly) that the incident is not important enough to spend time on the paperwork. Given the uncertainties around under-reporting levels, CTC bases its calculations on the risk that cyclists pose to pedestrians on the best figures available, i.e. DfT's *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain*, whilst acknowledging that under-reporting does exist.

<sup>5</sup> TfL. *Travel in London, Report 4*. 2011. <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/corporate/travel-in-london-report-4.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> See Mayor's answer to formal London Assembly question, <http://mgt.london.gov.uk/mgt/public/question.do?id=34203>

<sup>7</sup> Figures for pedestrian collisions with cycles on footway/verges obtained by CTC from DfT 25/1/2014; figures for pedestrian collisions with any vehicles on footway/verges from DfT. *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain* (2010-12 Table RAS 300026; 2008-09 Table 32). <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

<sup>8</sup> Freedom of Information (Fol) request made by CTC in 2008.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Set out in *Cycle Infrastructure Design*, DfT, 2008, P10

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/local-transport-notes/ltn-2-08.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Countryside Agency. *How people interact on off-road routes: phase II*. CA report CRN69, 2003.

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/65057>

<sup>12</sup> CTC. *Cyclists and pedestrians: attitudes to shared use*. CTC, 2000

<sup>13</sup> DfT. *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2012*. Sep 2013. Table RAS 2006.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2012>

<sup>14</sup> DfT. *Cycling in Pedestrian Areas* (TAL 9/93).

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/165240/244921/244924/TAL\\_9-93/](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/165240/244921/244924/TAL_9-93/)

<sup>15</sup> Countryside Agency. *How people interact on off-road routes*. Research Note CRN 32. March 2001.

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/50065>