

# Letters

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**This month:** Edinburgh infrastructure, **stormy cycling**, three-wheelers (s)trike back, **mudguards**, off-road access, **a weighty problem**, and a helping hand on hills



## STORM FORCE

This winter, I was caught in the worst storm that I've ever experienced. With a third of our planned 61 miles ridden, my mate Barry and I saw pitch-black clouds looming. As we live several miles apart, we decided to split up and head home immediately.

Shortly after, all hell broke loose. Gale force winds and stinging hail brought me to a standstill. I stood like an emperor penguin with my back to the elements whilst clinging on to my bike. I was on a country lane in the middle of nowhere with no shelter. Jagged lightning bolts struck the fields next to me!

After about 15 minutes there was a slight lull, so I set off again, soaked from head to toe and very

cold. When I got home, there was a message on my answer machine: Barry was home safe too. It's a day I'll never forget.

**Tom Halliday**



## RETALIATORY TRIKE

I commend the fact that CTC is more inclusive these days. I remember taking previous Chief Executive Kevin Mayne to task for CTC's then strapline 'keeping you on two wheels'. As a tricyclist, it was very narrow-minded.

It's better now, but there is still room for improvement. According to the recent survey (last issue), I don't appear to cycle! There was no mention of adapted cycles or trikes.

I feel aggrieved that I am excluded from your version of the cycling community. It is hard enough having to contend with the narrow-mindedness of road planners and those in charge of so-called 'cycle provision', without having to chivvy the organisation that is supposed to represent my interests!

**Bob Nolan**



## GUARDS, GUARDS!

It can't be easy writing an editor's letter, knowing that by the time it goes to press the cycling world may have moved on. So congratulations on the mudguard intro. I am currently building up my first bike from parts. It will become my third road bike.

My Specialized Secteur Sport was lovely, but had Sora shifters I didn't like and no proper mudguards. So I moved on to a Verenti

## Letter OF THE MONTH



## WRONG SIGNALS

I was interested to read the piece on 'Practical Cycle-Proofing' in the Feb-Mar issue, but I'm mystified by the use of photo three on page 57, which shows an advance direction sign on a cycle route with the caption 'how not to do it'.

The context here is a shared-route footway beside a busy main road, on a route between Leith and Portobello. The sign is just before a toucan crossing of the main road, and the continuation street is a quiet road. The route is being developed by Edinburgh Council and

Sustrans.

Spokes, CTC, and Sustrans are happy with what the council have done, and are doing, with this route. (It's part of a Sustrans local route, so they are part-funding it.) They've already put in a nice new bridge to replace an old rail bridge, and a ramp to replace former steps. Where the photo is taken, a former footway has been widened and re-surfaced to become shared-use. The route as a whole creates a link from Portobello promenade (now accepted for shared-use) to the east, with Leith Links to the west. It connects Leith to Portobello, all off-road.

**Peter Hawkins**

**Apologies to Peter and the other Edinburgh cyclists who wrote in about this. I was looking for a photo that showed cycle provision being forced to fit around the road network rather than being part of an integrated network. This sign seemed to show that. Clearly it doesn't.**



▲ **SNAP HAPPY** Congratulations to Edwin Jones, who won the photo competition we announced in the June-July 13 issue of Cycle with this shot: Canyon Ride. Edwin wins an Ortlieb bar bag with camera insert plus a Gorrillapod Classic, worth over £100. You can see the other category winners at [ctc.org.uk/news/cycle-photo-competition-summer-2013-winners](http://ctc.org.uk/news/cycle-photo-competition-summer-2013-winners)

Kilmeston, with Sram shifters and full mudguards, but it was so harsh over longer distances. Now I'm graduating to a self-built Spa Steel Audax, which I will equip with the Verenti's components – including the mudguards.

Given the mild but soggy winter this year, I cannot imagine riding sans guards. Of course, for some folks double-sealed hubs might not be enough, given the floods. I guess the 16% hill I live on has its benefits.

**Nick Marston**

## OFF-ROAD ACCESS

There is a small note in the latest edition of Cycle regarding cycle access on Ministry of Defence land. I am a Sustrans Ranger, and sections of NCN1 that I cover in Medway use military roads (liable to closure at any time) and a permissive path across MoD land.

It was thanks to a Cycle article about two years ago that I was able to establish contact with the MoD about route maintenance. Since then, vegetation has been cleared and potholes repaired when I've reported problems, usually promptly.

Last October, NCN179 was re-routed along another stretch of military road in the same area. I reported some potholes this week and anticipate the same prompt action. So it isn't all bad news.

**Gary Outram**

## MATERIAL BENEFITS?

I've cycled through the evolution of bicycle materials, from steel to aluminium to carbon frames and next, no doubt, back to steel.

I have an aluminium touring bike with fat front forks and the ride comfort is appalling. I recently bought my wife another bike for shopping. It's aluminium, with front

suspension and, at her request, a sprung seat-post. It weighs 17.5kg without a basket or panniers!

Using extra alloy to prevent fatigue, then hiding the poor ride comfort with suspension is not progress. I've searched for cheap steel bikes but not found any, only 'designer' ones. Where are they?

**Phil Ely**



To paraphrase Keith Bontrager: **light, cheap, practical – pick two.** Koga's LightDeluxe M (above) is a practical trekking bike that weighs only 12kg. But at £1500, it's not cheap. See [koga.com](http://koga.com). For a steel tourer for you: see page 77.

## ELECTRIC AVENUE

I'm 80 this year and recently bought a Scott E-Venture e-bike. I have been a CTC member for 20 years, and some years ago joined a group on a 15km club ride. I explained that I was out of practice and was told by two of the ladies that when I had to get off, they would get off and walk with me. I thoroughly enjoyed the ride but found it hard work, even with a triple chainset.

My new pedelec makes things much easier, and still provides much needed exercise. I would advise anyone who thinks they are getting past being able to cycle to at least have a test ride on an e-bike. It's like having a strong tailwind. The battery on mine will easily do 35 miles.

**Alan Spencer**

## Obituaries

### ▶ Jack Gledhill: 1916–2013

Died aged 97. Jack grew up in Halifax with his mother; his father perished in 1918 in WW1. Jack became an engineer and rode with the erstwhile Halifax section. His cycle-touring was interrupted by seven-day shift-working during WW2. He kept cycling diaries from 1946, including records of his racing days with Yorkshire Century Racing Club. Jack was a family man – his daughter recalls sidecars, tandems and a triplet. Remembered by his peers as strong, stoic and weatherproof, Jack was still riding at nearly 90. *John Whiteley*

### ▶ Richard Bradshaw

Died suddenly on 18 January, aged 69, whilst returning from a club run with wife Pat. He was the Chairman of Heart of England Member Group, and a leading light of their Redditch & Bromsgrove Group, which he helped develop. He was a regular club rider, had toured in Europe and North America and enjoyed everything cycling. His enthusiasm and warmth made him a great ambassador for cycling. He persuaded many to become club riders. *Alan Head*

### ▶ Sue Simmons: 12/03/46–04/12/13

Sue Simmons, a founder member of Reading CTC, died peacefully at home on 4th December 2013. She had battled breast cancer since April 2010, but was going to the gym, cycling and walking until January last year. Sue rode with the local group and had enjoyed several CTC tours in Europe. Throughout her illness, Sue remained remarkably cheerful and in good spirits, and carried on riding until it became impossible. Sue had several bikes, but was most often seen on her faithful and extremely retro pink Roberts. *Mick Simmons*

### ▶ Brian Archer: 24/04/1932–18/11/2013

Brian was born in Camberwell, London, but the war forced a family move to Dorchester, where they ran a small café. After working briefly for the Atomic Energy Authority, Brian took teacher training, and worked in local schools. He joined CTC in 1947, riding with the former West Dorset section and is gratefully remembered by many for his help to young cyclists. His enquiring mind for his surroundings led him to a great knowledge of Dorset and its lesser known cycle routes, especially 'County Roads'. *Malcolm Howell*

## ▶ JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Get immediate feedback from other CTC members on the CTC forum: [forum.ctc.org.uk](http://forum.ctc.org.uk). Here's an abridged extract from one popular thread before Cycle went to press (see [tinyurl.com/q6v8t13](http://tinyurl.com/q6v8t13)).



### WEARING A CAMERA

**Jughead:** I think all cyclists should wear a cam easily visible to other road users. I have noticed a huge difference in how drivers treat me. I have a cam attached to the right hand side of the handlebars so that drivers can clearly see it. It really has made a difference with less dodgy overtaking.

**gaz:** If fitting a camera makes motorists think twice about close overtakes why is there so much camera footage

of close overtakes? If your camera makes such a difference to the behaviour of other road users, why are you seeing more red-light-jumping cyclists?

**patricktaylor:** I think the judge's wig idea is better. All cyclists who don't have long blonde hair should wear a judge's wig.

**Grumbleweed:** My pal has a Czech goretex jacket that says 'Polizia' on the back. Seems to do the trick!

**downfader:** As someone who uses cameras, I agree. The camera is too small to be noticed by a driver who is already inattentive. However, it has had its uses in a 'calm down, mate, you're on camera' way a couple of times.

**Graham:** If I could get hold of a hi-vis vest printed, on the back, with 'Camera Running' or 'Camera On', I would certainly wear it – even though I don't carry a camera when I'm riding my bike!



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