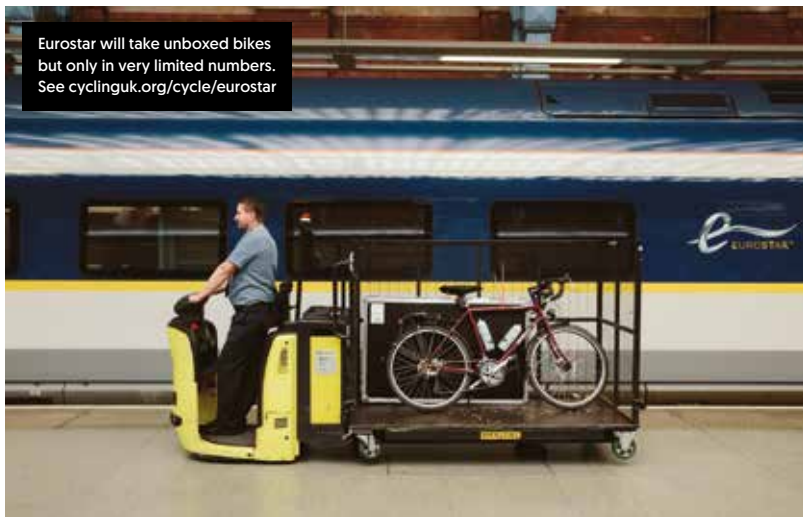


Opinion Letters

THIS MONTH FLIGHT SHAME SOLUTIONS, GOOD GADGETS, BEEPING DRIVERS, RIDING ETIQUETTE, AND MORE



Eurostar will take unboxed bikes but only in very limited numbers. See cyclinguk.org/cycle/eurostar

Photo: Sara Lincoln Photography

Letter of the month

FLIGHT-FREE TOURING

Further to Martin Greig's letter, 'Flight shame', last issue: choosing not to fly doesn't preclude going far and wide across mainland Europe. Ferry services offer good choices, especially if you live in the south of England.

The best example perhaps is Harwich (for the cycle-friendly Stena Line) to Holland. Others include Dover to Calais/Dunkirk (P&O and DFDS), Folkestone to Calais (Eurotunnel); Newhaven to Dieppe (DFDS); and a series of Brittany Ferry routes to France and one to Spain from points such as Portsmouth and Plymouth. Hull to Rotterdam (P&O) is the one option from north of Watford!

Once across the water there are good links to central, eastern and southern Europe, particularly from Holland. The choice is usually: a cycleway link to a well-signed Eurovelo route; or catching one of the many cycle-friendly train services operated by Dutch Railways, Deutsche Bahn and the OBB (Austrian Railways) Railjet. SNCF in France, including the TGV, and Belgian Railways also offer good services. Eurostar too will take cycles, though you might find the experience more akin to flying if you have to dismantle and box your bike.

Robin Bevis

If you have queries about trains and ferries to continental Europe, Robin has offered to answer them. Email the magazine and I'll pass them on.

Win a Lezyne Macro Plus GPS worth £100

The letter of the month wins a Lezyne Macro Plus GPS, courtesy of Upgrade Bikes. It pairs with your phone and offers turn-by-turn navigation, Strava Live Segments, training integration, optional horizontal orientation, a best-in-class run-time of 28 hours, and more. For details about this and other Lezyne GPS computers, or to find your local stockist, visit upgradebikes.co.uk



Get in touch

LETTERS are edited for space, clarity and, if necessary, legality. The Editor reads and acknowledges all letters to Cycle but publishes only a selection and doesn't enter into correspondence. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 30 June.

WRITE TO: Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ or email cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk



Fumpa tub-thump

Felt moved to write a counterbalance to Fumpa Grumpa Bob, who seems not happy with the wee gadget. Reader, I bought one.

I have a household of 12 tyres, many on 16- or 20-inch wheels as I have two trikes. It's hard to get the head of a floor pump between the spokes. Sick of scraping my knuckles and getting tired of pumping tyres to the right PSI with badly connected pumps, I invested in a Fumpa.

It's brilliant. You can inflate a tyre from flat and get out riding quicker – and with accurate pressure figures.

Natalie Morven



Parp down!

In the April/May 2020 issue, Bob Tydeman writes: [when driving behind a cyclist] "I tend to use my horn as a gentle reminder of my presence." Horns are not 'gentle'. Their volume cannot be moderated. A sudden blast can cause someone on a bike to wobble with shock. Many women who cycle ignore hooting because it is so often intended as a form of intimidation or is coupled with abuse.

For decades I've been writing to each new MP I get asking that motorists be required to retake

the driving test every five years. Every driver would then learn about changes to the theory and the practice – for example, the Dutch Reach promoted by Cycling UK – introduced since the last time they sat it. Many drivers deliberately move into ASLs (bike boxes) at lights and rail against people riding “in the middle of the road” due to ignorance.

Rebecca Lack



The big picture

Clearly the article Better Together was prepared and edited before the outbreak of the Covid-19

pandemic, as mentioned in the editorial. However, there really is no excuse for publishing the cover picture promoting the idea that riding three abreast on a public highway is acceptable behaviour. It is that irresponsible type of group riding that gives cycling and cyclists a bad name. Even in the 1950s, when on a club run from London to Brighton, when the group would be passed by no more than four or five cars all day, the club rode strictly only two abreast.

Graham W Collins

The photo was taken with a long lens, which causes foreshortening. The ladies on the left and right are in front. The man in the middle is behind them – a wheel length behind, not overlapping – and riding with no one alongside him.

The joy of group riding was published at a bad time! But it was nice to see Calderdale CTC with Winged Wheels blazing away on each arm. On page 12 there's a photo of my section, South West London Midweek Wayfarers, who have the same colours and Winged Wheels on our tops. I joined way back in 1954 am still clocking up the miles, even in our present lockdown.

Grant Pyke



Century riding

CTC Northampton celebrates 100 years of cycling this year; the DA was formed in October 1920. I am the club archivist and have been with the club 15 years, which has allowed me to create an account of the club's history. See ctc-northampton.org.uk/history.html. I have placed documents in the Cycling UK archive at Warwick, which also provided me with some pictures of the 1928 Golden Jubilee Relay Ride.

David Upton



Best medicine

I am an NHS worker who used to cycle to work every day years ago, then had to stop due to health issues. When my health improved, I found I'd lost my nerve to cycle.

Fast forward to lockdown and the need to safely exercise whilst working from home. I decided to give my bike a go on the quieter roads. Six weeks in, and now a member of Cycling UK, I have regained my road confidence, and my fitness is improving. I also find that my daily ride boosts my mental health; it is the biggest benefit to me during this difficult time.

Thank you to Cycling UK for the gift of my first three months of membership. Feeling part of a cycling community has definitely helped me to get my cycling mojo back.

Dr Elizabeth Shea

Obituaries

Are published online at cyclinguk.org/obituaries. Contact publicity@cyclinguk.org



Photo of the month

Solo cycling

Here's a selfie taken on a tiny country lane in Northumberland. It's been a difficult time for everyone recently, but let's hope we can return to at least a semblance of normality for leisure cycling this summer. **Stephen Psalidas**

CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other members on at forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a popular recent thread: cyclinguk.org/quieter-roads-better-driving



Anyone found the roads less busy and/or motorists driving better?

The utility cyclist: Wondered if anyone has been finding the roads less busy either going into work or on your normal leisure rides? Around here it seems business as usual.

millimole: In Leicestershire I'm seeing much quieter roads, but this seems to be encouraging more stupid-than-usual driving.

gazz: Anecdotally a little less traffic, more speeding, poorer driving.

softlips: Central London was virtually empty today. Lovely cycling, through.

roberts8: I live in the Surrey Hills area and yes, there is a bit less road traffic but air traffic is nearly nonexistent, so the lanes near Gatwick are a joy to cycle on. Birdsong against Easyjet is no

contest.

Patrickpioneer: On the roads here it is very noticeable how the amount of traffic has reduced. To me it's like it was cycling 30 years ago.

Pete Owens: The air quality is noticeably better.

Marcus Aurelius: I've just completed my morning commute, and I think I saw two cars in the entire ten miles.

MikeF: I agree with many others. A great reduction in motor vehicles with a few roads almost free of them. :) However the proportion of these few drivers driving badly is now large.

BrownBear: Yep, I'll remember these rides for a long time. I can include roads I'd normally avoid. Most drivers seem a bit unsure they have any right to be on the road... not something that you can normally say!