

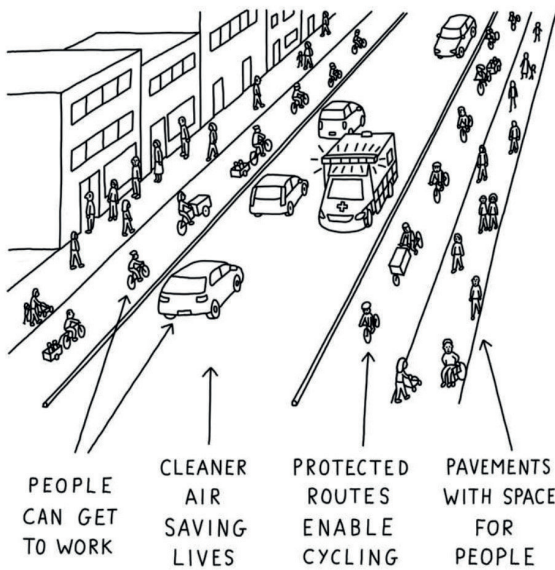


With Labour's Fabian Hamilton MP (right)

“LONG-TERM INVESTMENT AND BUILDING MORE CYCLE LANES GETS MORE PEOPLE CYCLING. WE’VE SEEN THIS IN LONDON. CYCLING LEVELS CONTINUE TO INCREASE YEAR BY YEAR IN THE CAPITAL”



Polling day is likely to be in the autumn



Election predictions

The election has to take place before 28 January 2025. Pundits all agree that campaigning over Christmas won't be appreciated by the electorate, so the election will take place in 2024. It could be called tomorrow, and the announcement of an early March budget has sparked speculation of an early May election. However, the most likely scenario still seems to be an election in October or November. We'll be ready for a campaign leading up to a May election but expect the campaign to run throughout most of the year.

Above left: Aboullrhman Hassona. Right: Peter Cornish. Cartoon: Dave Walker

networks. Schools, shops, healthcare facilities and green open space can and should be within a short walk or cycle of people's homes.

Having explained why the general election is going to be a major focus for our campaigning and lobbying in 2024, I should add that we've already been busy with this. Much of it has been quiet lobbying and engagement rather than public-facing campaigning, though that will change as we get nearer to the election. Last September and October, Cycling UK attended several party conferences and put on events at both the Labour and Conservative conferences.

Before, during and following those conferences we've been engaging with the parties and individual candidates. We will be ramping that up in the coming months. We're also working with two separate think

tanks on research that should support our manifesto demands. It is due to be published early in 2024 and launched at parliamentary events in Westminster.

As we approach the election, we'll need to engage our supporters and enable you to ask your candidates whether they'll support our manifesto if elected. We'll make that really easy with a simple supporter action, so you can email your candidates. Some people have asked whether these email campaigns work. The simple answer is yes – but usually not on their own. That's why, by the time we ask you to write to your candidate, they'll already have heard from us. If they're from one of the major parties, we'll have already engaged with their party colleagues, and we'll be highlighting why supporting our manifesto will help tackle a myriad of economic, health and environmental

issues. What we can't do is speak to your candidates as a constituent, which is why we'll need your support.

Back to Donald Rumsfeld and what we do and don't know. We know that more people cycling brings huge benefits, but that not all politicians seem to understand that. We also know we need to try to convince them and secure wider political support for cycling. It's our campaign priority this year.

But the 2024 unknown unknown I started with was whether, in an election year, we'll be able to make the benefits of getting more people cycling relevant to politicians and candidates. What we do know is that we'll have more chance of succeeding with your support. Please keep an eye out for our election 2024 campaigns communications. Help us turn this big unknown into a collective success. ●