

Cycling debate: briefing for MPs

Chamber of the House of Commons,
Monday 2 September, 7pm

On 2 September MPs will debate the motion ‘that this house supports the recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group’s report ‘Get Britain Cycling’; endorses the target of 10 per cent of all journeys being by bike by 2025, and 25 per cent by 2050; and calls on the Government to show strong political leadership, including an annual Cycle Action Plan and sustained funding for cycling’.

This note is for the information of participants in the debate. It has been assembled by a group of significant national organisations specialising in transport, public health, social issues and sustainable development.

We all support the motion and wish to see it incorporated into policy and practice. We want to see further commitment to build on the Government’s recent announcements of investment in cycling. We therefore urge all MPs to attend the debate, and to vote for the motion.

Benefits of cycling

The case for cycling is now irrefutable. Academic research and modelling in all the relevant fields has demonstrated the health, environmental, social and economic benefits achievable by a decisive shift to cycling in national and local policy. Bodies such as Foresight, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and the Health Select Committee have given clear endorsement to cycling as a policy priority.

Key elements include:

- **Health:** regular cyclists suffer fewer cancers and less heart disease, are less likely to be obese, suffer depression or diabetes; they cost the NHS less in healthcare.
- **Environment:** cycling is almost zero emission, and a shift from the car also reduces local toxic air pollution and noise.
- **Economy:** more cycling helps reduce the need for fossil fuel imports, active employees are healthier and more productive, cycling and cycle tourism create valuable employment. Cycling (and walking) schemes yield much higher benefit to cost ratios than other forms of transport investment.

The need for cycling growth

The All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group report ‘Get Britain Cycling’ (2013) concluded that massive growth in cycling was not only desirable but eminently achievable.

The report calls for cycling to increase five-fold by 2025 and more than ten-fold by 2050.

This may seem radical but is in fact just catching up with other northern European countries, with broadly similar economies, weather, topography and culture.



How to achieve cycling growth

The recommendations of this multi-disciplinary group of expert bodies are largely based on those in the 'Get Britain Cycling' report. We recommend:

Political leadership: the Government should support the ambition for 10% of all trips to be by bike by 2025, and 25% by 2050. It should produce a cross-departmental Cycling Action Plan, with resources committed from all Departments whose objectives it serves, including DH, DfE, DCMS, BIS and DECC.

Investment: a long-term cycling budget of at least £10 per British citizen per year, increasing to £20, in line with more advanced EU countries and with the target percentage of trips.

Legislation and regulation: a statutory duty to make high quality provision for cyclists, as in the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, and to design cycling into all road schemes. Improve official design guidance and update regulations to make cycling provision easier.

Road safety and law enforcement: make 20 mph speed limits the norm where people live, work and shop. Improve HGV safety and limit use of HGVs on busy streets at the busiest times. Strengthen the enforcement of road traffic law, including speed limits, and ensure that driving offences – especially those resulting in death or injury – are treated sufficiently seriously by police, prosecutors and judges.

Cycle training: on the curriculum at all schools.

Signatories

We support the motion, and the findings of the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group:

- Association of Directors of Public Health
- Automobile Association
- Bicycle Association
- Brake
- British Cycling
- Campaign for Better Transport
- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
- Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation
- Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management
- CTC the cyclists' organisation
- Cyclenation
- Environmental Transport Association
- Faculty of Public Health
- London Cycling Campaign
- Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety
- Passenger Transport Executive Group
- Play England
- RoadPeace
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
- Royal Society for Public Health
- Sustrans
- UK Health Forum
- 1010
- 20sPlenty for Us

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