

## Chief Executive

# GETTING THE UK CYCLING

This autumn sees the launch of Cycling UK's new five-year strategy. **Paul Tuohy** explains why we need it



**PAUL TUOHY**  
Chief Executive



Right: Julie Stelton

Cycling to school needs normalising

**T**HAT WAS SOME heatwave this summer! MPs may have had a recess, but Cycling UK staff were as busy as ever – supporting members, managing projects, and of course campaigning, with your all-important support.

Already, more than 7,500 of you have written to your MP backing Cycling UK's call for a full review of road traffic offences and penalties (see page 12). The Government proposed to review cycling offences only, in the wake of the media frenzy surrounding the Charlie Alliston case last year. We hope that your support will impress upon the Department of Transport the folly of singling out cyclists when a wider review is what's needed to protect *all* road users.

You also helped us win our campaign to stop the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) from

**“To change these statistics, we need a more ambitious purpose and a different strategy”**

raising the small claims limit in road traffic incidents to £5,000. This was aimed at preventing spurious whiplash claims, but would have caught cyclists in the same net. I'm delighted to say that, with your help, the MoJ backed down! Cyclists will be exempt.

## A NEW PLAN

This summer, we've also been working hard on a new five-year strategy (see page 18). Cycling UK became a charity in 2012 after 129 years as CTC, The Cyclists' Touring Club. We have done a lot for cycling, as a club and a charity. We have helped change the law, improve conditions for cycling, and inspire and assist people to cycle. We have always been passionate about the potential for cycling to make life better for people. In the early days, we were a lone voice. Today, there are thousands of people and communities who share our passion and are making it easier for people to cycle. We are part of a growing social movement.

The UK faces huge challenges, such as air pollution, obesity, poor mental health, and traffic congestion, all of which more cycling could help fix. But despite the efforts and achievements of us and others,

cycling levels in most parts of the UK remain stubbornly low. Women, people from ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities are significantly less likely to cycle than white men. If we are to shift these stubborn statistics upwards, we need a more ambitious purpose and a different strategy.

We believe that *people are the key to bringing about positive, lasting change*. People who are passionate about cycling as a vital ingredient in happier, healthier communities, and who are willing to do something about it – by inspiring and helping others, by helping change attitudes, by influencing those with power and funding, and through sharing knowledge.

Across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are thousands of people who support a thriving cycling culture. They are educating, inspiring, influencing, and supporting. They get things done through formal or informal community groups; through charities and social enterprises; in their schools and workplaces; in universities and think-tanks; or via networks and digital platforms. Some work for public bodies, others seek to influence them. Together, we are an influential social movement. We're convincing the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Transport to take cycling and active travel more seriously. But it only happens because we have people like you supporting the cause of cycling.

We are forging closer working links now with Sustrans, Living Streets, Ramblers, the Bicycle Association, and British Cycling because we need them all by our side. Together, we can turn our communities into vibrant places to live, work, and enjoy life; places where cycling is safe, accessible, and fun. Our allies will be joining in with our demands for improved infrastructure and a regular increase in the percentage of money spent from the transport budget on provisions for walking and cycling.

Our new five-year plan begins on 1 October. We're up for it and, judging by the fantastic support from thousands of you for our campaigns, so are you!