



CycleReading

WORKING FOR A CYCLE FRIENDLY READING

www.readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Summer 2025 No 166

Get Out On Your Bike



What's Inside

- 2 Campaign News
- 5 Kidical Mass Summer Report
- 6 Chairman's Letter
- 7 How To Go Bikepacking
- 8 Electric Adventure from Aldermaston to Bath
- 10 E-Bike and E-Scooter Battery Safety
- 11 Food Courier Switch
- 12 Contact Us • Campaign Diary

Reading Borough Council has recently set up an internal task group to provide scrutiny of the Council's active travel strategy and we will, of course, be contributing our ideas and opinions to this group.

On page 6 you can read the thoughts of our Chairman on the task group's initial questionnaire seeking those opinions.

We tend to concentrate our campaigning efforts on making our local urban and suburban areas cycle-friendly; however there are some cyclists who will

be thinking of taking their bikes further afield, especially during these summer months.

So in this issue we have looked at the practicalities of bike-packing (page 7) and relate a tale of a trip to Bath along Network National Cycle Route 4 on electric assist pedal bikes (page 8).

On that note we also give the technical low-down on how bike batteries work and what can cause them to catch fire, as well as providing tips on how to avoid this (page 10).

Campaign News



Reading Borough Council (RBC)

Summer 2025 Report

Active Travel Task and Finish Group

RBC is setting up a Task and Finish Group to review the success (or otherwise) of the Council's Active Travel schemes and look at how such schemes support the Council's wider transport strategy. The initial step is collating feedback from various interest groups via a questionnaire. We would hope that the group will go on to consider how such schemes are chosen, planned and funded.

Shinfield Road

Works are underway (early May) to remedy the drainage issues on the approach to the Shinfield Green junction which resulted in the cycle lanes being flooded over the winter. Works to complete the signing and lining will be carried out along with remedial works to the dangerous kerb upstands where cyclists transition from the road to the cycle track.

Bath Road and Castle Hill

Previously we reported that RBC would be reconsulting on revised proposals for the scheme to minimise costly changes to the traffic signals at the Castle Hill roundabout due to increasing overall costs. We are awaiting a timescale for consultation on the updated proposals.

A33 Kennet Bridge

Works to complete the new shared-use bridge on the A33 over the river Kennet appear to be almost complete. The new bridge is being built as part of the South Reading Bus Rapid Transit scheme, which will provide bus lanes along the A33. Whilst this doesn't provide any new cycle routes as it replaces what is there already, RBC is taking the opportunity to provide enhanced cycle facilities as part of this project. This is an important link in the cycle network south of Reading,

as not only does it join various routes from the town centre heading southwards, it also links with National Cycle Network route 4 to Newbury and Bristol along the Kennet and Avon canal as well as NCN route 23 to Basingstoke and Southampton. We don't have details of when the new bridge will be opened but we will publicise this as soon as possible.

Cycle Hangars

RBC have secured funding for a trial of cycle hangars as part of the Capability and Ambition programme. This will provide for some secure on-street cycle storage hangars in residential streets, such as terraced housing, where there are no other suitable cycle parking spaces. We understand that costs are being finalised, and we await further information about how many cycle hangars will be trialled as well as how the sites will be chosen.

Street Pods Cycle Parking

RBC has also used the Capability and Ambition programme funding to install 36 Street Pod cycle parking stands at different locations across the town centre. These are a different design to the usual Sheffield cycle parking stands as they wrap around the front wheel of a bike, which means that cyclists should only need one lock to secure their bike. The downside is that they only seem suitable for standard solo bikes. These are being installed on a trial basis so we would welcome any feedback from members with their experience of using these cycle parking stands.

Whitley Street Cycle Lane

Several cyclists have raised concerns about the cycle lane on Whitley Street being blocked by drivers parking to use the shops, forcing cyclists to pull out into the busy traffic lane. RBC has responded to this by increasing the level of parking enforcement on this section of road. We would be grateful for any feedback on whether this enforcement is proving effective from members, or whether other measures should be considered.

River Academy

Although concerns were raised about the adequacy of walking and cycling routes around River Academy school before it opened, the Council's Active Travel Officer has been working with the school, feeder primary schools and pupils to identify improved routes to

the school. This has resulted in existing routes on Richfield Avenue being upgraded along with the introduction of a new parallel cycle/pedestrian crossing outside the school. Other routes have been introduced or upgraded on Portman Road. We haven't been involved with the development of these new routes, but we will look to include a plan in a future newsletter to ensure that more people are aware of these new routes.

Public Space Protection Order

RBC is looking to introduce a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for the town centre to deal with the various issues of anti-social behaviour which aren't presently enforced by the Police. This is likely to include issues such as rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour, excess drinking in public, but could also include restrictions on dangerous use of cycles, e-bikes, scooters etc. Naturally, we are concerned about possible further restrictions on cycle use in the town centre, especially as schemes in other towns have been very restrictive. However, we don't presently know what restrictions will be included or how the scheme will be taken forward.

Reading Cycle Map Update

We have recently met with RBC to discuss updating the Reading cycle map. The map was last updated in 2022, since when a number of new schemes have been introduced. Although online cycle maps are increasingly popular, paper-based maps are particularly useful for publicity purposes and are used by many people, especially useful to those new to cycling. We also discussed having a Reading leisure rides map that would be suitable for novice riders and family groups.

Future Meetings

We have regular informal meetings with RBC officers to discuss progress on the various schemes and initiatives that are on-going. If there are any suggestions or queries from members, we would be happy to raise them at these meetings. The next meeting is the Cycle Forum on 4 September. Future dates for the Clean Air and Sustainable Transport forum (CAST) are yet to be confirmed.

Tony Carr
RBC Campaigner for RCC

Campaign News



West Berkshire Council (WBC)

Summer 2025 Report

The West Berkshire Cycle Forum met on Wednesday 16 April.

The next Forum will be on Wednesday 24 September.

If there are any matters you would like raised at the Forum, contact wbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Active Travel England Funding

Cycling, walking and wheeling in West Berkshire is set to be boosted thanks to a £328,000 grant from [Active Travel England](#).

The funding will be put towards West Berkshire Council's [design and delivery of new active travel initiatives](#).

Initiatives which have been delivered using previous funding include the:

- introduction of an additional School Street scheme at Francis Baily School in Thatcham;
- development of proposals to improve the pedestrian and cycle connection between Theale and Calcot;
- development of plans for Stage 2 of the Stockcross Linkway, intended to connect into the wider Newbury area network via Speen Lane.

More School Streets

WBC plan to start a school streets scheme around Springfield Primary School, Tilehurst, in June 2025.

There are currently two schemes in operation in West Berkshire which are enforced by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (APNR), Calcot Infant and Junior, and Francis Baily Primary.

The details of the new scheme and the replies to the consultation are on the WBC website:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/springfield-school-streets>



Springfield Primary School, Tilehurst, RG30 5NJ

Meeting with Olivia Bailey MP

RCC's Rob Hill and Tony Carr met Olivia Bailey in March to discuss Theale Green roundabout. We referred to Kieran Beale's crash when he was hit by a motorist, leading to very serious injuries.

It was Kieran's email which brought the matter to the attention of RCC. We presented the accident numbers for that junction and afterwards forwarded the information to Olivia's office.

There are over 400 new houses and flats being built next to the junction; WBC has not made any assessment as to the effect this will have on traffic at the junction. The Council has indicated it will look at placing improved signage at the junction.

We also discussed the language used when reporting collisions and referred to the 'Media Guidelines for Reporting Road Collisions' - a document which not all media or police statements follow.

Olivia Bailey has [spoken in parliament](#) about her concerns regarding dangerous electric cycles. We told her that RCC is formulating a policy about electric cycles and look forward to having a discussion with her and other local MPs about this subject.

Rob Hill
WBC Campaigner for RCC



Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC)

Summer 2025 Report

Speed limit changes

Wokingham Borough Council has approved significant changes to speed limits and parking restrictions on major roads across the borough.

These changes were approved by the new executive member for active travel, transport and highways, Martin Alder. They have all come from requests from members of the public.*

The approved changes include introducing a 30mph speed limit on parts of the A329 Reading Road in Winnersh, London Road in Wokingham, Hollow Lane in Shinfield, and the A327 Arborfield Road in Shinfield.

A 40mph limit will be put in place on parts of Toutley Road and Longdon Road in Winnersh, where it was previously 30mph. The Council felt that 30mph was not reflective of these roads' function.

Campaign News

Additionally, various double and single yellow lines and no stopping at school entrance markings have been approved across several roads to help manage parking and traffic flow.

*Anyone can request a speed limit change by writing to the Council using information found in the following link www.wokingham.gov.uk/parking-and-transport/road-safety and I would strongly encourage people to use this.

Dates for the Diary

8 June 2025: Three Counties Cycle Ride: 3ccr.org/event-details/

12 June and 26 June 2025: Summer CX Series at Dinton Pastures: www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/317882/Sprockets-Summer-CX-2025-Race-3

22 June 2025: Kidical Mass/Wokingham Bikeathon. Kidical Mass will be starting and finishing a ride at the main Wokingham Bikeathon site at Cantley Park at 10am: www.wokinghambikeathon.co.uk/ and kidicalmassreading.co.uk/our-next-rides/



Darknet Diaries 153 Bike Index

Cycling Podcasts I've Been Listening To

Darknet Diaries 153 Bike Index
darknetdiaries.com/episode/153/ - this podcast talks to the founder of Bike Index, the bike registration site, and looks at how the internet and particularly Facebook Market Place facilitates a sophisticated cross border trade in stolen bikes and how hard it is to get the tech giants to take responsibility.



Cyclist Next Door @cyclistnextdoor

Cyclist Next Door
www.instagram.com/cyclistnextdoor/ - this relatively new podcast focuses on the everyday cyclists and stories we don't always hear from other cycling focused media. The presenter is very engaging and enthusiastic and clearly an avid cyclist herself.

Alex Cran
WoBC Campaigner for RCC

we are
cycling
The cyclists' champion **UK**
READING

**Come and
join us for
a ride!**

- Friendly, sociable group rides to great cafes/pubs.
- All levels of cyclists welcome. Ride your E-bike, gravel, mtb, hybrid, or road bike.
- Wide variety of on and off-road rides throughout the week - day or evening.
- Over 300 rides annually from 20 to 100 miles, we've got something for everyone.

For ride information visit: www.cyclingukreading.org.uk/rides

Or contact Sel Dixon, the club secretary: secretary@cyclingukreading.org.uk
Phone or text: 07867 442046

www.facebook.com/cyclingukreading

Kidical Mass Summer 2025 Report

A Marathon, not a Sprint

When we originally planned March's Reading Kidical Mass ride, we hadn't realised it coincided with the Reading half marathon. This was an interesting situation for two reasons:

1. The route we'd originally planned to use was closed for the runners...
2. ... which included many people who are part of our marshalling team. Apparently, there's a big overlap between cyclists and runners!

We reached out to our community to ask for more marshals - we are so grateful to the people who give up their time to get kids out on their bikes - please let us know if you'd like to get involved as a marshal or baker!

There was a flurry of activity of scribbled-on maps exchanged in the KM WhatsApp group (all the cool kids are on it). We want to offer an opportunity for a large group of children to ride **safely** on the roads, so some routes are just not possible.

Still, we did find a suitable option. The other side of the Kidical Mass operation is to engage with the



Council. When we decide we cannot use a route, that gives us very focused feedback for where we need better infrastructure.

Despite the marathon and the rain, we had a great turnout of over 50 riders, including many new faces.

On the ride we were helped by the new bus and bike lane which runs alongside Palmer Park. The route we would have taken (if not for the road closures) would have taken us through Blake's Wharf, a safe route into town which didn't previously exist. It's great to see progress.

But we also saw evidence of where things can still get better - the current bike route through Gas Works Road involves going up a high kerb (we brought our own ramps).

On the zigzag bridge the station marshals must make sure no child falls down the steps, and this time we were very glad we had them.

Campaigning for better infrastructure is a marathon, not a sprint, and I'm grateful to everyone who came along to our rides to add their voices to ours to say that it matters.

Hilary Smart



Chairman's Letter

Dear RCC members

The theme of this newsletter is 'Get out on your bike', which is part of the founding mission of the RCC we have been promoting for over 40 years.

It was, then, with some puzzlement that I recently received a questionnaire from Reading Borough Council with a set of questions about walking and cycling and active travel in general.

They asked, 'How do you think people (in general) find cycling in Reading?' and 'What is currently discouraging some people from cycling in Reading?'. I think we have been telling them this for a very long time in all sorts of different ways - have they not been listening?

The questionnaire was sent as a result of the formation of a scrutiny group to look at the way the Council's active travel strategy is implemented. Sadly, the questionnaire does not ask anything about the Council's own policies and procedures, although it does ask what steps they could take to make it easier to choose walking but strangely not cycling.

The other thing which recently caught my attention was the decision by Jeremy Vine to stop posting on social media videos of cycling matters as a direct result of the threats and abuse he has received from the anti-bike lobby. Peter Walker wrote a 'more in sorrow than anger' piece in *The*

Guardian about how he had received similar abuse. I also have experienced considerable anger towards me when I have been out cycling, and I was obviously seen to be denying a car driver's God-given right to drive anywhere at whatever speed he or she chooses. And yes, women drivers can be just as bad.

Our cause is certainly not helped by the press picking on the most sensational items. A search for 'UK cycling news' brings up the proposed life sentence for any cyclist who kills a pedestrian. This makes front page news, but the awful and continuing loss of lives on our roads caused by the drivers of vehicles hardly merits a mention.

A quick look at the government's statistics website shows that during the period 2004 to 2020 each week an average of two pedal cyclists were killed and 83 seriously injured on Britain's roads. The average sentence for causing death by dangerous driving is under three years.

If the Mayor of London is really concerned about the safety of Londoners, as well as banning exploding e-bikes from London trains, perhaps he should resurrect the splendid policy of requiring all locomotive vehicles to be preceded by a man carrying a red flag.

Whilst this might seem a bit flippant, I contend that gross disparity in the reporting can only be explained by a

long process of normalising vehicular traffic and the attendant problems it brings and that by blaming a very small minority, this effectively diverts attention from the big picture.

In the days when actual horsepower ruled the road, these noisy new things belching smoke really did frighten the horses. They belch a little less smoke these days, but they frighten even me when I am on my bike.

The most common answer to the two questions at the start of this letter, is that cycling on Reading's roads is too dangerous. The solutions to reducing these dangers are not simple and providing separate cycle facilities is often impractical or too expensive in Britain's crowded towns and on roads designed only for cars and lorries. Raising the standards of driving would be a very good first step.

We MOT test cars every year but never retest the drivers. Once you get a licence, unless you get caught doing something really bad, your driving abilities never get tested again.

Maybe we should campaign for regular testing of drivers along with a concerted campaign showing that in the matter of road safety, cyclists are far more sinned against than sinning, then maybe we can persuade more people to get out on their bikes.

Joe Edwards
RCC Chairman
(chair@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk)

risc

35-39 London Street, RG1 4PS
www.risc.org.uk

world shop & global refills

fair trade • ethical • sustainable

open 10am-6pm
tuesday-sunday

 @risc.org.uk

 @risc_globalcafe_worldshop

 @risc_reading

Need your bike repaired? Don't have the time or tools to do it yourself?

Wheel building and truing a speciality.

Contact **Bob Bristow** on

0118 958 2056

or email bobbristow.bikes@gmail.com

for cycle repairs at a very reasonable price.

How To Go Bikepacking

Sit outside the Fisherman's Cottage in Reading with a pint on a sunny Sunday and you'll often spot cyclists passing on the canal-side path, bikes laden like pack mules. Look closely at their faces and you will see a certain kind of grin reserved only for those who have achieved the purest state of independence and free spiritedness. These are 'bikepackers'. Bikepacking is the latest craze to hit the cycling world, accompanied by a proliferation of bloggers, influencers, and gear comparison websites.

Of course, bicycle touring is nothing new. People have been travelling long distances by bicycle in a self-supported fashion for as long as there have been bicycles.

An early pioneer in this regard was T. E. Lawrence who, before his famous adventures in Arabia, completed a 2,200-mile tour of France entirely by bike in the Summer of 1908. How he managed this before the invention of padded shorts and properly surfaced roads is anyone's guess.

What is different now is the range of ultralight, packable gear and ingenious luggage solutions available at a relatively affordable rate. This makes it possible to travel much further in a self-supported fashion.

Specialised bags can be attached to the handlebar, on top of or below the top tube, to the seat post, and to the front forks. And while classic pannier bags remain an excellent solution for entirely on-road touring, these alternative "frame-hugging" solutions allow one to distribute the weight equally across the bike, which massively improves manoeuvrability, essential if one plans to go off road (such as the 125 mile, Traws Eryri all-terrain mountain bike trail in Wales).

So, you want to try bikepacking yourself, but don't know where to start? The first thing to choose is the bike, of course. To start out, a standard hybrid bike will serve fine. Just try to make sure it's not too heavy, as you may occasionally have to carry it over turnstiles or up staircases.

For my first trips in the UK and the Netherlands, I used my middle-of-the-road commuter hybrid bike. This kind of bike is well suited to on-road tours, even with a bit of off-road gravel or towpath sections. For longer off-road



My preferred bikepacking setup: two pannier bags and a handlebar bag.

tours, a suspension is essential, so a hard-tail mountain bike is advised.

After choosing a bike, it's time to think about equipment. The gold standard is Ortlieb, the German manufacturer of the famous Back-Roller pannier bag. Ortlieb sell a variety of high-quality packs for attaching all over the bike. They are only matched in their careful craft and thoughtful design by the British newcomer Restrap.

Restrap even offer a custom frame-bag service so you can design your perfect luggage solution. Neither of these options are cheap - a handlebar bag alone can set you back £100 - but high-quality equipment can be easily resold, even after heavy use. Indeed, I have bought several Ortlieb bags second hand, in excellent condition.

Now we need to plan a route. Route planning for bikepacking follows much the same logic as any other bike ride, except that extra care must be taken for hilly and mountainous stretches. A full bikepacking setup can easily add 10-15 kg to the weight of your bike, which you will certainly notice when going uphill.

Beginners are advised not to plan more than 30 miles per day for hilly areas such as in the West Country or Wales. For flatter regions like the Netherlands, the extra weight will not be noticed much, so you can easily ride for more than 60 miles a day without too much exertion (provided there are no strong headwinds).

While there is a certain joy in starting and ending a tour on your doorstep,

for most trips you will need to transport your bike elsewhere. If you have a car and a bike rack, you can drive of course, though this does limit you to circular routes. For more interesting linear routes, one can take a train, a flight, or a ferry. Where available, ferries offer arguably the simplest means to transport your bike, as you can keep it fully assembled. Ferry services from Harwich, Portsmouth and Plymouth are all bike friendly, and allow you to reach the Netherlands, France, and Spain.

I am still very much a rookie when it comes to bikepacking, but already I have a few adventures under my belt. Late this March, two friends called Alex and I set out from Shaftesbury, Dorset, bound for Portland, where we planned to camp for the night. The ride started well: clear skies, smooth, quiet country lanes, and bucolic scenery.

As we approached the coast, the headwinds grew stronger and stronger until, just outside Weymouth, it felt like cycling up a 20% gradient. We arrived at Portland, with one final 100 m climb to reach the campsite. After a hearty fish and chip supper and a good night's sleep in our tents, we were ready to return to Shaftesbury, taking in as many thatched villages and pub stops along the way as possible. The ride ended with an epic climb back up to Shaftesbury (though I opted to push my bike up Gold Hill, one of the Alexes pedalled the entire way) before a celebratory curry. That's what they call Type 2 fun!

Sam Hatfield

Electric Adventure from Aldermaston to Bath

After years of talking about it, they finally did it!

On the morning of 6 April, three of them — John, Paul, and Mike — set off from Aldermaston Wharf on a two-day journey along the stunning Kennet and Avon Canal, heading westward to Bath.

Here's their story according to **John Clark** of *Velospeed*, and we thank him for allowing us to reprint this.

Day 1: Aldermaston to Devizes

It was a glorious day to set out on the first leg to Devizes, fortified by a fry up at Aldermaston Tea Rooms.

We're riding Moustache e-bikes - one Xroad 5 FS, an Xroad 7 and a Weekend twin battery with full suspension - perfect for this sort of trip!



As we made our way west, the route served up a wonderful mix of scenery: peaceful narrowboats (some pristine, some... well-loved), walkers, fellow cyclists, and even a few determined anglers in the middle of Newbury town centre.

We paused in Kintbury for a well-earned pint at the Blue Ball Inn, where the cider went down a treat.



Even with electric assistance from our powerful Bosch motors, a day's ride still takes it out of you — especially for aging knees and legs. A quick rest, a cold drink, and a stretch made all the difference. And it's nice to get off the saddle!

Barges of old must have been propelled through these tunnels using the foot method, where you lie on your back on top of the boat and "walk" the barge along.

We, on the other hand, rode up the hill next to the tunnel, more sensible than cycling through 5m of water.

At times, if following the National Cycle Network route 4, you are away from the canal and cycling through the lovely Wiltshire countryside.

Obviously we got lost a few times — I was not to blame, of course. Naturally there are pubs which must be investigated along the route.



Looking for a e-bike?

Or would you like to try one?

Visit our shops in Yattendon and Oxford

www.velospeed.co.uk



Electric Adventure from Aldermaston to Bath

Eventually we got to Devizes and checked into the Castle Hotel. They have excellent bike storage facilities, and the rooms are comfortable.

Sadly, the restaurant was closed on a Sunday evening, so we found 'Nerano', an excellent Italian restaurant, so that turned out well.

Day 2: Devizes to Bath

The amazing Caen Hill Locks, here we are huddled together for warmth at the top. An amazing feat of engineering, restored in the 1960s and kept going these days by the Canal and River Trust.

There were lots of volunteers there, and one of them helpfully took our photo before we descended the 237 feet.

Cake and coffee were had in the little café here, and Paul managed a bacon roll. It had been nearly 15 minutes since breakfast, after all.

Another coffee stop, Dusty Ape Coffee just off the towpath - we thoroughly recommend their coffee and cakes.

Below is the view from the viaduct over the River Avon at Avoncliff. We had managed to get on the wrong side of the canal, but all was not lost, and we regained the correct path.

Mike started to doubt we were on the right route but



Huddled together for warmth at Caen Hill Locks

there's only one canal and you can only go one way on it at a time, so we ignored him.

Happily, we were right for once.

As we got to Bradford on Avon there were more people enjoying the day on the towpath, so it was important to ride carefully and ring the bell to warn them.

There were a lot of boats moored up, many of them a little the worse for wear, as were their owners. An interesting herbal aroma filled the air.

Then on to Bath, where I forgot to take any photos of the city from the towpath. It was quite different and worth taking a look if you're there.

And finally, to Bath station where we were just in time for the 15:13 and fortunately it was also on time. We'd booked three bike spaces on board, but they were very inadequate. It worked out fine though.



View over Bath



Back to Reading station in an hour.

Reflections

Two days, three bikes, one canal, and countless laughs. This trip was years in the planning and all the more special for finally making it happen.

We wholeheartedly recommend the route for anyone with a sense of adventure and a love of beautiful British landscapes.

We'll be planning and hopefully actually doing more so any tips will be gratefully received.

If this story gives you serious FOMO and you haven't got your e-bike yet - come and have a chat! We'd love to see you at either of our Velospeed showrooms.



View from the viaduct over the River Avon at Avoncliff

E-Bike and E-Scooter Battery Safety

Electric scooters, electric bikes, power tools, laptops and phones all contain batteries. These contain substantial amounts of energy and are all capable of failing in a manner of ways, causing fires.

Here we are mostly concerned with bike and scooter batteries, but the safety advice applies to all sorts of battery systems. Bike and scooter batteries are much higher capacity and so demand more respect in handling.

Most of these will use the 18650 cells. These are 18mm diameter and 65mm long hence the part number 18650. They are commonly used in power tools, electric bicycles, and electric vehicles.

These usually use lithium-iron (Li-ion) chemistry to store the electrical charge. They will have a cell voltage of between 3.6V and 4.2V.

The cylindrical batteries are combined into packs, to create the voltage and capacity of the battery pack. Cells arranged in series will increase the voltage, while those in parallel increase the capacity.

The capacity is given in either Amp Hours (Ah) or Watt Hours (Wh). My e-bike batteries are 36V and have a capacity of 15Ah or 540Wh.

Lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries can cause fires. The electrolyte they contain is flammable, and toxic, and can leak out gas from a damaged cell and produce a very intense flame.

These batteries can fail if the cells are charged too rapidly causing the lithium-ion to build internal short circuits inside the cell.

This also happens if the battery is charged when the cells are below 0°C or above 70°C, or if the charging current is too great. Short circuits can also occur if the battery is punctured or severely distorted.

Equally, rapid discharging can damage the cell, but the danger here comes from the external circuit overheating from drawing too much power from the battery.

This is mostly mitigated by the Battery Management Systems (BMS) inside of these that prevent overcharging, unbalanced charging, short circuit, or over temperature. This will monitor

the state of the battery, during discharge and charging.

The BMS also controls the battery cells in the pack, monitors the temperature and will disconnect the pack if it overheats or experiences other unsafe conditions.

It also controls the charging cycle, using a low voltage to limit the current until the cells reach a minimum voltage, after which the charger will limit the voltage to complete the charging cycle.

We use many of these batteries every day, and they are very low risk. But the higher capacities used in electric bikes and scooters need to be respected.

Scooters are often more vulnerable, where the battery is under the riding place and close to the road, and more likely to suffer impact damage.

CE marking and compliance for batteries in the UK is only required in Northern Ireland where EU regulations apply. Despite this most batteries will have CE compliance, and you should check before buying a battery.



awcycles

Proudly Supports
Reading Cycle campaign

110 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6DH
0118 946 3050 | info@awcycles.co.uk | awcycles.co.uk

E-Bike and E-Scooter Battery Safety

There are similar issues with LiPo (Lithium Polymer) batteries used in drones. These may burn or explode when charging as they generally do not contain a BMS. The chargers perform this function by separately charging each cell.

Just under half (48%) of the fires involving an e-bike or e-scooter were recorded with batteries on charge, according to reports from the London Fire Brigade.

To summarise the advice on charging:

1. Only use the charger supplied with the battery.
2. Do not leave a battery unsupervised while charging. If you are going out disconnect the charger.
3. Charge in a safe place, like a fire hearth.
4. Do not charge if there is damage to the battery; dispose of in a battery collection point.

Further reading

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithium-ion_battery
<https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/product-safety/lithium-ion-batteries/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fires-in-e-bikes-and-e-scooters/fires-in-e-bikes-and-e-scooters-2022-and-2023>

Stuart Ward
RCC Website Manager

Food Courier Switch

How do you feel now that there are less food couriers on the roads?

The non-throttle electric bikes have been an interesting debate point in many of our committee meetings.

We firmly believe as a Campaign that all cyclists should have the opportunity to cycle safely and should behave responsibly. We're also cognisant that the working conditions many of those young men found themselves in meant they had to choose between their, and potentially others', safety and being able to earn any money.

We're not going to comment on the kids, who, having had most other sources of entertainment defunded, have been using these e-bikes to do tricks.

In recent weeks it has been noticeable that many of those riders have abandoned their bikes in favour of a moped. The number of mopeds with 'L's on is now a regular sight at bike racks in town, and on the road.

And visually there's far less cyclists out there. It's not surprising: mopeds are bigger and can go faster, so they can get more jobs done in the same space of time.

And no doubt people who feared the perception of these cyclists tarring us all will be delighted.

The positives are there's less people on the Kennet cycling, which is a plus



for anyone walking along there. But some of the more active cyclists on the committee have noticed there's now more motorised vehicles on the road.

I had a close pass in a bus lane which stimulated me to write this article, and it was more intimidating than if it came from another cyclist. Mopeds, like cars, put out toxic fumes and a collision with a moped would be worse than with an e-bike*.

What do you think? Will the loss of numbers take us away from this critical mass of cyclists? Will

that positively or negatively impact the Council's desire to support active travel? Is the move back to motor vehicles a good or bad thing?

*We note of course that there has been less than one recorded death by a non-throttled e-bike in comparison to the 463 pedestrian and civilian deaths caused by cars in the last reporting period, so there is no reason to think that these learner moped drivers will crash.

Kat Heath
RCC Events Coordinator



Contact Us

readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
facebook.com/ReadingCycleCampaign
@rdgcyclecampaign.bsky.social

Chairman	Joe Edwards chair@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Secretary	Keith Elliott secretary@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Treasurer	Brian Morley treasurer@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Keith Collyer membership@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Publicity Coordinator	Susan Children publicity@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Events Coordinator	Kat Heath events@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Reading Campaigners	Tony Carr & John Lee rbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Wokingham Campaigner	Alex Cran wokingham@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
West Berks Campaigner	Rob Hill wbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Newsletter Editor and Designer	Alice Elliott newsletter@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
Website Manager	Stuart Ward webmaster@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
CUK Liaison	Karen Robertson
Newsletter Distribution	Kat Heath and Nick Zealey

Next newsletter copy deadline: 1 August 2025
The newsletter is delivered electronically to RCC members.
If you prefer to receive a paper copy, please email
membership@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Campaign.

Cycling Events

5 June @ 11:00 - 14:00
Free Dr Bike Session in Reading

8 June @ 08:00 - 17:00
Bracknell Cycle Festival / Three Counties Ride

10 June @ 08:00 - 16 June @ 17:00
Bike Week Events

14 June @ 10:00 - 17:00
Newbury Cycle Festival

View more events on our Events page:
<https://readingcyclecampaign.org.uk/events/>

RCC's Monthly Meetings

7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month
Wed 16 July 2025 - cttee mtg
Wed 20 Aug 2025 - open mtg
Wed 17 Sept 2025 - cttee mtg

See RCC's Facebook Page or our website for more details.

Advertising Rates:

1/6 page (87.5mm x 80mm):

RCC members £6 - Non-members £12

1/3 page (180mm x 80mm):

RCC members £10 - Non members £20

1/2 page (180mm x 120mm):

RCC members £14 - Non members £28

Full page (180mm x 247mm):

RCC members £25 - Non members £50

Bikes 'n' Bits (text only) free to RCC members

Contact the Editor by emailing
newsletter@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

PURCO PRINT 0118 958 8737
For a Sharper Image

GREAT PRICES - FAST DELIVERY

LETTER HEADS
BUSINESS CARDS
BILL PADS
FOLDERS NCR SETS
MENUS LEAFLETS
BOOKLETS / MAGAZINES

XEROX DIGITAL PRINTING
For Small Print Runs
Flyers, Invitations
Booklets, Reports

Call us on 0118 9588 737
or Email: sales@purcoprint.co.uk
To discuss your printing requirements
Unit 3-4, 132 Bath Road, Reading RG30 2EU

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Campaign.