



CycleReading

WORKING FOR A CYCLE FRIENDLY READING

www.readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Autumn 2026 No 171

Making Reading Safe for Cyclists



What's Inside

- 2 Campaign News
- 7 Kidical Mass Autumn Report
- 8 Chairman's Letter
- 9 Cycle Safety in Reading
Just One Thing (A Drivers' Guide)
- 10 What Cyclists Say About
Cycling in Reading
- 11 Simple Brake Check
Quick Win for Lower Earley
- 12 Contact Us
Campaign Diary

The Reading Cycle Campaign's strapline is "Working for a cycle-friendly Reading", and cycle-friendly includes it being safe for cyclists to get around. It is well established that the biggest deterrent to people cycling is the fear around road safety.

The issue of cyclists' safety in Reading made national news recently when the BBC picked up on some analysis of accident statistics - RCC's Tony Carr explains this on page 9. You can also listen to the interview Tony

did with BBC Radio Berkshire on <https://tinyurl.com/yc5dbkwk>.

We identify the worst locations for accidents involving cyclists in Reading, and have a roundup of what local cyclists say on social media about riding in and around our town on page 10.

And, of course, read the Campaigners', Kidical Mass and Chairman's reports, plus our other articles, including our new entries 'Just One Thing' and 'Quick Win'.

Campaign News

Reading Borough Council
(RBC)

Autumn 2026 Report



Bath Road and Castle Hill - Active Travel Tranche 3

We first reported on the Bath Road and Castle Hill scheme back in Summer 2022. It's fair to say that it's had a long and complex planning and development process, with design changes, cost reviews, preliminary consultations, oversight by Councillors, as well as design reviews by Active Travel England, who have been managing the allocation of funding for the scheme. But we are very glad to say that detailed scheme plans have now been agreed and have been released for public consultation.

The Council is to be applauded for developing a scheme which addresses concerns we have raised about previous cycle schemes: it doesn't just provide disconnected cycle facilities where it is relatively easy to do so, but also a continuous cycle route from the town centre through to the Bath Road junction with Southcote Lane.

Whilst the Bath Road and Castle Hill corridor is a major route to and from Reading town centre, it is a heavily trafficked route with major junctions which is presently an unattractive route for most cyclists.

By providing a continuous route for cyclists, this scheme opens up this corridor for increased numbers of cycle journeys to and from the town centre.

We acknowledge the scheme has some compromises, as it has to fit within existing highway infrastructure whilst continuing to provide for all other road users. We have made a number of comments on the scheme, but these are essentially matters of detail.

We therefore strongly support the scheme as it is a considerable improvement to conditions for cyclists along this corridor. Also, we welcome the amount of time and effort RBC has put into this scheme's development.

Future Cycle Scheme Funding

In the last newsletter we highlighted the good news about RBC receiving Government grants through Active Travel England for walking, cycling and wheeling improvements. These grants include capital funding to construct new schemes as well as revenue funding for network planning, scheme development, community engagement, etc. Encouragingly, this is continuous multi-year funding which is not directed at specific schemes, as previous funding has been.

We appreciate that many schemes take time to plan and develop or require Traffic Regulation Orders (parking restrictions, speed limits etc) which are often time-consuming, so we have submitted a list of smaller quick-win schemes for RBC to

The banner features a row of five bicycle silhouettes at the top, decreasing in size from left to right. Below them is the 'awcycles' logo in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Underneath the logo is a stylized graphic of a person riding a bicycle, with the person's body forming the frame. To the right of this graphic, the text 'Proudly Supports' is written in a smaller font, followed by 'Reading Cycle campaign' in a larger, bold font. At the bottom, the address '110 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6DH' and contact information '0118 946 3050 | info@awcycles.co.uk | awcycles.co.uk' are listed.

Campaign News continued...

consider, based on suggestions for improvements from RCC members.

Ideas include removal of barriers and pinch-points on routes, reduced wait times and improved detection for cycles at traffic signals, improved crossings where shared-use paths cross sideroads, better lighting on routes away from roads in order to improve personal security, flush kerbs at crossing points, widened paths through parks, better markings on routes, and filling missing links on routes.

RBC has asked us for more details of many of these schemes, so it is good to see these suggestions are actively being considered. In the meantime, please forward any further suggestions for improvements to us so we can discuss them with RBC.

Cycle Hangars

RBC has confirmed funding for between four and six cycle hangars has been secured. The Council has asked residents to identify possible locations for sites as part of a public consultation, with responses required by 31 August. We will report back when we hear the outcome of this.

Bus Lane and Sidmouth Street Cycle Schemes

We have provided initial comments to RBC on the proposed partial removal of the Sidmouth Street cycle lane, which is proposed as part of plans to introduce a bus lane on London Road.

We have suggested the proposed changes to this cycle route would be more acceptable if improvements were included to make alternative local cycle facilities safer, more connected, more convenient and easier to use, in order to develop the overall network of routes in this part of the town.

The bus lane scheme and changes to Sidmouth Street will be subject to public consultation later in the year and we will be watching to see if our suggested measures are included as part of the proposed changes.

Cycle and Pedestrian Safety

Local media has recently highlighted a worrying number of injury crashes involving cyclists and pedestrians, which results in the impression cycling and walking are inherently dangerous. We will raise this concern at the next

Cycle Forum meeting in September, where we will request RBC to develop a more coherent approach to reviewing road safety for vulnerable road users, especially for those sites with a high number of reported injury crashes involving cyclists and pedestrians.

Future Meetings

We have regular informal meetings with RBC officers to discuss progress on the various schemes and initiatives which are on-going. If there are any suggestions or issues from members, we would be happy to raise them at these meetings. Also, there are regular formal meetings with the Council: the next Cycle Forum will be on 3 September, and the next Clean Air and Sustainable Transport forum (CAST) takes place on 1 December.

Tony Carr
RBC Campaigner for RCC



West Berkshire Council (WBC)

Autumn 2026 Report

Burghfield to Mortimer Cycle and Walking Path



A new off-road path is taking shape alongside Burghfield Road, starting just after College Piece in Mortimer. The section to Longmoor Lane is

complete and work has now begun at the Burghfield Common end near the twin roundabouts. The project is funded by Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council from their Community Infrastructure Levy. The path provides a tree-lined, safe route for those choosing to walk or cycle between the two villages. Most importantly, the new path will enable children from Mortimer to travel independently to the Willink School in Burghfield.

Goring Gap Active Travel

The group have been working with South Oxon CC on the area's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan and the development of a greenway between Goring and Wallingford. Details about these projects and group rides can be found on their website: <https://tinyurl.com/3af9dvhk>.



The next West Berks Cycle Forum will be on Wednesday 23 September. If there are any cycling or active travel matters you would like raised at the Cycle Forum or with WBC, please let me know.

Rob Hill
WBC Campaigner for RCC
wbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk



Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC)

Autumn 2026 Report

Woodley to Reading Cycle Scheme

The final section of the first half of the Woodley to Palmer Park cycle scheme was scheduled to open on Monday 24 August. Work then starts on the second half from Woodlands Avenue towards Palmer Park.

This will provide a safe cycling route from central Woodley to Palmer Park and will be WoBC's first LTN 1/20 compliant piece of cycle infrastructure.

It is likely at least one organised ride will be organised in the Autumn to promote and publicise this route, and any definite dates will be published on the WoBC website and in future RCC communications.

Barrier Removal in Wokingham and Earley

Several very cycle (and pram/wheelchair) unfriendly barriers have been removed and replaced with more

Campaign News continued...

appropriate barriers around Earley and Wokingham (see page 11 for an example). These are relatively small changes but ones which make a big difference to how easily people can move around the borough.

If you have an example of a physical barrier to cycling, please pass it on or report it directly to WoBC, who can consider whether it can be changed.

Spokes ETC Bike Workshop in Earley

Spokes ETC bike workshop is a brand-new cycle workshop based in the Centrepoint Community centre (RG6 5HZ) offering affordable and accessible bike repair services aimed at keeping families, leisure riders and commuters on their bikes. They are also looking for volunteers to help. More information and opening times about the workshop can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/3r7rwvuz>.

Safer Streets

A recent Department for Transport report showed there were 194

collisions on Wokingham's roads in 2025 where one or more people were killed or injured, resulting in 253 casualties - around five a week.

The number of injuries classed as serious more than doubled compared with 2024, with pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists significantly more at risk.

These figures and the increase year on year are stark and show why WoBC must take road safety, especially for vulnerable users, more seriously.

Thankfully the Safer Streets consultation earlier this year showed the public are aware of local issues and are keen for things to change.

841 members of the public responded to the safer streets consultation, submitting almost 2000 proposals for streets or areas where they believe a safer speed limit is needed.

There were also 95 proposals from 15 town and parish councils. These proposals are now being assessed against WoBC's speed limit policy, and

the first new speed limits are expected to be introduced from January 2027 following public consultation, with more to follow.

Kidical Mass at the Wokingham Bikeathon

To end on a positive - the Wokingham Bikeathon at Cantley park on 28 June was a big success, with the Kidical Mass children's bike ride being the highlight.

In 2025 we had over 70 cyclists take part, which was a record for Kidical Mass in Wokingham; this year's attendance doubled to around 150 cyclists, proving that if you organise and help people to cycle safely, they will.

Thanks to everyone who took part and all the marshals who helped make this event such a good one; we'll be back next year to hopefully increase the number again!

Alex Cran
WoBC Campaigner for RCC

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Campaign News continued...

Going Round Again

Going round a busy multi-lane roundabout on a bike is something you might try to avoid if possible. But one fine Spring day back in 2019, about a hundred cyclists got together to cycle round the Vastern Road roundabout. And then cycle round it again. And then cycle round it again.

The Vastern Road roundabout is the one between the railway station and Reading Bridge, and it's the worst spot in Reading for cyclists to get hit by motor vehicles. This had been brought into sharp focus in 2018 when one of our members, Adam, was a victim of one such collision. We decided it was an issue which needed drawing to people's attention.

The mass cycle event was covered by the BBC and ITV, as well as more local news outlets, and Reading Borough Council did look at the design of the roundabout to see how safety could be improved.

The result of this was the introduction of new spiral lane markings on the roundabout to help guide drivers to the correct lane for their exit. But this was just one of the improvements we had suggested to the Council.

Tellingly, at the time the changes were proposed, the Council's transport officers reported that *"Even as a result of this change, further improvement may be needed"*.

Fast forward seven years to 2026 - are further improvements needed? Well, the accident statistics most definitely show that they are.

There are seven roundabouts on the Inner Distribution Road, and in the past five years there have been as many accidents involving cyclists on the Vastern Road roundabout as all of the other six put together. But again, it was a recent collision where one of our members, Mashood, was the victim, which has brought this accident blackspot back into focus.

Mashood had entered the roundabout from under the railway bridge and was progressing towards the exit for Reading bridge when he was hit by a car entering the roundabout from Vastern Road - that's the road by the Thames Water offices, and the location where most accidents occur.

Mashood suffered serious injuries and the police and ambulance services



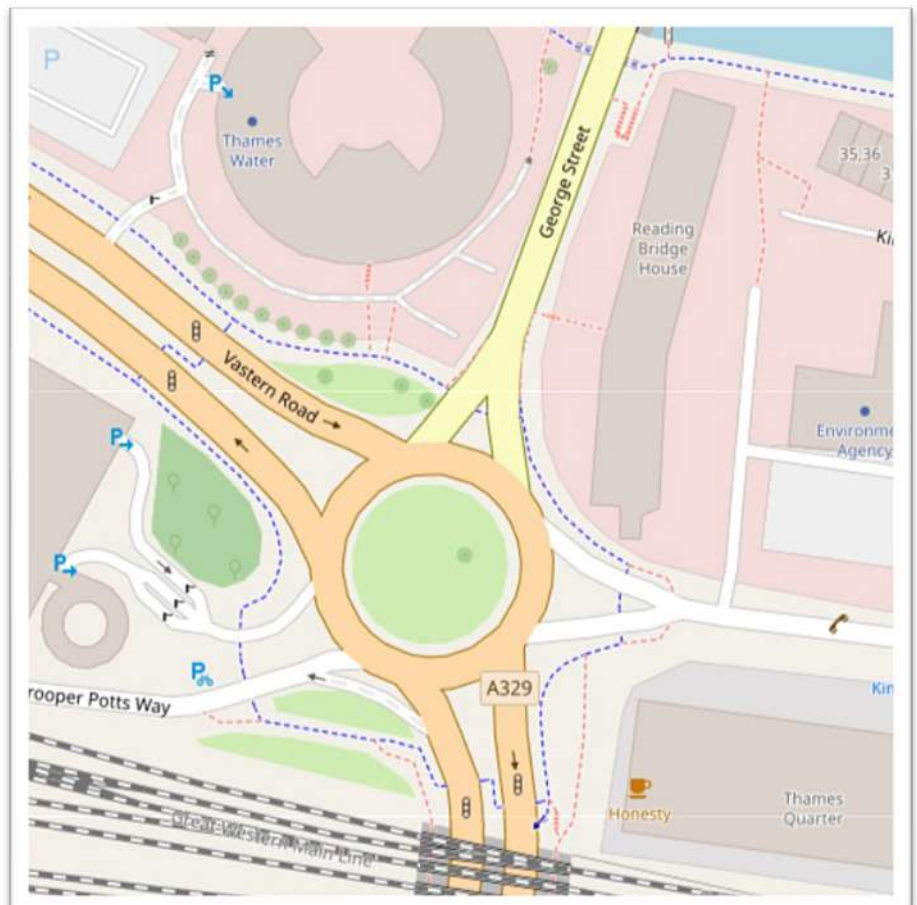
The 2019 Protest Ride

were called. It was 10am in the morning, the weather was fair and visibility good; the driver said that he did not see Mashood.

So, what's to be done? At a meeting of the Council's Policy Committee in July this year the issue of cycle safety in Reading was raised. This was following

a news report that road accidents in Reading feature a disturbingly high proportion of cyclists compared to other towns and cities.

John Ennis, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, stated that: *"The Council is committed to reducing risks for*



Vastern Road roundabout (Source: Openstreetmap)

Campaign News continued...

vulnerable users such as cyclists... We are meeting with the Reading Cycle Campaign to get their input on this and where they consider the most important areas are where improvements for cycle safety are needed."

It's encouraging to hear this commitment from the Lead Councillor. A roundabout with multiple lanes and five exits is a tricky beast to tame, but it's a beast of our own making, and it's not impossible to make safety improvements given the will and the budget.

We will be talking to RBC about how safety can be improved at the Vastern Road roundabout. Hopefully we can agree on some meaningful action without the need to go round and round the roundabout again.

What Has Thames Valley Police Ever Done for Us?

To find out what Thames Valley Police (TVP) does for cyclists, and perhaps what more they could do, we invited a TVP representative to talk to us at our June Open Meeting. Sergeant Betsy



Sergeant Betsy Palmer

Palmer duly showed up for duty and treated us to a wonderfully frank and informative Q & A session.

Betsy is a keen cyclist herself and uses a

bike to commute to work. She works in the Neighbourhood Policing team and told us their priorities are driven by residents' opinions and crime data, with retail crime and anti-social behaviour being high on the list. Consequently, cyclists may not figure as highly on TVP's priorities as Betsy herself would wish.

If you are interested, you can find out the neighbourhood police priorities for your local area on the TVP website: <https://tinyurl.com/w8it9n3v>.

When asked how the TVP could make cycling better and safer, Betsy felt that more enforcement in relation to driving offences and speeding would help; and in terms of what cyclists themselves could do, Betsy suggested

good visibility (clothes/lights) and exercising caution when overtaking and undertaking.

Betsy explained whilst the Roads Policing team deal with road safety, the Neighbourhood teams can issue tickets in relation to basic road traffic offences and report people to court.

However, she pointed out the threshold of evidential proof is high for action to be taken. Many offences that are reported in relation to careless or dangerous driving the TVP struggle to prove, as it is often one word against the other. Betsy suggested go-pro cameras are useful when cycling on the road as they can be used to prove offences.

The Neighbourhood teams do get to deal with bike thefts and have deployed trap bikes in high theft areas, as well as the use of plain clothes officers. Betsy stated they seize any bikes they suspect are stolen and bring them back to the station until someone can prove ownership and claim them.

As a result they have a lot of unclaimed bikes in store! In this respect Betsy remarked the use of Bike Register kits* and other forms of bike marking are really important. Firstly, they help prevent thefts if they are clearly marked on bikes, and secondly, they make it much easier for the TVP to reunite stolen bikes with their owners. Knowing the serial number of your bike can also be very helpful.

Besty explained as a general rule crimes are investigated proportionately, taking into account the available evidence and the threat, harm and risk surrounding them. There will always be a crime assessment, and if there are reasonable lines of enquiry, then these should be taken by officers to establish where there is sufficient evidence to proceed.

However, if it is assessed there is no chance of a prosecution, then the crime just gets filed.

Betsy's advice if you are a victim of crime, is to always make note of your crime reference number. Officers in Reading are always busy, so progress can be slow, but if you feel you are being ignored, then call 101 to chase

progress, as this can lead to an investigation being escalated.

* Reading Cycle Campaign members can get a 10% discount on Bike Register kits. Visit our Cycle Hub for details: <https://tinyurl.com/4ey59b7n>

The Nation's Cycle Campaigners Come to Reading

Two dates for your diary this Autumn.



The first is our AGM, which will be held at RISC on London Street on Thursday 7 October starting at 7pm. This is where we will elect the committee to serve for the next 12 months, but also your chance to let us know how you want us to represent local cyclists and where our focus should be.



The second is Saturday 14 November. We're very excited to be partnering with Cycling UK to host a national cycle campaigners' conference in Reading.

The conference is titled: 'Reframing the Message'. What's the most effective messaging for talking about cycling in a positive and inspiring way? This is your opportunity to find out!

The conference will take place in the Civic Centre on Bridge Street; it's free but spaces are limited. Register your attendance as soon as you can at: <https://tinyurl.com/2et6nzys>

Keith Elliott
RCC Secretary

Kidical Mass Autumn 2026 Report

Sunshine, Cycling and School Runs

In June Kidical Mass and friends ran family friendly rides in both Reading and Wokingham. The Wokingham ride from the bikeathon was especially popular with over 100 bikes taking part.

In Reading the route we took was much easier to ride than it would have been a few years ago. We enjoyed the ride along the Kennet with the wide bike path which passes Huntley Wharf and very much appreciated the shortened boom barrier on Chestnut Walk which made it much easier to pass that way (see bottom picture).

Cycling back through the tunnel under the station (see right) - another campaigning win of recent years - was a great reminder of the value of pushing for safer connected bike routes throughout Reading. And where they exist, they are glorious!

We are now heading back into a new academic year. If your family is considering taking the school run on a bike, then do come down to Reading Cycling Festival on Christchurch Meadows on Sunday 13 September. We will be running a family friendly ride and will be happy to discuss our experience of different setups for transporting children.

Within our ride team we have experience of and can answer questions about child seats, trailers, tagalongs, follow-me-tandems, actual tandems, triplets, long tail cargo e-bikes and box bikes. And that's just the setups my husband (and Kidical Mass ride leader) Simon has tried out!

Our children are getting a bit older now and enjoy riding independently on their own bikes whenever possible.

It's noticeable that if they ride the route to school, they arrive in a better mood than they set off in. Getting the body moving is a great way to start the school day.

After the cycle festival, if you are interested in joining our Halloween or Christmas rides later in the year, please keep an eye on our website kidicalmassreading.co.uk for more details.

Hilary Smart



Chairman's Letter

Dear RCC members

I was reading an article recently which complained about the plague of Lime bikes in London, detailing many of the problems they cause to law-abiding car drivers and owner occupiers in the Capital.

There, of course, was the obligatory reference to "the way their riders often run red lights and cycle on pavements". This got me thinking about the ethics of running red lights and cycling on pavements.

Rules 64 and 69 of the Highway Code are clear and say you **MUST NOT** cycle on pavements, and you **MUST** obey all traffic signs and traffic light signals (their emphasis).

But is life this simple and wouldn't it be nice if obeying the Highway Code really made cycling safer and more popular? Real life is not quite like the perfectly ordered universe envisioned by the Code's writers.

This week my youngest grandchild is doing a holiday course near the King's Road and to get there from her home near Palmer Park, the only safe way for a reasonably competent seven-year-old cyclist is along pavements and very carefully across Cemetery Junction at the pedestrian crossing.

Her Mum shadows her along the way and presumably both of them are committing offences according to the Highway Code. But what else are they

supposed to do? Walking is one option, or should they add to the already heavy road traffic in this area?

Thinking of some of the regular routes which I take around the town, there are several places where I will take to the pavement for short distances to keep myself out of the way of heavy or fast traffic - the Forbury is a road I avoid if I possibly can.

There are also a couple of places, mainly on the entry to bus routes, where it is in my view far safer for all concerned that I get out of the way of the rest of the traffic.

If I wait with them at the red light, I am at risk when it changes and I wobble a bit in getting going and the cars try to push past me. I have long thought that all traffic lights should have an extra phase - perhaps solid red and flashing amber which would allow cyclists and pedestrians to move with caution.

The article claims that 12% of cycling journeys in London are made on rental bikes, but they are responsible for a third of all collisions between cyclists and pedestrians.

What it does not explore is whether this is a big number and also how many other ways pedestrians can be killed and injured on London roads. Crucially the terrible statistics of cyclists killed and injured whether on Lime bikes or not don't ever seem to figure.

Cars (and car drivers) killing people is just something we have to put up with, but a cyclist running into a pedestrian is a cause for instant outrage - "LOCK 'EM ALL UP" cry the popular press.

When I mentioned to my wife I was thinking of writing this piece, her immediate response was: "What about the car drivers who go through red lights?". It seems to be totally accepted for one extra vehicle (or more) to push through as the lights turn to red.

I have seen Reading buses do it, taxis do it, and at the Three Tuns cross-roads it seems to be almost every time, which leads to some very near misses. However, even if we had a special advanced phase at the lights for cyclists, would motorists take any notice, and would it be enforced?

So just how do we cyclists make ourselves safe on the roads? Whilst the Campaign tries to move the dial on the bigger issues, such as dedicated cycle routes and driver education, we still must be responsible as individuals to cycle in a way that keeps ourselves safe and out of the way of others.

If this means sometimes cycling on pavements or getting out of the way of traffic at the lights where it is obviously safer to do so, I for one cannot object.

Joe Edwards
RCC Chairman

RCC's Mission

- To campaign for better facilities for cyclists in Reading, in particular a network of safe cycleways linking residential, industrial and commercial areas, and giving access to the town centre.
- To work with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans), Cycling UK (both locally and nationally), and others interested in promoting cycling and the well-being of cyclists.
- To identify the needs of cyclists in Reading, for example, the location of safe and secure parking, and to campaign for their provision.
- To work with and advise local authorities and, where necessary, criticise and highlight their shortcomings.

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Cycle Safety in Reading

Some of you may have seen a recent news item about a road safety report which suggested Reading was the most dangerous place for cyclists outside of London: <https://tinyurl.com/3frdp66k>

Whilst we would query the way the data has been interpreted in the report (for example comparisons with similar areas rather than Manchester or central London would be more relevant), the data does nevertheless highlight a road safety issue for cyclists in Reading.

The report's conclusion states that out of 277 total road casualties in Reading in 2024, 80 involved injuries to a cyclist, meaning that almost 30% of all road crashes involved a cyclist, even though cyclists typically represent around 2% of total road traffic.

This means that cyclists are at a disproportionately higher risk of an injury crash compared with other road users.

There are several reasons for this, but Cycling UK has highlighted a national issue: when cycling conditions are inconsistent, cyclists' risks increase.



Safety is a critical issue for cyclists. Whilst cycling is now safer than most people think, concerns about safety are a significant deterrent to existing cyclists, and also a discouragement to others considering taking up cycling.

Cycling should feel safe and accessible for everyday journeys. Too often the network is fragmented, and cyclists are forced to use heavily congested or fast main roads or poorly designed junctions.

This all contributes to Reading having this high number of injury collisions involving cyclists.

High risk casualty sites in Reading include:

- Vastern Road/Reading Bridge roundabout
- Caversham Road/Vastern Road roundabout

- Cemetery Junction
- IDR roundabouts
- Oxford Road/Norcot Road roundabout
- Oxford Road/Chatham Street
- Oxford Road/Salisbury Road
- Oxford Road/Beresford Road

What can be done?

Firstly, we would encourage cyclists involved in collisions to always report them to the police so that crashes are always recorded.

Secondly, let us (RCC) know the details of crashes via the Incident Reporting page on our website: <https://tinyurl.com/2pupmh9h> or even locations where cyclists feel unsafe. We can then discuss safety measures for these sites with Reading Borough Council.

We can also provide advice to any cyclist involved.

Tony Carr
RBC Campaigner for RCC

Just One Thing (A Drivers' Guide)

The Dutch Reach

A simple habit which prevents 'dooring' collisions.

Open your car door with your hand furthest from the door.

This naturally turns your body, making you look over your shoulder.

This small movement ensures you check for cyclists and pedestrians before opening the door.

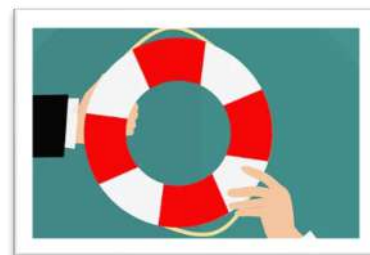


How to do it

- Use your far hand (left hand for the driver, right hand for the passenger)
- Your body rotates
- Your head turns over your shoulder
- You automatically check the blind spot
- You open the door safely

Why it works

- Prevents 'dooring' collisions
- Works for drivers and passengers
- Becomes automatic after a few uses
- Protects cyclists, pedestrians, mobility scooter users and children



One small habit could save a life.

Susan Children

What Cyclists Say About Cycling in Reading

A community snapshot following the "most dangerous place to cycle" headline from BBC News, 15 June 2026

When a recent report* claimed that Reading is the "riskiest place to cycle outside London", it sparked a wave of discussion across social media platforms.

Specifically, this quickly became an opportunity for local cyclists to share their personal experiences on the Reading Cycle Campaign Facebook page.

This article summarises the many comments on both Facebook and Reddit.

However, before we start, it is worth highlighting that the statistic behind the headline was somewhat misleading. In fact, multiple commenters challenged the BBC's interpretation of the casualty data.

One explained:

"The stat is not actually showing how dangerous it is to cycle in Reading. It's really just showing cyclists as a share of all reported road casualties."

This means Reading could appear "dangerous" simply because pedestrian casualties fell and/or car-on-car collisions fell, even if cycling casualties stayed the same. (See our article 'Cycle Safety in Reading' on page 9.)

Reading should absolutely take cyclist casualties seriously, however cycling remains one of the healthiest, most efficient and most reliable ways to travel in Reading. That said, there are still many improvements Reading could make to help keep cyclists safer.

The Biggest Issue Is Infrastructure Which Doesn't Join Up

Cyclists repeatedly highlight the same issue: inconsistent, incomplete and poorly maintained cycle infrastructure. One commenter summed it up bluntly:

"Cycle lanes are painted lines and even they don't join into anything meaningful."

Others described disappearing lanes, sudden switches to shared-use paths and dangerous pinch-points:



"Before the roundabout the cycle lane mysteriously disappears... then requires dismounting the bike to safely cross the road."

The lack of continuity forces cyclists to constantly switch between road, pavement and shared paths, something riders say increases risk rather than reducing it.

Traffic Volumes and Road Layout Make Things Worse

Many cyclists feel that Reading's narrow roads, confusing junctions and often heavy traffic create a hostile environment.

"Reading roads are narrow with confusing layouts for cars, which then has a knock-on effect for cyclists."

Several pointed to well-known bottlenecks - Cemetery Junction, Reading Bridge, Vastern Road roundabout - as places where cycling feels particularly unsafe.

One former resident wrote:

"Traffic volumes have gone up... infrastructure has not improved. This turns every single road into a rat-run."

Close Passes, Driver Behaviour and Roundabout Design

A striking number of comments described close passes, tailgating and even deliberate intimidation.

"Get close passed daily, multiple times... impatient drivers sitting on your back wheel."

Some reported extreme incidents, including being chased, forced off the road and being involved in or witnessing collisions on roundabouts. In fact, roundabouts were repeatedly named as the most dangerous place to cycle.

"Going around a roundabout as a cyclist in Reading is a complete gamble."

(See the RCC article on Vastern Road Roundabout on page 5.)

But Not Everyone Has Negative Experiences

Several riders said they feel safe cycling in Reading and have done so for decades without incident.

"I've been cycling in Reading for 30 years... I've never had any of that happen to me."

Newer residents also commented that Reading has more cyclists than expected and that some cycle lanes are better marked than in other towns.

What This Means for Reading

The online discussion shows a town where:

- many people want to cycle,
- many already do,
- but the infrastructure hasn't kept pace with demand.

The comments highlight the need for consistent, safe and connected routes that work for all road users.

"More segregated cycle lanes are needed. Only then will people make the swap from cars to bikes."

Reading has the potential to be a brilliant cycling town. The distances are ideal. The river and canal paths are loved. But the gaps in the network, the dangerous junctions and roundabouts, and the lack of protection on busy roads continue to hold people back.

As one commenter put it:

"Cyclists don't choose to ride on busy roads... it's just most of the time they are the only viable option."

Susan Children
RCC Publicity Coordinator

* A study by process safety consultancy Sigma-HSE analysed the latest data from the Department for Transport (DfT). It revealed that Reading ranked 11th in the list of riskiest areas for cyclists in Great Britain. BBC News 15 June 2026.

Simple Brake Check

How to Check Brake Function

Static check (recommended)

With the bike stationary, squeeze the front and rear brake levers firmly.

- The levers should feel firm (not pulling to the handlebar).

Front brake roll test (safer, controlled)

Roll the bike slowly forward (or gently have someone else hold/steady it), then squeeze the front brake.

- The bike should slow quickly.
- The wheel should be held (it may still skid if the bike is light or on an uneven surface, but it shouldn't freely spin).
- Depending on the bike's geometry, the rear wheel may lift.
- You may see front wheel skidding or rotation stopping; depends on speed, tyre grip, rider weight, surface, and brake strength.



- If the bike keeps rolling much more than expected, the brake needs adjustment, pad service, or (for hydraulic) bleeding/air removal.

Rear brake roll test

Same idea as the front brake except squeezing rear brake lever. Same results expected, except:

- The front wheel should not lift.
- You may see rear wheel skidding or rotation stopping; depends on speed, tyre grip, rider weight, surface, and brake strength.

Happy safer cycling.

Keith Collyer
RCC Membership Secretary

Quick Win for Lower Earley



Before showing metal barrier and afterwards the quick win with wooden posts

Here are before and after photos of the end of Elm Lane in lower Earley.

What the pictures don't really show is that the land is quite sloped, making the previous metal barrier particularly hard to navigate and potentially quite dangerous.

The metal barrier, which was particularly tricky for cargo bikes/recumbents/trikes and other non-standard bikes, has now been removed and replaced with wooden posts designed to make navigating the area much easier.

A relatively quick simple and cheap win, but one which makes a huge difference to cyclists and many other users of mobility vehicles.

Alex Cran
WoBC Campaigner for RCC



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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

13 September @ 11:00 - 16:00

Reading Cycle Festival

25 September @ 19:30 - 21:00

Critical Mass - Cycle for Change

30 October @ 19:30 - 21:00

Critical Mass - Cycle for Change

14 November @ 10:00 - 17:00

Cycling Conference - in Reading!

27 November @ 19:30 - 21:00

Critical Mass - Cycle for Change

View more events on our Events page:

<https://readingcyclecampaign.org.uk/events/>

RCC's Monthly Meetings

7.00pm on the third Thursday of each month

Weds 7 Oct 2026 - AGM

Thurs 19 Nov 2026 - cttee mtg

Thurs 17 Dec 2026 - social

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

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