



CycleReading

WORKING FOR A CYCLE FRIENDLY READING

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Cycle Friendly Highway Code



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Campaign Diary

Most of us have probably not read the Highway Code recently - chances are that unless there is a learner driver about you don't even have a copy in the house.

But the Highway Code is important, it's where new drivers learn what the rules of the road are, it's what driving instructors teach, and it influences the judgement of right and wrong in court cases.

For some years now Cycling UK has been calling for revisions to the Code to make it more cycle-friendly and earlier this year the

Department of Transport (DfT) consulted on a raft of proposed changes to protect vulnerable road users.

The good news is that these changes got overwhelming public support and will be incorporated in an update to the Highway Code in early 2022.

Outlined on the next page are some of the changes that will help create a safer road environment for cyclists.

A Cycle Friendly Highway Code continued...



The first of these, and underpinning the proposed changes, is a concept the DfT calls a “hierarchy of road users”.

In descending order of vulnerability, these are: pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, motorcyclists and motorists.

The hierarchy places the greater responsibility to consider the safety of other road users on those with the greater potential for causing harm. Hopefully this will provide an antidote to the “I own the road” mentality of some road users.

A second planned change will impact junctions. Vehicles turning at unsignalised junctions should give way to pedestrians or cyclists going straight ahead across their path; thus the person going straight ahead would have right of way over the person turning left. This should reduce those infamous ‘left hook’ collisions.

A third change is to combat the ‘close pass’. This will introduce safe passing distances and speed limits when overtaking pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, horse drawn vehicles and motorcyclists. The specified safe passing distance will be 1.5m at speeds less than 30mph and 2.0m at speeds above 30mph or for large vehicles at any speed.

The ‘Dutch Reach’ will also become official advice to help prevent car-dooring. Road users will be advised to use their opposite hand when opening a vehicle door, which will lead them to naturally turn their head towards traffic/cyclists coming towards them from behind.

For drivers set in their ways such changes may not change the habits of a lifetime, but for following generations of drivers these changes will set new standards for sharing road space with cyclists.

Keith Elliott
RCC Secretary

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Specialising in a wide range of injury work for adults and children, we are members of all relevant specialist bodies including Headway and the Spinal Injuries Association and are closely involved with the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust (BHIT) based in Reading and The Cycle-Smart Foundation.



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Once again my sincere thanks for your kind assistance and courtesy in dealing with this claim and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Jean Cronin, Kent

Campaign News



Reading Borough Council (RBC)

Winter Report 2021

After a quiet time since meetings in August, the Cycle Forum took place in November (see below), and the CAST meeting is due in December. I'm not aware of any recent infrastructure improvements for cyclists in Reading, but the major road re-surfacing programme has certainly improved the cycle-ability of many roads.

Cycle Forum

A Cycle Forum via Zoom was held on 17 November with three main issues being discussed: the Shinfield Road Tranche 2 scheme; the Cycle Hub; and the ongoing Traffic Management Schemes Requested list.

Active Travel Cycle Schemes - Tranche 2

We were talked through the Shinfield Road proposals with questions being raised and answered. See details on <https://images.reading.gov.uk/2021/10/70080223-WSP-X-DR-HI-0100.pdf>.

There had been a scheme display at the University on the previous day where the Council had also received feedback. In general, the scheme was welcomed, although how many cyclists it will attract as opposed to the parallel quiet road of Northcourt Avenue will be interesting to see.

The scheme will include mainly segregated one-way cycling surfaces, in accordance with DfT LTN 1/20 guidance. Low kerbs between cyclists and motor traffic, and also between pedestrians are proposed. Designation of the route as 'segregated cycle lanes', with clear marking and coloured surfacing, was suggested by RCC to ensure safe legal continuity at side-road junctions.

The route joins the main carriageway at signal-controlled junctions, where cyclists' early release is to be included, giving cyclists a 5-second start on motor traffic from the 5m deep advanced cycle stop-line.

The problem of cyclists heading from the University to Redlands Road was discussed with the likelihood that cyclists would use the northern footway rather than try the unprotected (by island) right-turn out.

A two-way track on the University side and/or an extra gate out to help access to Redlands Road is desirable, otherwise cycling on the footway is likely to occur.

A 20mph limit at the eastern end would help cyclists and pedestrians in the vicinity of the shops.

Tranche 1 Schemes

Improvements to the Tranche 1 Active Travel schemes are being considered by the Council, so let them and us know of any changes that you want. Sidmouth Street including the cycle route has been resurfaced recently as part of RBC's resurfacing programme.

Tranche 3 Schemes

The Council is also bidding for funding for the Bath Road/Castle Hill scheme and seems to be hopeful for DfT funding. This is the route that was prioritised by Reading Cycle Campaign.

Schemes Requested List

A list of mainly cycling and pedestrian schemes that have been requested by RCC and others is held and updated by the Council. This list is to be used when considering planning applications (CIF - Common Infrastructure Fund) and other Council works.

Unfortunately, many of our requests have been buried in earlier versions of this list, including the simple issue of correcting cycle signing in the town centre (waiting for six years?!). Let's hope that the list is used and some of the priorities and simpler requests can be carried out.

Cycle Hub

The Council is still investigating sites for the proposed Cycle Hub, a secure cycle parking facility in the town centre.

A location in the Broad Street Mall area is most likely, with funding of £125k from the government's Capability Fund available this financial year. The Fund is also financing an Active Travel Officer and the Tranche 1 improvements.

CAST (Cleaner Air and Safer Transport)

The next CAST meeting is due in early December. The Shinfield Road scheme will be on the agenda again.

With COP26 and the Climate Emergency it would be good to see some real commitment and change in Reading to improve cycling conditions.

John Lee
RBC Campaigner for RCC



West Berkshire Council (WBC)

Winter Report 2021

Opening of Newbury Station Cycle Hub



The second Cycle Hub on the north/town side of Newbury Station, between the new car park and the western end of Platform 2, was opened on 7 October, providing 176 spaces. This complements the larger hub (with its total of 230 cycle spaces, comprising 180 spaces under cover and 50 spaces externally) opened in March on the south/Station Road side of the station, giving over 300 cycle spaces in total.

Community FUN Cycle Club

This pilot scheme is aimed at primary school students to complement Bikeability training using money from the DfT Capability Fund. The target age group is 8 to 11-year olds, with the emphasis being on fun but also on core stamina. Taster sessions will take place in January 2022, with a full programme of sessions running every

Campaign News continued...

other Saturday, from April through September, at Shaw House, Newbury. If it is successful and funding can be secured it is hoped to expand the scheme to other parts of West Berkshire.

Potential extensions to the Eling Way



Sustrans has prepared two feasibility studies, assessing scope for potential extensions of the existing Eling Way multi-user path, which already connects Hermitage with Hampstead

Norreys over the former railway alignment.

The feasibility studies built on earlier valuable work by West Berkshire Spokes and have looked at options for southward extensions from Hermitage towards Newbury and, separately, at the potential for a northward extension from Hampstead Norreys to Compton. The study reports and recommendations are currently being reviewed by WBC's Network Manager.

Widening Participation Fund

The objective is to make Bikeability more accessible to Special Educational Needs (SEND) students and increase participation in cycle training, as it is recognised that SEND students will need 1:1 training. A bid for £75k has been submitted to enable students at Castle School, Brookfields School and Mary Hare School, plus SEND students attending mainstream schools and potentially others being home-schooled, to access Bikeability training.

A4 London Road/new Lidl, Newbury

Works started on 8 November to prepare for installation of a pre-cast culvert section that will in turn enable construction of a kerb-segregated section of cycle track, with separate footway behind, along the front of the new store building which will be occupied by Lidl. Installation of the culvert using a crane happened on the night of 18-19 November 2021, under an overnight closure of the section of London Road past the BP fuel station. Overall scheme completion scheduled for January 2022.

A4 Western Avenue (Brummell Road to Waitrose roundabout), Newbury/Spenn

The scheme overall has been revised, as there is a need for alterations to Splitter Island opposite Waitrose freight access/Benedict Court/Microfocus car park exit. This has been overcome and designed out to

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Campaign News continued...

minimise disruption. The main issue will be with replacement of signalled crossing on Western Avenue east of Old Bath Road junction. The Council are waiting to confirm programme dates with the contractor.

Kennet & Avon Canal Towpath

Several improvements and repairs to the towpath are in the pipeline including a £360k scheme in Newbury between Ham Bridge and Bull's Lock.

West Berkshire Cycle Forum

The next meeting of the West Berkshire Cycle Forum will be held on Tuesday 18 January. If you wish to raise any matters concerning cycling in West Berkshire email: wbc@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Rob Hill
WBC Campaigner for RCC



Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC)

Winter Report 2021

I have to start by giving credit to Wokingham Active Transport Hub (WATCH), a group as the name suggests set up to promote active travel in the Borough.

WATCH have been very effective in arranging meetings with and developing rapport with Councillors and in particular their officers as well as the outside contractors brought in to plan and implement travel planning and a lot of the news and developments mentioned are from their hard work.

Probably the main focus for active travel groups in Wokingham at the moment is around the Local Travel Plan (LTP) and Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) updates that Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC) is in the process of developing.

It is great that WoBC is updating this plan as the last one was developed pre-2011 and therefore is now quite out of date.

Anyone interested in helping develop cycling or walking can search for this and comment on an interactive map by searching for 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Wokingham' on your chosen search engine. It is a very simple thing to do, and all comments will hopefully help the changes made over the next few years so please go on and comment.

In the last couple of years there has been quite a shift in how cycling provision should be implemented and therefore all facilities going forward should where at all possible be compliant with LTN 1/20 standards.

This would be a huge step forward over the designs that have led to what we currently have in place. Unfortunately, as mentioned in previous articles on the Borough's schemes, major projects that have not been built but were designed before this guidance came out, such as the South Distributor Road (SDR) and Western Gateway Roundabout, will not be LTN 1/20 compliant - in my opinion a major missed opportunity for WoBC.

To give WoBC credit (as I always try to!), they and the contractor WSP have allowed members of the WATCH group to come and comment in meetings on the design of the LCWIP and the initial routes audit being undertaken across the Borough and if this advice and expertise from local cyclists is taken on board and helps what is designed this will be a very positive step.

Another focus of the LCWIP was initially on greenways in the Borough and whilst this is welcomed by cyclists and walkers, we have been trying to show how these are a good

addition to, as opposed to a replacement, for direct cycleways alongside existing roads.

In my opinion they are preferred by Councils as they are cheap and easy to implement and do provide a good resource, but these alone will not reduce the congestion by the numbers the Council's own calculations require to meet their climate change targets.

On the subject of climate change and after attending a very successful Climate Change march event in Reading where I had the chance to meet the very engaging MP Matt Rodda (I didn't see any sign of Wokingham MP John Redwood, although maybe I missed him!), who complimented me on the bike I had ridden into Reading on!

I am still astounded to see that despite WoBC declaring a Climate Emergency, they still feel the best way to address this is to invest huge amounts of money in road building with a fraction dedicated to cycling and walking.

It seems to be a pattern that many organisations talk about net zero and climate neutrality and then go and completely oppose that with their actions but that is a discussion for another forum.

Happy cycling.

Alex Cran
WoBC Campaigner for RCC

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Campaign News continued...

Details of Proposed Shinfield Road Cycle Track

In November Reading Borough Council ran a public consultation on the £1.2 million cycle facility along Shinfield Road.

As a reminder this scheme is being funded by the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund set up to support Local Authorities to implement walking and cycling schemes.

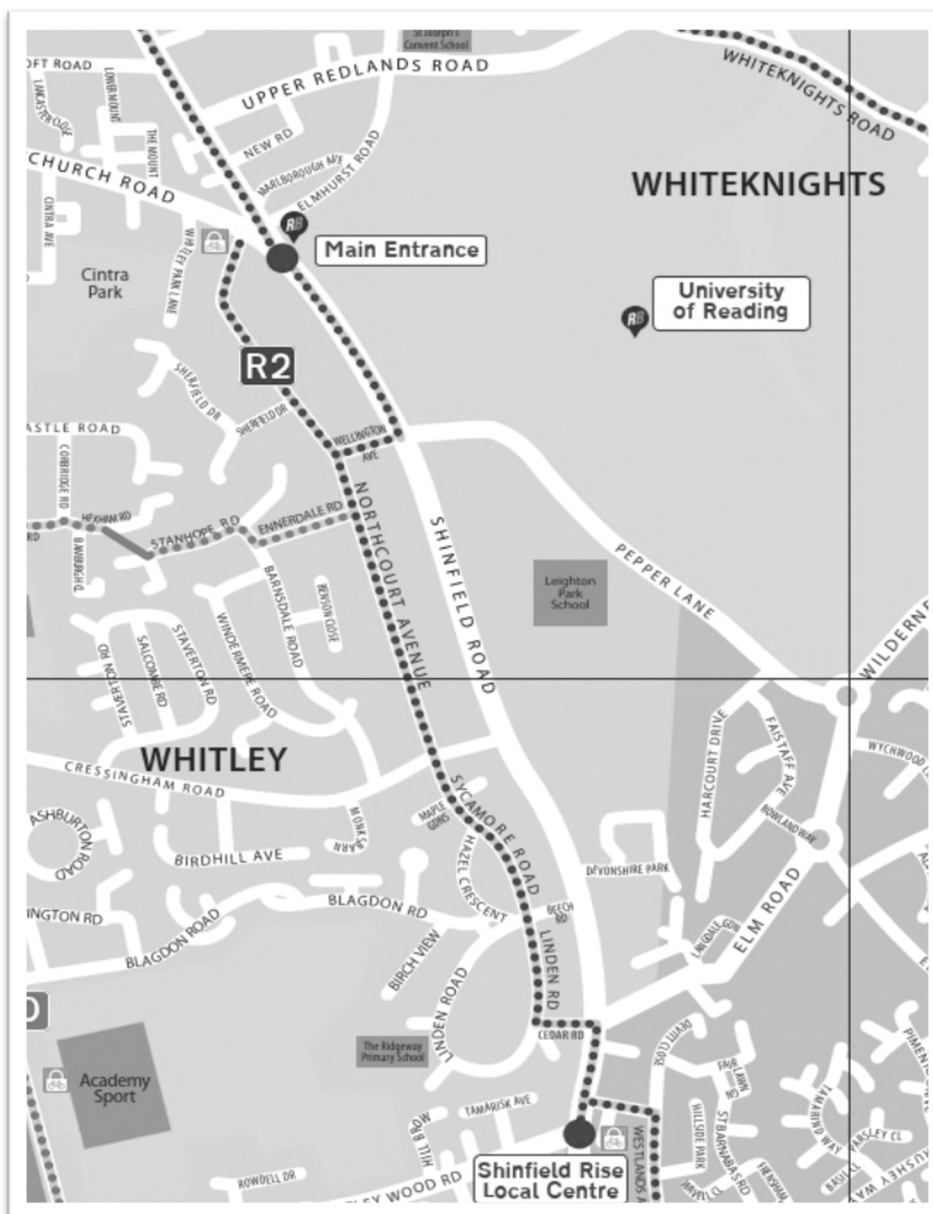
The proposed scheme will provide a segregated cycle track on both sides of the road from the junction with Elmhurst Road, past the University, to Shinfield Rise in Whitley, a distance of just over a mile.

Reading Cycle Campaign has provided comments to Reading Borough Council on the scheme - see separate article on the RBC Cycle Forum on page 3.

The segregated cycle track will be a step-change in the provision of quality cycle infrastructure in Reading.

However, three quarters of serious cycle accidents occur at junctions, and we have urged the Council to make the track more visible where it passes side roads and goes through junctions to make it clearer who has right of way.

Keith Elliott
RCC Secretary



Are you good with social media?

We are looking for people to help the RCC highlight cycling issues and raise our profile on Facebook and Twitter.

If you would like to create a cycle friendly Reading, then email secretary@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk



Chairman's Letter

Dear RCC members,

It's been a busy few weeks for me; I'm now getting into the Chairman's role and a lot has been happening so this will be quite a long letter.

The Reading Cycle Festival -

this was an excellent opportunity to meet lots of keen cyclists and recruit some into the campaign. I heard first-hand how many of you use your bikes to get around the town and the many obstacles you encounter. I hope that the festival will become a regular event so it can help to encourage more cyclists out and about.

Much thanks to Karen Robertson who looks after campaigning and events for us and among lots of others who put in sterling work on and before the day, I must mention Greg Woodford of Avanti Cycling who worked with Karen to make the whole thing happen.

Reading Borough Council (RBC) has been busy as well with a proposal for a bike hub in the centre of the town and a consultation on their plans for dedicated cycle lanes on the Shinfield Road. Your committee have discussed both these proposals but at the time of writing we had not yet agreed a final response to either.

There is an article elsewhere in this newsletter which describes what we know about both these proposals. As always, we want to hear from as many of you as possible and learn what your views are.

There is one thing that concerns me with both these proposals. I can see no plans for monitoring the schemes to evaluate just what they are achieving. For instance, has RBC carried out any surveys to see how much use their fine newly resurfaced cycle lanes on Sidmouth Street are getting - and speaking of which...

Traffic Calming - I live near the hospital and we have seen the second stage of the area traffic calming scheme

brought into operation recently with speed humps, traffic cushions and chicanes built into the roads. Below is my personal view and I would like to hear from as many of you as I can, as to how you have been affected by this scheme and whether you think it is working.

But first a little tale which may not reflect all that well on my ability as a cyclist. One Thursday evening my wife and I were going to the Concert Hall in the Old Town Hall for the first live classical concert to be held there since the onset of COVID. We decided to go by bike and set off in the dark at about 7pm, clad in high viz and bedecked with lights front and rear.

As we cycled down Morgan Road, over the new speed humps, we were pushed from behind by a white van. I kept my place on the road and he had to stay behind until we turned into Kendrick Road, where as soon as he could he roared past. It wasn't a very close pass, but close enough for me to need to move over.

Fifty yards down the road he joined a queue of traffic waiting to turn onto London Road. There was a queue because Sidmouth Street was closed for resurfacing and London Road was jammed with vehicles.

As I caught up with the van, I moved out to pass him and perhaps

remonstrate with him for the overtaking, but as I slowed, I hit a large pothole in the centre of the road and my front wheel went one way and I went the other.

Fortunately, there was nothing coming in the other direction, and I suffered nothing worse than a bruised elbow, but it got me thinking about just how bad Reading's roads have become.

Kendrick Road was resurfaced not that long ago in two halves and there is a groove running down the centre. This is now breaking up and forming potholes like the one I hit. It was invisible in the dark, as are older speed cushions where the original painted triangles have worn away.

Another major problem of cycling after dark is the effect of speed cushions and road humps on the headlights of motor vehicles. When cycling on Addington Road, not only do you have to get out of the way of cars that want to go over the cushions in the middle of the road, but the constant up and down of their headlights is an extra danger to all road users. Cycling after dark is certainly getting more difficult.

My current view is that the traffic calming measures in my local area have neither significantly reduced the speed nor volume of traffic but

have made cycling on these 'calmed' road even more perilous than before.

I'd love to know how much has been spent on these schemes and whether any work has been done to see what effect they have actually had.

Certainly, as a car driver myself, I don't see any improvement in road behaviour and in fact I'd argue the bad drivers have become worse. If I could say one thing to RBC, it would be to give us decent road surfaces to cycle on.

Joe Edwards
RCC Chairman



Cycling as a New Year's Resolution

With the New Year fast approaching, you may be considering resolutions for 2022 and given the most common resolutions are No.1: To get more exercise/improve fitness and No.2: To lose weight⁽¹⁾ it is likely that finding activities to achieve these resolutions will be high on your Google search list.

If the above sounds familiar, then you'll be pleased to know you need look no further than this article to read how years of evidence has shown cycling is the perfect way to achieve both these resolutions (as well as many other benefits) and maintain them beyond January 2022.

Obesity and inactivity are a massive and growing problem with 25% of people aged over 16 doing less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (like brisk walking) a week⁽²⁾. Physical inactivity (as defined above) increases with age and is also higher in most ethnic groups compared to the White British population⁽²⁾.

The dangers of inactivity and the often-associated weight gain are well documented. In England, physical inactivity was identified as a cause in 37,000 preventable and premature deaths per annum amongst people aged 40-79⁽³⁾.

The benefits of physical activity on almost every aspect of physical and mental health and the evidence base supporting this are too numerous to even go into in this article and for this reason physical activity/exercise is often termed 'the perfect pill' in

healthcare. Physical activity has been consistently shown to be more powerful at improving physical and mental health than any other form of therapeutic intervention and comes with almost none of the downsides of these other things.

Recognised international guidance states that we should get at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week⁽³⁾; there is no recommendation on how this is achieved however, and this can be done as any activity which raises the heart rate and makes you breathe harder. Unfortunately in the UK around 40% of adults over 16 don't meet this recommended amount⁽³⁾.

Getting enough exercise, however, is not easy as few of us have the time, money or motivation to deal with the stresses of everyday life, with work, family life etc. and THEN come home and exercise in the little free time we have, and it is not surprising that the top 3 reasons for not exercising⁽⁴⁾ are:

- 1) I'm too tired to exercise
- 2) I can't afford a gym
- 3) I don't have time in my day/I'm a busy parent

The above reasons rule out many exercise activities for a large number of people and this is where the importance of incidental exercise is being realised by many health policy makers and planners.

Incidental exercise is any activity that you do as part of your 'normal'

daytime routine (such as walking to the train station) and don't have to make special time for (like going to the gym after work). Given that incidental exercise takes no or minimal additional time out of a busy day and will often cost nothing or less than an activity it replaces (such as cycling to work, compared to driving).

This reduces many of the barriers to being active and evidence is mounting that incidental activity is much easier for people to maintain than adding in (and paying a hefty fee for) an extra activity like going to the gym, on top of everything else someone has to do.

Given the high barriers (cost, time) there are to staying active, the barriers to incidental activity are mainly in the design of towns and cities to facilitate active travel and nudge people out of their cars where possible and are therefore much easier to reduce on a public level.

Cycling is the perfect incidental activity for many reasons. Firstly, it allows users to travel much further than walking, which without public transport realistically limits users to a few miles' radius around their house.

Secondly large population-based studies have shown that cycling as a mode of transport is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, and all-cause mortality, and may be a more beneficial form of commuting than walking^(5,6).

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Cycling as a New Year's Resolution continued...

To many people cycling, particularly cycle commuting in busy towns or cities, has the association of being incredibly dangerous but actually this idea is not supported by fact and when the benefits and risks are weighed up directly, the estimated health benefits of cycling are substantially larger than the health risks.

One study showed that if 500,000 people in the Netherlands swapped their car for a bicycle for short trips on a daily basis, 3-14 months of life would be gained as a result of increased physical activity levels, compared to the smaller harmful effects of inhaled air pollution (0.8-40 days lost) and increase in traffic accidents (5-9 days lost)⁽⁷⁾.

A simpler and more often quoted figure is 20:1 (active life years gained by regular cycling vs life years lost though associated injury)⁽⁸⁾.

In summary if you are looking to make a change this New Year and want to do something that is evidence based to help your physical and mental health, staying physically active is the most important thing you can do.

If you want that physical activity to be something that doesn't require additional time or an expensive monthly fee and if you want this resolution to last beyond the end of January, then evidence shows that incidental exercise is the way to go.

Given that cycling has been shown to have additional benefits compared with walking as an exercise, building cycling into a daily or weekly routine as a way to commute or see friends or shop or just get out and about is the resolution you should be planning to make for January.

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Big Bike Revival - Fix, Learn, Repair

Aiming to make cycling accessible to everyone



The Big Bike Revival Fix, Learn, Repair programme funded by [Cycling UK](#) offers a range of activities to help make cycling accessible to everyone.

[Avanti Cycling Community Interest Company \(CIC\)](#) has partnered with [Reading Bicycle Kitchen \(RBK\)](#) and has been running a series of workshops and training sessions which are FREE to participants.

Events have a common focus to deliver fun, social and inclusive activities and services that help the perception of cycling as a practical and normalised everyday behaviour.

Cycling UK's mission is to deliver events that enable many in a community to start cycling through fixing bikes, teaching skills and leading rides.

The programme is funded by Department for Transport, and supported by local authorities with a clear set of aims and objectives:

- Encourage people who don't already, to cycle
- Encourage people to cycle more often
- Increase short cycling journeys
- Improve the perception of cycle safety
- Improve people's confidence to cycle

Focused primarily on adults (with children supported through Bikeability training and Dr Bike sessions in schools), one of the key challenges has been to spread the word across different community groups for a short duration project (initial period of only 3 months).

The weekly Saturday DIY/ supported repair sessions at RBK have continued in popularity and these are now complemented with fortnightly Basic Maintenance workshops - giving people some of the key skills for maintaining and repairing the most common issues arising on bikes.

The other arm of the programme is **Cycling Skills Sessions** spanning everyone from total beginner '*Learn to ride*' support; *Back on Bikes* confidence rides - including using gears, signalling and other control skills; *Commuting skills and Urban explorer rides* - which cover different cycling routes around Reading and how to cycle safely on a variety of roads/ exploring various routes around the locality and a series of leisure rides for those wanting to try cycling with others.

Individuals or groups can be booked onto these sessions. We hope to secure additional funding to enable these and other sessions to continue throughout 2022 for free.

For more information, keep an eye on the [Avanti Cycling](#) website or contact info@avanticycling.co.uk to register interest in advance.



CycleReading Advertising

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Next newsletter copy deadline: 1 February 2022

The newsletter will now be delivered electronically to members. If you prefer to receive a paper copy, please email membership@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Council Contacts

Please let the relevant campaign officer know of anything you've reported.

Reading Borough Council

Highway queries: 0118 937 3797; parking: 0118 937 3767; potholes: 0800 626540

Wokingham Borough Council

0118 974 6302 or www.wokingham.gov.uk

West Berkshire Council

01635 519080 or www.westberks.org.uk

Windsor and Maidenhead

www.rbwm.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council

Roads and Transport: 0845 310 1111

RCC's Monthly Meetings

7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month

Wed 19 Jan 2022 - cttee mtg

Wed 16 Feb 2022 - open mtg

Wed 16 Mar 2022 - cttee mtg

See RCC's Facebook Page or our website for more details. We hope to see you there.

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RCC members £10 - Non members £20

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250 2 Colour £52.00 500 2 Colour £58.00

Letter heads on 100gsm bond
250 1 Colour £30.00 500 1 Colour £34.00 1000 1 Colour £45.00
250 2 Colour £55.00 500 2 Colour £58.00 1000 2 Colour £69.00
all of the above are subject to VAT

Full Colour A5 Leaflets
printed on 130gsm gloss or matt 1 sided
1000 £105.00 5000 £130.00 10,000 £160.00

Full colour A4 Leaflets
printed on 130gsm gloss or matt 2 sided
1000 £140.00 5000 £210.00 10,000 £330.00 50,000 £925.00
Re VAT on leaflets

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