



Perhaps the trend toward an increase in cycling comes from it being one of the few unregulated activities in British life - as you don't need a license, to pass a test, and provided you have a brake and some lights you're good to go. Its promotion through government and non-governmental campaigns would indicate that there's an attempt though to address a wider scope of social problems beyond just transport issues. Will this attention begin to impact on it being seen as simply an enjoyable pursuit we could take or leave? Do campaigns that declare we'd be healthier and slimmer if we cycled more just load too much onto an otherwise rather mundane activity? Will introducing new priority lanes or junctions for cyclists result in creating an illusion of order and safety that may actually make things more problematic for cyclists and pedestrians alike?



Advocates of increasing cycling say it must be made safer, with new cycle paths and perhaps even compulsory helmet wearing; but would we then risk over-complicating this most straightforward of activities? Do cycle paths do more harm than good by shunting cyclists to one side and causing friction with car drivers? And how best to manage existing tensions between cyclists jumping red lights, cycling on pavements and other road and pavement users? With a new generation of children often discouraged from walking or cycling to school by parents who

take them in their car, should Local Authorities be advising parents and kids to get on their bikes instead or is that too patronising?

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## Some background readings

[Velocity 2025: A cycling plan for 2025 and beyond](#) , Transport for Greater Manchester

[Cycling in London - a crisis of progress](#) , by Felix Denton, spiked 18 November 2013

[A Cycle Strategy for Greater Manchester](#) , CILT meeting write-up, Mad Cycle Lanes of Manchester 24 November 2013

[Bike ride saboteurs sprinkle DRAWING PINS on peaceful New Forest road after local villagers complain about scourge of cyclists in otherwise 'tranquil' area](#) , by Leon Watson, Daily Mail 15 April 2014

[Hundreds take to Manchester streets for naked bike ride – pictures and video](#) , by Jennifer Williams, Manchester Evening News 06 June 2014

[New Forest officials criticised for turning down bike scheme funding](#) , by Peter Walker, The Guardian 15 August 2014

[Gear we go! Thousands expected to saddle-up for Cycle to Work day in Manchester](#) , by Charlotte Cox, Manchester Evening News 3 September 2014

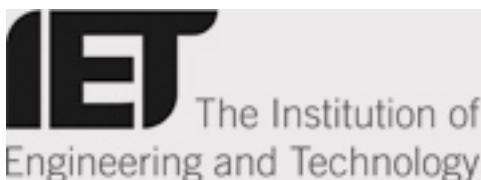
Video of the Battle of Ideas 2013 discussion entitled '[Free riders: cycle helmets and health and safety](#)' which touches on some key issues.

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**Watch video of the speaker and audience comments below. Thanks to Dan Clayton the [documentary filmmaker](#) from Leeds for this.**

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