

Cycling UK AGM 2024

Questions and answers

Motion 6

Colin Rand: One reason put forward for the change in trustee board composition is that you have "lost out on many strong applicants". What is it about the current articles that has prevented such strong candidates from standing to be Trustees?

Answer: *Our Articles are not particularly a barrier in this case however, an ordinary resolution passed some years ago which we are required to adhere to means that members must have been a member for over 12 months before applying to stand for election. In past years this has meant a number of prospective candidates have been unable to stand. We want to ensure high quality trustee candidates who we believe have the appropriate skills and experience are put to the membership. That's why we're proposing to amend the Articles to allow the Board to propose any minimum time period of membership before standing for election.*

Colin Rand: A second reason mentioned for the changes is low turnout in trustee elections. How are these changes expected to affect turnout in future Trustee elections? In 2023, the Nominations Committee put forward two candidates for two positions. Rather than a low turnout, is it not surprising that even 2% of members bothered to vote at all?

The election process in 2023 received an exceptionally low response, however applications have been falling for a number of years. These amendments are intended to try and broaden participation in the election process which we hope in turn will drive engagement from members where there are a wider selection of candidates with a breadth of skills and experience who members are able to vote for.

Motion 8

Arthur Caves: Why do you not acknowledge the amazing work done by Sustrans to create a marvellous network of cycle routes for all? And why don't you work with Sustrans to enhance and enlarge that network? I am a supporter of Sustrans and a member of Cycling UK and I think it such a shame that the two organisations, which have similar aims, cannot work together.

Answer: *We do work together with Sustrans. In the last year in particular we have worked very closely together on campaigns, on policy influencing, the general election and we have strongly supported investment in and support for the NCN which is supported and developed by Sustrans.*

Cycling UK is an active and founder member of the the Cycling and Walking Alliance (WACA), which includes Sustrans, Bikeability, British Cycling, Ramblers, The Bicycle Association and Living Streets. We currently chair this group and we are all closely co-operating on influencing the new government to increase investment in and support for cycling and walking. When funding for the National Cycle Network was under threat last year we spoke up to support this valuable infrastructure and Sustrans' work on it.

General Q&A

Peter Sebley: I believe that Cycling UK's position as the UK's 'Cycling Champion' is undermined by the fact that unless you are already involved with them, you are probably, as a member of the general public (whether cyclist or not), completely unaware of Cycling UK's existence. I therefore think that one of your specific policies should be to raise to a maximum the profile of Cycling UK so that, like other national charities (RNLI, RSPB, etc....) the general public knows about us and what we do. This has the potential to increase membership, encourage charity donations, spread the message about the benefits of cycling much more widely, and inform non-member cyclists that there is someone out there fighting their corner.

My question is therefore: Why doesn't Cycling UK advertise its presence in the UK national media?

Answer: *Peter, we share your ambition to make Cycling UK a household name and agree with you that it would help us deliver our vision if more people had heard of us. Current only about a third of people in the UK have heard*

Earlier this week, we took the decision to invest in a new dedicated media relations team who are responsible for raising our profile in the media through proactive and reactive work with journalists. This is already paying dividends – this year, we've already appeared on BBC Breakfast three times, The Today Programme once and The One Show once. So things are moving in the right direction.

We also intend to raise our profile through brand partnerships – teaming up with big brands who share our aims and objectives and will help us get in front of people who we might normally struggle to reach.

Finally, we're in the process of developing a brand, marketing and communications strategy that will include lots of digital marketing activities – including really targeted campaigns aimed at our priority audiences ie people who we've identified as being particularly important when it comes to delivering our new strategy.

James Hope: Is Cycling UK attempting to get rail companies to accept pedal powered cycles, other than bicycles on trains, in particular those used as mobility aids?

Context:

I ride a full sized adult trike, because of disability, including loss of balance. I have asked many rail companies whether I can take my trike on a train. Of the six who have replied all have said no.

Responses include:

'We recognise that there is a growing trend for bicycles and their derivatives to be used as mobility aids. Where possible, we will accommodate these on board our trains, subject to the terms of our Cycle Charter' (their charter does not accept tricycles).

Our observations were that the tricycles (folding or non-folding) could neither be securely stowed nor be accommodated within either the cycle space or luggage area without impeding passengers and on-train staff (I would dispute their conclusions)

I'm sure all non standard cycle users would like provision for their cycles and as a disabled person, who gains very significant mobility from my trike, I feel discriminated against.

Answer: *With 17 different rail franchises in Great Britain, each operator has applied different terms and restrictions for booking and the carriage of cycles. This has caused particular problems for people seeking to take non-standard cycles on trains.*

There is however draft legislation before parliament, the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill, which makes provision for passenger rail services to be provided by public sector companies rather than by franchise.

As the legislative framework changes, Cycling UK will be pushing for the new operator agreements to include minimum provisions for cycle carriage on trains. We work closely with the charity Wheels for Wellbeing, whose mission is to enhance disabled people's lives by ensuring that anyone can access the physical, emotional, practical and social benefits of cycling. We will collaborate with them in this work.