

Opinion Letters

THIS MONTH SAFER OVERTAKING, ALTERNATIVE HANDLEBARS, INSECT-PROOF HELMETS, ILLEGAL E-BIKES AND MORE

Get in touch

LETTERS are edited for space, clarity and, if necessary, legality. The editor reads and automatically acknowledges all letters but publishes only a selection. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 30 August. Please include your membership number.

WRITE TO: Letters, Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Rd, Guildford, GU2 9JX or email editor@cyclingsuk.org



Left: Mike Ginger

Letter of the month

CLOSE PASS

After reading Tim Devereux's letter on close passes (April/May), I thought readers might be interested in the work that Taunton Area Cycling Campaign has been doing on this widespread issue. I attach photos of the hi-vis vest we designed. We also have backpack covers with the same artwork.

We commissioned 20 street boards, based on a design from Cumbria, which were put up by Somerset Council's Traffic Team. All of this was funded by the Avon and Somerset Police Road Safety Fund. The police have been very supportive and made a video of the campaign, which they publicised. We have been waiting two years for the second phase of this.

We did some monitoring of feedback from vest/backpack users. A large majority felt that the impact on driver behaviour had been positive. We make the vests available for free at events and through a local shop (mycarboncoach.co.uk). We're not able to mail out our vests or backpack covers but can provide the artwork to any groups/individuals who are interested in using it.

Here are a couple of links to our website with more information: thetacc.org.uk/getting-the-safe-pass-message-out and thetacc.org.uk/pass-cyclists-safely-campaign-launched.

Mike Ginger, Taunton Area Cycling Campaign

Win a Passport Saddle Pack worth £69.99



The letter of the month wins a Passport Saddle Pack, courtesy of Ison Distribution. This 9.8-litre roll-top bikepacking bag has a waterproof liner to keep your kit dry and a wipe-clean tarpaulin base to shield you from mud. There are two external pockets for keys or tools, and the seatpost strap is rubberised to keep the bag stable. For more about the whole range of Passport bikepacking luggage, visit passportcycles.co.uk.



ALT BARS

As someone who's been experimenting with a set of On-One Geoff bars, I found your article on alt bars very interesting.

I'm surprised that no one's mentioned the effect of stem length on handling though. The backsweep of these bars can result in the hands being placed behind the head tube, which I found made the steering feel very strange.

Jeff Jones designed this style of handlebar to match his bikes, which use a shorter top tube design compared with a standard mountain bike. With that in mind I found they worked best on a bike designed for a drop bar, rather than a flat bar, as such frames have a shorter reach.

On my own 'Haute Gravel' custom adventure frame, I think they give much more comfort and control compared to the flared drop bar that I used previously. With the 90mm stem I'm using, the forward loop gives a similar position to being on the hoods.

Andrew Maddison

ALTERNATIVE SEAT PAD

I am a sweaty person and need to stop for a pee often when cycling. So my cycle shorts get smelly quickly. Rather than carry multiple shorts or wash and dry them daily during multi-day rides, I wear a sanitary pad in my pants. I only needed to wash my shorts once during a three-week trip along the River Danube. The added bonus is that the sanitary 'wings' provided extra protection from the leg elastic in my pants. This has definitely improved my saddle hygiene and comfort.

Saartje Drijver

