



Women's Festival of Cycling visits Westminster

Left: Julie Skelton

developments are required to be built around frequent public transport services, safe streets and excellent walking and cycling networks. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework should align with transport guidance to ensure that schools, shops, healthcare facilities and green open spaces are within a short walk of people's homes.

• **Make our streets safer**

Support speed-reduction measures in both built-up areas and on rural roads to make our streets and roads safer. Too often, people are deterred from walking or cycling because they don't think it's safe, but more people will choose active travel if our streets both feel, and are, safer. One of the quickest and easiest ways to achieve this is by reducing vehicle speeds, with speed limits appropriate to the environment.

• **Help everyone to access nature**

Increase responsible access to the countryside for everyone by extending public open-access rights. More and better connected green spaces close to where people live would realise huge public health benefits. This should include increased access for people cycling and horse riding on existing paths and tracks across open-access land, where the public are already able to roam on foot, and a simplified system for changing the status of public rights of way to create a network fit for the future.

• **Fix our failing road traffic laws**

Commission a review of road traffic laws within the first 12 months of the new government. The aim should be to reduce danger on our roads, protect victims, make our roads safer, prevent road crime and deliver justice. This should include measures to ensure that people who are a danger to others are taken off the roads, and that our laws covering careless

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and dangerous behaviour on our roads work better to deal with and discourage irresponsible behaviour.

**OUR PARLIAMENTARY AGENDA**

We started thinking about and planning for this election 18 months ago. We were taken by surprise with the timing, and this article was planned to drop through your letter box before an anticipated autumn election date, to tell you about what we planned to do rather than what we were already doing!

That said, in the last 18 months we've attended political party conferences to lobby and influence current politicians and future candidates. We've commissioned reports with different think-tanks, which have informed our manifesto asks, and engaged politicians at separate parliamentary launch events.

We've developed a contact programme for meeting politicians and candidates, which we've only been able to do by recruiting people into a new policy and public affairs team, to increase our capacity to complement our campaigning with lobbying and long-term political engagement.

And that's why the work linked to our general election campaign didn't end on 4 July. There are lots of new faces in parliament, and many have pledged to support policies to get more people cycling. Many more want to meet with us to discuss this further. The next 100 days are really important. We're already arranging conversations and meetings, including with new ministerial teams. ●



**How you can help**

If you asked your MP whether they'd stand up for cycling, please do remember to remind them by sending them a copy of our manifesto, which you can download from [cyclinguk.org/general-election-2024](https://cyclinguk.org/general-election-2024).

It's a manifesto designed to give people better transport choices so that: we don't feel we have to drive our children to school; there are safe, reliable, cheap and sustainable options for the journeys we need to make; active journeys become a normal part of our daily lives; and we have roads and communities free from congestion and pollution.

The policies needed to deliver these outcomes are cost effective, fast to deliver and proven to work. They tackle multiple challenges and would help the new government achieve a broad range of important objectives – including tackling climate change, improving public health, boosting the economy and easing the cost-of-living crisis for millions of people.

We need politicians to focus on the benefits and how to deliver them, and move on from divisive politics about cycling. We'd all be better off if more people cycled.