

# this is cycling UK



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## Oiling the wheels

Active travel has been promised 'unprecedented' investment by the new government. **Sarah Mitchell** met the now transport secretary earlier this year

**A**t Cycling UK we've campaigned for improved funding for cycling for decades. We know that it is an investment for a future where everyone has access to clear air, safer streets and a more sustainable way of getting around. We were therefore thrilled when, in late August, Transport Secretary Louise Haigh promised "unprecedented levels of funding" for active travel. We now hope to see the government translate this declaration into a firm spending commitment in the Autumn Budget.

Back in March, several Cycling UK colleagues and I met up with Louise, then shadow secretary of state, for an e-bike ride in her Sheffield constituency. We took in some local traffic-calming measures, as well as tackling some of those serious Sheffield hills, where we were very glad of a little electrical assistance! We also had time to talk about our work and about the report we commissioned from IPPR, which makes the case for greater investment in cycling and walking infrastructure.

It serves as an important reminder of the crucial role that our campaigning, public affairs and policy work plays – and this work is set to continue throughout the autumn and beyond. We'll be upping the pace on our political influencing with a jam-packed party conference season and events with our partners in the Walking and Cycling Alliance, bringing together ministers and officials from different government departments. I briefly met Simon Lightwood, the new local transport minister, over the summer recess, and I look forward to our upcoming meeting in Westminster. You, our members, power our campaigning and

influencing through your membership fees and your support for the Cycle Advocacy Fund, so thank you all for making this work possible.

As it is Free Wills Month in October, I'm delighted to let you know that we have a new offer for all our members: we've partnered with Farewill to offer you a chance to write a simple will, free of charge. There is absolutely no obligation to leave a charitable gift, but it is a great opportunity to consider your own legacy to cycling.

I often think about the cycling stories we hear about from our members at Cycling UK – the solo rides, group adventures and memorable journeys that bring us our best cycling memories. These stories are always fabulous to read, and they're what inspire us to keep pushing for a better cycling future. By leaving a legacy to Cycling UK, you'll be inspiring future generations to write their cycling story. If you're interested in learning more, or want to start writing your will for free, visit [cyclinguk.org/giftinwills](http://cyclinguk.org/giftinwills).

If you've ever ridden an electric cycle, you've probably experienced the 'e-bike smile'. As well as being a lot of fun to ride, e-cycles help save money, cut carbon emissions from transport and boost health. We know from our own programmes and impact measurement that they really can encourage people to get on a bike instead of into a car.

Yet there are also concerns about safety due to recent battery fire incidents, which are primarily caused by defective and low-quality products. That's why, alongside our partners in the Electric Bike Alliance, we've launched the E-Bike Positive campaign. We'll be championing e-cycles as a safe, convenient and healthy way to travel, promoting the safe use of e-bikes and counteracting misinformation.

A key element of our new organisational strategy – and something you told us you wanted us to do more – is building collaborations to grow our impact. So I'm delighted we've been able to team up with the Bicycle Association, the Association of Cycle Traders and Bosch eBike Systems on this campaign. We really hope this can lead to more people feeling confident to use the e-bikes that will help them to enjoy a happy and safe cycling experience. ●



Wales spends £19 per head per year on active travel. In England, outside London, it's just £12

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Sarah Mitchell (left) with Louise Haigh MP

Left: Mark Harvey, D&B Photography