



Insurance, they have produced a YouTube video (www.tinyurl.com/ExPlacesVideo), which gives a balanced view from a driver and cyclist. However, Sgt Castle says “The first thing we master when learning to ride a bike is balance, but it sometimes gets forgotten when we talk about cycling. While it can seem a threatening environment, the figures show that cycling is actually only slightly more dangerous than golf⁴. Some groups, such as young males, are actually at less risk while cycling than when driving⁵. But, when they do happen, these collisions are usually a tragedy for all involved; they are avoidable and we should all do everything we can to avoid them.”

The team’s success means that their numbers are soon to increase. “This month (December 2014), we will grow from just 11 officers to 33”, says Sgt Castle. “This will mean we can hold many more *Exchanging Places* events and spend much more time on enforcement.”

You have been warned!

⁴ <http://www.cyclehelmets.org/1026.html>

⁵ Mindell JS, Leslie D, Wardlaw M (2012) Exposure-Based, ‘Like-for-Like’ Assessment of Road Safety by Travel Mode Using Routine Health Data. PLoS ONE 7(12): e50606. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0050606

The cyclist perspective: practical advice for CV drivers

from David Dansky – Head of Training & Development, Cycle Training UK

More people are riding bikes in UK towns and cities. As local and national government realise the huge economic and health benefits to society in getting people to move around actively, many are encouraging people to cycle and walk. Incentives include bike purchase schemes, free or subsidised cycle training, bike hire schemes and some businesses are paying a travel allowance to people who ride. In addition local authorities are looking at ways to minimise risk to people not in motor vehicles. Lower speed limits in urban places, traffic calming meas-

The cyclist
hasn’t
been seen
in the
mirrors,
but...



...the driver already
knows he’s there.

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ures and some innovative road designs all help. Other recent development include the raft of safety measures outlined in the Construction Logistics and Cyclist Safety (CLOCS) project¹, which aims to bring the high standard of safety found in construction sites to the road environment.

In addition to these hard measures there are softer measures including Safe Urban Driving training for professional drivers through the CPC programme² as stated earlier. Here we will look at what drivers of HGVs or PCVs can do to minimise risk while sharing the road.

While cycling is a relatively low risk activity it is often perceived as risky especially by people who don't cycle. Per mile travelled, a person is less likely to be involved in a traffic incident on a bike than when walking or riding a motor cycle, however cyclist incidents are reported much more widely by the media than pedestrian incidents which leads to a misconception that cycling is very risky compared to other modes. The benefits of cycling to life expectancy, mental and physical health and work productivity greatly outweigh the risks³. It is also important that lorry drivers understand the benefit to them when people choose to cycle rather than drive.

The beauty of cycling is its simplicity. Riding a bike is empowering and enables people to move around freely using their

own power. In order to encourage more people to cycle there needs to be as few barriers as possible. You do not need any special clothing to ride a bike (apart from good weather gear). Helmets and hi-viz are optional as the safety benefits of these are inconclusive. Some cyclists will be insured since they will also be drivers or they belong to a cycling group that offers third party insurance. As a principle, cyclists, like pedestrians, do not require insurance since they rarely harm others. Cycles are not registered nor do riders pay vehicle excise duty (wrongly referred to as road tax) which is a charge for vehicle emissions. Everyone who pays income and council tax pays to build and maintain roads. Some cyclists will have better skills and experience than others. Some will have undergone Bikeability⁴ training, will know the Highway Code and some will not.

Here are some tips for drivers to ensure positive interactions with cyclists.

■ **Consider whether or not to overtake cyclists** Bicycles are machines built for speed. Riders can often cycle at the speed of the traffic stream. Consider hanging back, especially in towns where a rider may need to swerve to avoid a car door opening or a pedestrian stepping from the kerb. When overtaking pass wide and slowly, leaving room for the rider to swerve (if they encounter a pothole)

■ **Understand a rider's positioning** There are many occasions when a rider will be in the middle of the lane, such as when

passing parked cars, side roads or moving through pinch points where the road narrows. They are more visible in this position and can ensure drivers remain behind where it is risky to pass

■ **Be patient** There will be slower riders who may not be able to keep up with the speed of the moving traffic. Drivers should hang back when it may be risky to overtake, such as in the circumstances described above

■ **Give cyclists space at junctions, roundabouts and multi-lane roads** Trained and experienced cyclists move to the middle of the appropriate lane at junctions and on more complex infrastructure like gyratories in order to ensure that they get seen and don't get squeezed. They ride in the same position as they would if they were in a car. Less experienced riders ride between lanes. They too need space

■ **Cyclists do not have to use bike lanes** Many bike lanes put cyclists in risky positions by keeping them close to junctions or too close to the kerb. Cyclists choose to ride away from these lanes to be more visible and minimise risk, not to annoy drivers

■ **Be aware of cyclists on the nearside (left) of the vehicle** While trained and experienced riders will generally overtake on the right, many cyclists prefer to ride near the kerb and will be passing vehicles on the nearside. Be aware if there is a blind-spot and check the left side especially before turning

■ **Avoid using the horn unless it is to warn of genuine danger (as per the Highway Code)** A blast of the horn can really unnerve a cyclist and may unbalance them

■ **Understand cyclists better** If your drivers haven't ridden for a while consider getting them out for a ride. They could consider getting some cycle training. Drivers will then appreciate what it feels like to be on a bike and may well also have fun!

Professional drivers represent the company whose logo is emblazoned on the side of their lorry. Cooperation with other road users will enhance the reputation of the company. Sharing the road together will help with feelings of intimidation and people are less likely to be harmed. Ensuring that interactions between CV vehicles and people walking and riding are positive and low risk will make the road environment safer and feel safer which will lead to more people happy to travel actively.

1 <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/info-for/freight/safety-and-the-environment/improving-construction-safety>

2 http://www.fors-online.org.uk/index.php?page=DCPC_INTRO

3 <http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/recreation/article/ww-Wise-Words---Cycling-and-Health-o>

4 <https://bikeability.dft.gov.uk/>