

Vastern Road Roundabout Too Dangerous For Cyclists



Vastern Road Roundabout from car park exit

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The Vastern Road roundabout by Reading Bridge is by far the most dangerous area for cyclists in Reading.

The official collision records (STATS19) show 19 cyclist casualties in three years. These atrocious figures should be generating urgent action by Reading Borough Council. Unfortunately, four months after the issue being raised RCC have seen no remedial proposals, nor repainting of the worn road markings.

Most of the collisions appear to be failure to give way by motorists entering the roundabout and hitting a cyclist. Eight of these being northbound cyclists

hit by vehicles exiting Vastern Road, three with cyclists exiting Vastern Road, and three with southbound cyclists hit by vehicles exiting Napier Road.

Five arm junctions like this tend to have a poor safety record, whether they are roundabout or signal controlled. The number and complexity of vehicle movements is probably a factor, with users less able to judge the intended route of others even if they are signalling.

There are a number of problems that make conditions difficult and dangerous for cyclists at this junction. They were

Vastern Road Roundabout

noted by RCC at the time of construction, more than three years ago, and have been reiterated in recent months. We see the problems as:

- The large carriageway widths and no circular lane markings encourage higher speeds than appropriate and poor lane discipline. The layout also encourages unsafe overtaking on the roundabout. The deflections of traffic feeding onto the roundabout are mainly inadequate to slow traffic and not to Department for Transport design standards.
- The current three lane approach from Vastern Road is made worse by the offside bus lane on the approach and the nearside lane changing from straight ahead to turn left, forcing most traffic into one lane from two, causing potentially dangerous lane-swapping on the approach. This is a possible distraction from watching for vehicles and particularly cyclists on the roundabout.
- The two southbound lanes over Reading Bridge have generally caused problems with encouraging injudicious overtaking and use of the wrong lane, both of which can lead to knock-on problems at the roundabout.
- The two or three (unmarked) lanes that reduce to one narrow lane on the bridge approach are dangerous and do not conform to roundabout design standards.
- Cyclists have difficulty moving from the bus lane under the railway into the traffic lane for Vastern Road or Reading Bridge.



Vastern Road Roundabout from Reading Bridge

Give-way markings on the Vastern Road approach in particular are now worn, making them less effective.

The greater carriageway widths have also made conditions worse for pedestrians, particularly on the Reading Bridge arm.

Solutions or at least improvements to the junction should include:

- Provide some form of spiral lane-markings on the circulatory sections. This may necessitate separating the northbound vehicle lanes for Vastern Road and Reading Bridge with lane markings under the railway bridge and in Forbury Road.
- Remove unnecessary carriageway space with hatch markings and/or preferably kerb build-outs.
- Reduce Napier Road exit from two lanes to one.
- Reduce the length of the offside bus lane in Vastern Road, remove last section and reduce the number of lanes to two.

- Review the alignment of the car park entry and exits.
- Ensure that give-way and other markings are re-marked to maintain visibility.
- Consider partial signalisation of the roundabout with pre-signals for cyclists.

The current authorised give-way markings for a roundabout are a single dashed line as opposed to a much wider dashed line on mini-roundabouts and a double dashed line at give-way junctions.

A bolder give-way line is required at conventional roundabouts particularly large ones as at Vastern Road. What is really needed are the 'shark's tooth' markings (see below) which are far more conspicuous and are almost universally used in other European countries. This would then replace the current three different types of give-way marking.

Will Reading try and agree a trial scheme with the Department for Transport?

John Lee, RBC Campaigner for RCC



Examples of 'shark's tooth' road markings used by cyclists

Campaign News



Reading Borough Council (RBC)

Spring Report

Since the last Campaign News in December and the time of writing (mid February) there have been no meetings to report on or major issues that have cropped up.

The Cycle Forum was on 27 February at the Council Offices, and feedback from this will be reported in the next newsletter. We discussed what to raise at the Forum at our last RCC committee meeting. Our usual long list had both new and many unresolved issues from previous requests. Persistence and patience are needed by campaigners!

There appears to have been little or no action by RBC yet on signing and other improvements in the town centre which were agreed about a year ago.

Also, the series of cycling collisions at the Vastern Road roundabout by Reading Bridge has yet to get the immediate action that is required, as reported on the front page.

The campaign has been more proactive recently in contacting Councillors and others, which has resulted in a number of meetings. The outcomes of these meetings are recorded on pages 5 to 8 in this newsletter.

John Lee
RBC Campaigner for RCC



Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC)

Spring Report

Traffic in Wokingham has been causing a headache for Wokingham Borough Council (WoBC) because of delays in the project to renovate the market square. With the road closed from Peach Street to Broad Street, traffic is diverted and jams are even worse than usual. This led to a petition on the WoBC website, which got over 2000 signatures and a debate in full Council.

WoBC has promised to involve people in resolving the situation so we shall see what changes. In my view, the fundamental problem in Wokingham is that too many people choose to drive and there isn't space to build more roads for them. Having seen the Southern Distributor Road, it cannot take significant traffic from the town centre without making life in Montague Park unpleasant.

The only real space available for another road would be from Barkham Road through to Wooshill Spine Road, but that would go down like a lead balloon with all who (like me) live on Wooshill. I can only hope that the situation will make WoBC and local people realise that Wokingham cannot

build its way out of trouble. We need better buses and better walking and cycling routes so that there are fewer private cars on the existing roads.

The Wokingham MP, John Redwood, recently strayed from his usual EU polemics into a thoughtful blog post on the future of transport, speculating on the rise of self-driving cars and the congestion caused by parking: (<http://johnredwoodsdiary.com/2017/12/29/personal-travel/>).

Unfortunately for him, some of the dedicated readers of his blog perceived this as a veiled threat to the Right of the British Motorist to drive wherever and whenever she/he wants. Cue the squeal of brakes and some soothing words including 'the use of a car is essential' and 'bypasses'.

I'd like to thank the Cycling UK/CTC members who attended the Wokingham Borough (WoBC) planning committee considering the Arborfield Relief Road. The road will sever Swallowfield Lane, a useful cycle route linking Wokingham with the more rural roads of West Berkshire. Following our representations, it seems WoBC have made some changes to the proposed design, so I hope the effect of the road will not be too detrimental.

WoBC has now also submitted its planning application for the next part of the South Wokingham Distributor Road from Montague Park over the Wokingham-Bracknell railway line. This has 3m shared-use paths on both sides, which I feel is the minimum acceptable facility for cycling. I have

suggested that the paths should be widened to 3.5m on both sides because there is space; this would reduce the risk of conflict between people walking and people cycling if it does become a popular route.

WoBC will be submitting more planning applications for roads during 2018, including the Winnersh Relief Road and parts of the North Wokingham Distributor Road. Please let me know your thoughts about how these could encourage cycling, and please take part in the consultations when they happen.

Finally for WoBC, some good news. WoBC have fixed the drainage problem on the new shared-use path along the Emm Brook from Smiths Walk to Kingfisher Bridge, and there is even a new sign to point you from the bridge to Wooshill.

I have submitted comments for RCC to central Government consultations on major and strategic roads (busy A-roads), examples within the Reading area being the A33 and A3290/A329(M). The consultations mentioned cycling, and my response asked that policies for major and strategic roads should be designed to increase cycling, and make cycling safer and faster. Including this as a specific target will encourage Highways England, and local Councils, to design schemes that cater for people who cycle and not just for those who use their own car.

Peter Howe
WoBC campaigner for RCC

Bike Kitchen Update

Many local cyclists miss the Bike Kitchen that took over Jacksons in 2014. There was no such thing as a quiet time when the doors were opened, and there was a lot going on behind the scenes when the doors were closed too.

From the moment we tentatively opened the doors one Saturday in June in that first year we were pretty much flat out.

It was a busy enough scene, and many people worked their socks off to keep it going. It was one of the hardest jobs I ever had, except none of us really worked. It was entirely run by volunteers.

In the three years we were there we helped people use the workstands 8000 times, and at a guess we had 4000 people through the doors. When we were closed we spent hours fixing up old bikes for sale, 850 went back

on to the streets of Reading, 1500 were sent onwards to other recycling projects.

286 people gave up their time for free to help make the project run. It was a truly remarkable enterprise which is currently on ice.

We had to leave the building as it was about to be redeveloped. When we moved in we expected a few months. We had nearly three years, and actually that time took its toll on some of us. Working often 40 and sometimes 50 hours a week to keep the project alive was too much really, especially for a pensioner!

People exploiting it became wearying too, I trusted everyone, but some folk exploited that trust, inevitable but painful.

Now, without any premises it is just ticking over, but we do still do stuff. Every Monday our workstands spring up in the Global Café for a couple of hours. We are often but not regularly somewhere on the University Campus. If we can get a slot we are occasionally at the Farmers' Market. Soon we will pop up in other places too, but really we are just kicking our heels until we get a new place to be. We have a few promising leads, but as a project that doesn't generate a ton of cash we need somewhere very cheap, and I'm sure I don't have to tell you about the cost of renting in Reading.

One day though we'll be back with a vengeance.

Adrian Lawson
RCC Chairman



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AWCycles would like to announce they offer RCC members a permanent discount in the shop of 5% off bikes and frames as well as 10% off everything else, but you will need to show your membership card to receive your discount.

Street Tour Walkabouts

Caversham Walkabout

A Caversham walkabout meeting was held with Adele Barnett-Ward, who is a prospective Labour candidate for the Caversham Ward, accompanied by three cycle campaigners. Adele rides a bike slowly (she says) and therefore is keen to make cycling safer and feel safer. We spent nearly two hours looking at Caversham's streets and discussing various issues. These are grouped as:

- Areas for 20mph limit
- Central Caversham changes in line with the CADRA vision for Caversham
- Improvements and extension to the cycle route over Christchurch Meadow from the new bridge
- Improvements to the existing NCN 5 route through central Caversham
- Improvements to Henley Road and Lower Henley Road cycle lanes
- Improvements to Peppard Road cycle lanes and the uphill exit from Prospect Street
- Poor road surface in Wolsey Road

Adele appeared to be sympathetic to all our suggestions. Now it is probably appropriate to try to obtain buy-in from all Caversham Ward Councillors and other prospective Councillors.

John Lee

RBC Campaigner for RCC



Oxford Road

West Reading and Oxford Road Walkabout

Oxford Road is due a redesign! As many of you know, Oxford Road is a major route for cyclists into and out of the town. It is certainly not ideal: you share a relatively narrow road with cars that are either stationary due to the traffic, or go too fast for it to be pleasant, as well as an impressive number of buses. There are cars parked on both sides on large stretches of the road. Some houses have dropped curbs to access tiny bits of off-street parking and the street is full of pedestrian

islands as well as other forms of street furniture.

When you cycle here, you will likely experience a few close passes by cars only to have to wait behind them at the next traffic light. But all this can be improved! At least, there is an opportunity to do so. The Council has published plans for a redesign here: <http://www.reading.gov.uk/transport-schemes-and-projects>

These plans are not in fact new. They are plans from 2013 on which Reading Cycle Campaign commented extensively when they were first published. The plans are not specifically aimed at

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Street Tour Walkabouts

improving matters for cycling and while some changes could be beneficial, there are some serious problems that need to be resolved. Luckily there is hope this will be done!

We had the pleasure of speaking to Councillor Sarah Hacker on a rainy afternoon in January about Oxford Road and the proposed plans, and there were two things that stood out from the conversation: one was her reassurance these plans are certainly not final and any suggestions will be taken seriously. The fact there is a commitment to revisit the plans and change them where needed is encouraging. The second thing is that a 20 mph speed zone will be considered after the Cow Lane Bridge widening has been completed.

In regard to the latter, implementing either a 20 mph speed limit or a 20 mph speed zone will be a real improvement for cyclists. There is mountains of

evidence that lowering speeds to 20 mph reduces accidents and also reduces the severity of accidents that do occur. Getting this approved and implemented would be a real victory for walking and cycling.

But let's have a look at some of the problems with Oxford Road and how they are being handled in the plans:

1) The Norcot Road/Oxford Road roundabout. This is a very busy multi-lane roundabout and it is neither safe

nor pleasant for cyclists. Revisiting this roundabout with cyclists in mind should be at the top of the agenda for the Oxford Road redesign. This is where a real change for the better could and should be made. Unfortunately, the proposed plans manage to make things not better but worse, by adding an extra right turn flare lane on the approach from Oxford Road-Reading West side onto the roundabout. If you are going straight on you are now in between two lines of cars. As if the



Norcot Roundabout

We have been helping accident victims for well over 30 years and have developed a national reputation for our work in this field.

Specialising in a wide range of injury work for both adults and children, the firm has membership of all the relevant specialist panels including those of the Law Society, Headway and the Spinal Injuries Association and is closely involved with the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust (BHIT) based in Reading.

Once again my sincere thanks for your kind assistance and courtesy in dealing with this claim and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Joan Cronin, Kent

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advice@claims-personalinjury.com
www.boyesturnerclaims.com



Street Tour Walkabouts

situation is not complicated enough to navigate! The primary objective for the roundabout changes is obviously to increase the capacity for motor vehicles, not to improve matters for other road users, which is disappointing. There are other changes made around the roundabout, but generally speaking the plans are a missed opportunity. Back to the drawing board...

2) Entrance to Grovelands: Advanced Stop Lines will be added. In theory you would use the bus lane at this point, and if you want to make a right turn into Grovelands Road you should be able to position yourself in advance of cars, which would mean you can make the right turn more safely. Of course this is provided there is not a bus ahead of you. Either way this is a slight improvement.

3) Wantage Road roundabout: several accidents have occurred here including cyclists. There are no real speed calming measures in place. Right turns into Wantage Road are often taken by people in cars without slowing down, and this means a lethal situation for pedestrians and cyclists. The same is true for cars from Wantage Road entering Oxford Road. On top of that, right before you approach the roundabout from the town side the road narrows due to a pedestrian crossing. This should be turned into a normal priority junction. There is no excuse for this situation to remain, yet strangely enough no changes were proposed in the original plans.



Wantage Road roundabout



Continuation of cycle lane along Oxford Road

4) Mandatory left turn into Bedford Road for cars: in the approach to the left turn the road changes into two lanes. But there is a bus lane continuing straight on Oxford Road that cyclists are allowed to use. To reach the bus lane you have to cross those two lanes, which is dangerous as motorists tend to speed up in this section.

Here there is some good news: the bus lane will be extended before the road (for cars) turns into two lanes meaning for cyclists it will be safer to cross into the bus lane (which is something we have proposed for a long time). The change is minimal, but would be an improvement for cyclists.

There are a lot of other small changes being suggested. Some positive and some ridiculous, like adding bike symbols on the side of the road to remind motorists they have to share. It just suggests you should cycle close to the gutter, which is a bad idea on a very narrow road.

Things that are not resolved in the plans that need looking at are the removal of badly positioned pedestrian islands and other road narrowings. Some drivers try to overtake you before you reach a pinch point, which makes it instantly dangerous. Also, road humps that have little effect on the speed of motorists, but encourage cyclists to move into the gutter to avoid the actual hump, are not removed.

We will post a full breakdown of the plans on the website over the next few weeks. But these are some of the more important proposals. I think what this little breakdown shows is how small the changes are. It is really more of a tweak than anything else. And that is a

bit of a shame. If there was political will to remove parking spaces there is space enough for an actual protected cycle lane along the majority of the road. It would instantly make cycling a better option for going into town for thousands of people living in Reading West, Tilehurst and beyond.

And allow me to dream a bit more: the middle section of Oxford Road, which is essentially a little centre to the area and a destination in itself deserves a bit of love. Would it not be great if here we were to drastically reduce speeds for cars and make it a pedestrian priority zone? Maybe not an improvement for cyclists, but imagine the result...



Oxford Road

Anyway, back to reality. To summarise: there are minor improvements in the plans as well as some bad things that need to be resolved and there are several problems with the current layout that do not get tackled. We look forward to working with our local councillors to improve the plans and make Reading West a bit better.

Leendert van Hoogenhuijze
RCC Publicity Coordinator

Chairman's Letter

Dear RCC members,

It took many months of emails, phone calls and Twitter messages before I finally got to speak to a member of the Thames Valley Police road safety team to explore working together on a close pass project in Reading.

Close pass was an initiative from West Midlands police. One of their cops would ride a bike. If someone overtook them too close they radioed another cop with a motorbike who pulled the driver over "for a word". The effect has apparently been dramatic, drastically reducing collisions, empowering cyclists, and helping significantly to get more people on bikes. It also turns out to be cheap, cheaper than any other intervention they have used.

Sadly in our area this isn't on the cards. The officer is due to retire, they don't need our help, they don't have the resources, and they generally don't see the benefit of getting lots of

people cycling. "People aren't going to ride on cold wet days now, are they?"

I did have a meeting to discuss bike theft, and although the officer was very enthusiastic, I had to point out that the cycle racks at the station were a textbook example of the problem. They were those wheel grabbers that only allow you to lock your bike with the front wheel, the opposite of what their very own leaflet advise.

Other police forces have taken to encouraging all road users to send in videos of poor driving, so they can be used in enforcement too, but although you can submit them locally it isn't easy and it isn't actively encouraged.

The response has been less than inspiring. I once heard that one of our members should have pulled over to let the poor driver pass. It wasn't fair on the driver to hold them up, so going the wrong way round a bollard in a

truck wasn't likely to be prosecuted as cyclists "were in the driver's way".

We invited the local Thames Valley Police to our February meeting. Sadly they failed to show; the PCSO got caught up in operational matters and couldn't make it.

So the brilliant simple and cheap way of making our roads safer so we don't have to wait years for decent cycling infrastructure isn't going to be something we'll see imminently.

Which is a real disappointment.

If all drivers feared that passing a cyclist improperly would land them in trouble with the law, which is what the benefit of Operation Close pass has proved elsewhere, then at a stroke all roads would be a bit more attractive to anyone who wanted to use a bike. If all drivers thought their actions were being recorded and the evidence acted upon, they would

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For more information and list of forthcoming rides visit: www.readingctc.co.uk/rides

Or contact: Sean Hayden, Secretary Reading CTC by emailing secretary@readingctc.co.uk or by phone or text on 07801 410707

Chairman's Letter



Adrian Lawson

surely behave better than they do now. But at the moment submitting evidence of dodgy, careless, dangerous or aggressive driving from an action camera isn't taken seriously either. The police are very pro-motorist.

The other day I was in Greyfriars Road. There was a delivery van parked in the cycle lane. I approached the driver and pointed out what he was doing, but he said he had every right to do it, gave me some abuse and waltzed off with his parcel in his hand. As I made a note of his details and contacted his company, two PCSOs rode past, went around the outside of the parked van, rode up to the lights (the ones that only cyclists use, and which can test even my patience). I walked over to ask them to speak to the van driver when he came back, but they both rode straight through the lights, which were still red, and rode off in the direction of the doughnut shop.

So if this all seems to paint a very negative view of the police, who I know are stretched, and who I know try very hard, it is because my experience of them when it comes to people riding bikes is that they don't really give a toss. And they wonder why some people on bikes have a similar attitude.

Actually I think there has been an improvement in driver behaviour. I have noticed many more patient drivers than there used to be. Many people now take great care round me when I'm cycling. The trouble is the impatient ones, the angry ones and the dangerous ones are still out there. And there is little chance of them being stopped.

That is scary, it really makes me evaluate my routes, not to choose the most convenient ones, or times, but to make a judgment on when and where I might get a peaceful ride. I also ride very defensively, which means thinking hard about my position, how if needed I can prevent someone trying to overtake, but making an overtake easy when it is safe for me to let them pass.

On a narrow road with cars coming towards me, or with a bend ahead, I will ride a long way out from the kerb, and I will move out there well before I really need to, so I am safely in position and following drivers simply have to slow down. The problem with that is not mine though. I am a confident assertive cyclist who has been honing his skills for 50 years. With every ride I learn a tiny bit more, and get a little better.

That is of no use to someone who thinks getting on a bike for the first time is a good idea. That is our target audience. The person who has a short journey to make, and who doesn't want to keep driving a mile or less. The person who has been advised to get a bit more exercise, but hasn't got the time, wastes an hour each day sat in traffic. The person with little cash who can't afford the bus fare every day, or the person who has just lost their driving licence for texting or drinking or speeding. They are hardly going to have the confidence to ride assertively. They may not have the first idea what is the best position to use on the road. The default for most will be as far to the left as possible.

Either that or on the pavement. Of course with all the new cycle routes put in by the Council being on the pavement, it is understandable that many people think that is the place they should be. The latest National Cycle network route through Reading is appalling, all on the pavement and a real waste of money.

I almost never use the shared use pavements, but I have used one in particular. It is a contraflow which allows me a much shorter journey occasionally. In that respect I have to grudgingly admit it is a good route. However there is one potentially scary

thing. It has people walking along it, often in the same direction as I am riding. If I pass them I have to let them know I am passing, otherwise they could move to one side, possibly suddenly, and tip me off the kerb into oncoming traffic. The solution is to ring my bell or call out "excuse me". Now I hate bells with a passion. Coming along behind someone and ringing my bell is just rude. If someone in a car came along behind me and sounded their horn I would be quite cross.

The safe way to ride along these paths is very slowly and cautiously. I use Oracle Riverside almost every day. It is occasionally really busy. It isn't great to make good progress, but it does avoid a much busier road. However it does encourage pavement cycling. This is a real problem, because one thing the police have history on doing well is telling people to stop riding on the pavement.

The complaints about Caversham Bridge led them to mount a campaign, and they ignored the Home Secretary's advice to tolerate people riding carefully. They stopped at the point where the pavement cycle route (2 metres wide) from Tilehurst Station to Caversham bridge (3 miles?) stopped and became a 5 metres wide pavement where cycling wasn't allowed. They forced all cyclists onto the road, which at the time was filled with queuing vehicles. Not a very bright move. But then, as cyclists are so easy to stereotype, so are coppers.

Adrian Lawson
RCC Chairman

Our Mission

- To campaign for better facilities for cyclists in Reading, in particular a network of safe cycleways linking residential, industrial and commercial areas, and giving access to the town centre.
- To work with Sustrans, Cycling UK (both locally and nationally) and others interested in promoting cycling and the well-being of cyclists.
- To identify the needs of cyclists in Reading, for example the location of safe and secure parking, and to campaign for their provision.
- To work with and advise local authorities and, where necessary, criticise and highlight their shortcomings.



Getting Your Bike Summer-Ready

Check your bike to make sure it is in good running order and safe to go on the road

- Check the brake blocks. Make sure there is still plenty of braking compound left on them. If not, the metal stud which the compound is bonded to will protrude and damage the rim. Also adjust them so there isn't too much movement in the brake lever before they grip the rim or disc in the case of disc brakes.
- Check the inner cables. Make sure there is no fraying before the final clamping bolt. If there is, the inner cable will need replacing. Also do some basic lubricating. Check the outer cabling, making sure there aren't any kinks which will affect the performance.
- Check the chain. A simple way to check for wear is to see if you can lift the chain from the chainrings. If you can do this, it should be changed before too much wear occurs. If you are not sure, have it checked by a bicycle mechanic. If it looks OK lubricate it with chain oil.
- Check the gears are set up correctly. If they are not it will cause problems in changing gears and also will cause wear and tear on the mechanisms.
- Check the wheels. Make sure there are no loose or broken spokes, plus make sure the wheels are running true. Also check the rims look OK, and are not bowing out, which could mean they are about to give out. If any of these faults are present, take your bike to a bicycle shop and have it fixed.
- Check the tyres. Make sure there aren't any splits or tears that could lead to sudden deflation. Also make sure there is still plenty of tread on them.
- Finally check to make sure there aren't any loose or missing bolts. If you find a loose bolt, tighten up using an appropriate spanner.

Bob Bristow

Get your bike summer-ready in 4 simple steps

Has your bike been holed up in the garage over winter? Maybe you run a different summer bike to your winter hack. Either way, the mercury is rising and if you're thinking about piling on some miles, it is time to ensure things are ship-shape. After all, is there anything worse than getting kitted up for a ride to find that your bike is unrideable?

Check over your bike with these simple steps...

1. Drivetrain



First things first. You won't be going anywhere fast without a working drivetrain. Set up the bike so you can shift through the gears (a workstand is a worthwhile investment for this task alone!) to see if things are working as they should. If they aren't, it's best to conduct a full overview of your system.

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10 checks for a summer-ready bike

1. Check tyre pressures as your tyre pressures will almost definitely be too low.
2. Check your chain, derailleur and cranks to see that they are not bent or not adjusted correctly. If they are not normal, either adjust them or replace broken parts.
3. Then lube your chain so you cover all the moving parts on your chain and cassette.

Getting Your Bike Summer-Ready

Start with the cables. Check that they aren't too stretched or too slack. Take a look at the connections as well as the whole length to see if they have played.

Ensure the rear (and the front if you have one) derailleurs are correctly seated and haven't been knocked.

Assess the chain, cassette and chainrings for wear. If any of these individual components are worn, it will mean that the chain can't find enough purchase to catch on and provide drive. Sometimes drivetrains work differently under pressure, so if it is safe to do so, take the bike out for a quick spin. Of course a cleaned, spotless and adequately lubed chain is also important! Check for signs of rust and grime.

2. Brakes



Functional, responsive brakes are a necessity. Check both your callipers

are moving freely and then move onto the pads. Most pads, whether disc or rim, have wear markers that give an indication of when a new set is on the cards.

3. Wheels/Tyres



Again, with the bike in a stand, spin the wheels to assess how true they are. It's also a good idea to check individual spokes for damage along with how worn the rims are.

Depending on whether you've ridden through winter or put your bike into hibernation over the colder months, tyres can get worn out or degrade.

Check the tread is good and perform a visual check of the sidewalls. The tyres will no doubt have deflated too, so get them back up to the required PSI.

4. Cleaning

Steps one to three complete, it's time to break out your cleaning products.



Perform a deep clean of everything, frame, drivetrain, brakes, wheels and contact points.

We're huge fans of frame shine or detailing products. Standing back and seeing the sunlight catch your shiny frame only makes you want to get out riding more!



Of course if the above is not for you, visit Cycle Republic Reading at 3 Apex Plaza, Forbury Road, Reading RG1 1AX, where we offer three levels of bike servicing as well as all manner of specific repairs.

All work carried out is guaranteed for six months and a same service is also available.

4. Make sure you wipe off all the excess lube, as excess lube will collect dirt and speed up wear of parts.

5. Have a look at the condition of your brake pads (disc or non disc). If there is plenty of life left in them, then don't worry about replacing them.

But if they are getting close to being worn out, then best to replace them now as you have a whole summer of riding ahead.

6. Check the condition of your tyres. If they are worn out (so there is no

tread left) or covered in cracks, then it's best to replace them so they don't fail on you.

7. Check your wheel nuts/Q R skewers /through axles are tight and not damaged, as you need these to be working properly all of the time.

8. Check that all visible bolts/nuts are tight and not damaged.

9. Check that there is no bearing play coming from your wheels, cranks, headset or pedals. If there is, then tighten or grease the appropriate part, or replace it if necessary.

10. Finally lift your bike about 20-30cm off of the floor and just drop it. It should sound solid with no noticable clunks or rattles with the exception of the chain. If it sounds normal then you're ready to ride!

Lewis, Decathlon Reading mechanic



Decathlon Reading. Forbury Retail Park, Reading RG1 3HS. Opening times Mon-Sat 9 - 8; Sun 10 - 4:30.

CycleReading Advertising

For 1/6 page display advert (87.5mm x 80mm)
RCC members £6 • Non-members £12
Bikes 'n' Bits (text only) free to RCC members
Contact the Editor (details below)



Contact Us

Tel: 0845 330 2543
www.readingcyclecampaign.org.uk
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You can now find RCC on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/ReadingCycleCampaign>
and Twitter: <http://twitter.com/ReadingCycle>

Next newsletter copy deadline: 4 May 2018

The newsletter will now be delivered electronically to members. If you'd prefer to receive a paper copy, please email newsletter@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Council Contacts

Please let the relevant campaign officer know of anything you've reported.

Reading Borough Council

Highway queries: 0118 937 3797; parking: 0118 937 3767;
potholes: 0800 626540; www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk

Wokingham Borough Council

0118 974 6302 or www.wokingham.gov.uk

West Berkshire Council

01635 519080 or www.westberks.org.uk

Windsor and Maidenhead

www.rbwm.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council

Roads and Transport: 0845 310 1111

Monthly Meetings

7.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month:

Wed 18 April 2018 - open mtg

Wed 16 May 2018 - cttee mtg

Wed 20 June 2018 - AGM

Held in Room 1 of RISC, up the stairs
beyond the bar. See RCC Facebook Page
for updates. We hope to see you there.

Advertising Rates:

1/6 page (87.5mm x 80mm):

RCC members £6 - Non-members £12

1/3 page (180mm x 80mm):

RCC members £10 - Non members £20

1/2 page (180mm x 120mm):

RCC members £14 - Non members £28

Full page (180mm x 247mm):

RCC members £25 - Non members £50

Bikes 'n' Bits (text only) free to RCC members

Contact the Editor by emailing
newsletter@readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

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