



# The Economic Cycle

## Quantifying the benefits of getting England cycling



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Full report available at: [www.ctc.org.uk/economic-cycle](http://www.ctc.org.uk/economic-cycle)

## Foreword



The 'Get Britain Cycling' inquiry, organised by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, won support from members of all political parties. It recommended a long-term programme to increase cycle use nationally from less than 2% of journeys in 2011 to 10% in 2025 and 25% by 2050 - technically feasible, and achievable by sensible policies which are relatively cheap and very good value for money.

The country would benefit by reduction of traffic congestion, better health, reduced NHS costs, and improved child development in schools. The indications are that at each stage the economic benefits would be greater than the costs.

This report now deepens the understanding and broadens the evidence base for these benefits, and strengthens the case for the funding to achieve it.

*Phil Goodwin*

Professor Phil Goodwin  
Professor of Transport Policy, University West of England

## Introduction



Obesity, heart disease, poor air quality, congestion, road danger, climate change...these symptoms of past policy failures will become increasingly costly, unless we can change course. We need to enable grandparents and grandchildren alike to cycle easily, safely and enjoyably for any local journey.

In 2013, the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG) published its 'Get Britain Cycling' inquiry report. This called for ambitious targets for cycle growth backed by funding of at least £10 per person annually, rising to £20 over time.

The research summarised in this booklet demonstrates the vast economic benefits cycling could bring. We now need the major political parties to provide the necessary leadership and funding to make it happen - with councils, businesses, Local Enterprise Partnerships and others playing their parts too.

It really is time for joined-up action to Get Britain Cycling.

*Jon Snow*

Jon Snow  
CTC President

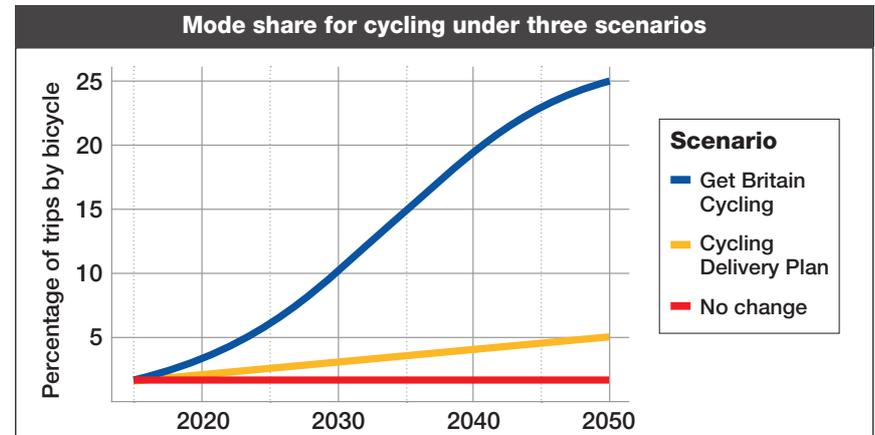


# We have a choice. By backing the Parliamentary Get Britain Cycling's targets, 25% of all trips will be made by bike by 2050, meaning £42bn in annual benefits and a cumulative benefit of over £248bn.

## Mode share for cycling under three scenarios

The Parliamentary 'Get Britain Cycling' (GBC) report proposed targets to boost cycle use to roughly German levels by 2025, and to Dutch levels by 2050. This is a lot more ambitious than the Government's Cycling Delivery Plan (CDP), and would therefore provide **far higher economic benefits**.

CTC commissioned research from Leeds University which estimated the economic benefits of increasing cycle use in England in line with these two scenarios, compared with a situation where the percentage of trips remains unchanged (around 2%).



## Summary of annual economic benefits in 2025 and 2050 (undiscounted)

	CDP in 2025	GBC in 2025	CDP in 2050	GBC in 2050
Increased physical fitness	£1,807m	£5,296m	£5,437m	£35,488m
Decongestion	£284m	£1,086m	£956m	£7,094m
Decreased casualties resulting from car usage	£36m	£136m	£120m	£888m
Reduction in indirect taxes (disbenefit)	-£64m	-£244m	-£215m	-£1,595m
Other	£27m	£92m	£111m	£751m
<b>Total economic benefits (undiscounted)</b>	<b>£2,090m</b>	<b>£6,366m</b>	<b>£6,409m</b>	<b>£42,626m</b>

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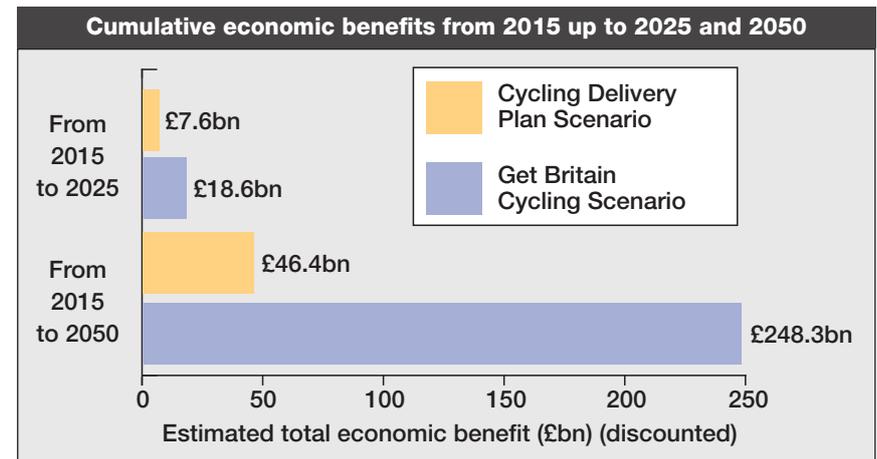
The research found that:

**Cycling makes economic sense.** If the Get Britain Cycling targets are met, the annual benefits in 2025 of the GBC scenario would be nearly **£6.4bn** in today's money, rising to **£42.6bn** in 2050. By contrast the Government's target would yield just £2.1bn in 2025.

## Cumulative economic benefits from 2015 up to 2025 and 2050

The cumulative benefits between 2015 and 2050 of meeting the **GBC targets would be £248bn**. This compares with just £46bn if cycle use continues growing at the rate proposed in the CDP.

This allows for 'discounting', which is how economists and the Treasury determine the present value of future benefits or income streams.



# What cycling could be worth

If England met the GBC targets recommended in the Parliamentary 'Get Britain Cycling' report, the resulting £248bn worth of benefits between 2015 and 2050 would amount to **£117 per person annually**. This is more than **five times higher** than the benefits from merely increasing cycle use in line with the Government's Cycling Delivery Plan.

The Government has already estimated that the benefits of increased cycle use amount to at least **£5.50 for every £1 spent**.

Estimated benefits and costs per person per year to 2050		
	Cycling Delivery Plan (2015-2050)	Get Britain Cycling (2015-2050)
Estimated benefit per person per year (£)	22	117
Predicted cost per person per year (£)	4	23

## £248bn is equivalent to:

- 2.5 times the General Government Net Borrowing in 2013-14  
(£100.4bn – source: Office for National Statistics)
- 4.5 years of health care spending in England at 2012-13 levels  
(£55.2bn – source: Department of Health)
- 2.9 years of total public expenditure on UK education at 2012-13 levels  
(£85bn – source: House of Commons Library)
- 20.6 times the Government's total road maintenance expenditure for the next 6 years  
(£12bn – source: Autumn Statement 2014)
- 36 times the current public expenditure on the UK rail network in 2012/13  
(£6.8bn – source: House of Commons Library)



# About the authors



**Robin Lovelace, BSc, MSc, PhD**  
Research Fellow in Big Data,  
University of Leeds

Robin is a quantitative geographer who advised on the inclusion of active travel modes in the Department for Transport's National Transport Model. He is currently based between the School of Geography and the Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (LIDA), in the Consumer Data Research Centre (CDRC), where he works on ways to model a transition to a post-carbon economy.



**Fiona Crawford MA, BSc**  
Institute for Transport Studies,  
University of Leeds

Fiona has a diverse academic and professional background that has seen her working in the public sector at both the National Audit Office and the Office for National Statistics, and also in the third sector for Sustrans, where she worked on the Cycling City and Towns monitoring project. She has studied at Cardiff University and Durham University, and is currently a PhD student at the University of Leeds, where she is researching travel time reliability on the road network using emerging data sources and dynamical models.

## CTC & Campaigns

CTC actively campaigns to make cycling in the UK an attractive option for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. Our campaigning focuses on six core themes: political and funding commitment to cycling; space for cycling; safe drivers and vehicles; cycles and public transport; promotion and encouragement; and off-road access.

For further information on Cycling and the Economy, see our briefing: [www.is.gd/qGJC2m](http://www.is.gd/qGJC2m)

Other CTC briefings can be viewed at: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaignsbriefings](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaignsbriefings)

To keep up-to-date on our campaigning activity, please subscribe to CTC's Cycle Campaign News: [www.ctc.org.uk/subscribe-to-cycle-campaign-news](http://www.ctc.org.uk/subscribe-to-cycle-campaign-news) or contact [campaigns@ctc.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@ctc.org.uk)

## About CTC

Since 1878, CTC – the UK's national cycling charity – has been protecting and promoting the rights of cyclists. CTC is a not-for-profit organisation that is funded through its membership and donations. At CTC, we focus on the social side of cycling, making cycling accessible to all through projects to help get people cycling, as well as being a powerful and independent voice on behalf of all cyclists through our campaigning.

Find us on: Facebook and Twitter

Join and support CTC | T: 0844 736 8451 or 01483 238301  
[www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)

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