

Network Rail and Cycling UK launch partnership as a fifth of Brits say they're considering cycling for their journey to work

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As government guidance around returning to the workplace comes into effect, a new YouGov study commissioned by Network Rail reveals that a fifth (20 per cent) of people are now likely to consider cycling as part of their journey to work, with nearly 60 per cent of commuters feeling confident about travelling back to their workplace and almost a third (32 per cent) planning to do this within the next week if it's safe for them.

Yet, despite many wanting to cycle for parts of their journey, the research highlights a number of barriers which are putting people off: 49 per cent are worried about cycling on busy roads (which increases to 55 per cent for Londoners), while 22 per cent are concerned their bike will get stolen or damaged, and 15 per cent are worried there won't be enough available bike storage at or near their place of work.

To address these concerns and support the growing numbers of cyclists in the UK, Network Rail has partnered with charity Cycling UK on a new initiative to help novice cyclists taking to the roads in towns and cities. Together, they will be offering cyclists practical tips on where they can park their bikes at

stations, information on safer cycling routes on quieter roads, as well as access to an interactive journey planner to help plot a cycle-friendly route from each station, in a bid to encourage sustainable, healthy travel.

There are currently 5,000 secure bike storage spaces at Network Rail's 20 managed stations, including at London Waterloo, Birmingham New Street and Manchester Piccadilly, offering convenient places for people to park their bikes before heading onto their next destination.

Network Rail has also introduced a range of measures – including enhanced cleaning regimes and increased station staff – to help keep passengers safe from the virus while travelling by rail. Passengers should continue to follow public health guidance – wear a covering if you are not exempt, travel at quieter times and maintain a distance from others wherever possible. Those who do not wear a face covering and are not exempt risk a £100 fine.

Network Rail and Cycling UK will provide information across each station and on their website about the availability of bike storage space and how to use these units safely and securely to avoid bikes being stolen or damaged.

David Biggs, Managing Director, Network Rail Property, said: “With more people taking up cycling and considering using it as part of their journey back to the workplace, we wanted to let them know that our stations offer lots of convenient storage space for them to leave their bikes.

“We’re working with Cycling UK to help promote sustainable, healthy travel, by offering useful and practical advice to new cyclists and help overcome some of the common barriers to cycling.”

Jenny Box, Head of Behaviour Change – England, Cycling UK, said: “Cycling is one of the best ways to make your short essential journeys, such as riding to the station or shops. It’s fun, free, good for you and an easy way to maintain social distancing while still getting out and about.

“Together with Network Rail, Cycling UK wants to encourage more people to discover the simple joy of riding a bike and give them the skills to keep on cycling.”

Cycling Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: “We have set out a revolutionary plan to transform attitudes around cycling, focused on creating a healthier and more active country.

“This important partnership will provide practical support and guidance, as well as confidence that they can safely store their bikes at stations, helping people make a positive change.”

You can find out more information about the initiative, bike storage locations at Network Rail stations and Cycling UK's interactive journey planner at www.networkrail.co.uk/cycling.

Photo credit: Network Rail