## About this document

This is a resource for supporters of the Exeter Cycling Campaign. It gives prompts for the key messages we wish to convey to prospective Councillors.

## Key Messages for prospective Councillors

* **We ask prospective Councillors to commit to planning, investing and building a comprehensive network of cycle paths in and around Exeter.**
* We need to be building a better city / county, with cycling at its heart, which will benefit all citizens. This is not about ‘favours for cyclists’.
* There are urgent issues that need addressing: pollution, congestion, unhealthy lifestyles and degradation of the public realm. Cycling provides answers to these. What part will you play as a Councillor to address these issues?
* Other cities are getting ahead of Exeter and Devon in building places where it is safe to walk and cycle. This won’t do!
* We expect our Councillors to be bold and lead us. Will you be that Councillor?
* The way to get a significant shift of people away from private cars and onto bicycles is to make it safe to do so.

This means building safe cycling infrastructure: segregated on big/fast roads, traffic-reduced and filtered on residential streets.

Merely ‘encouraging’ people to cycle won’t achieve this shift in behaviour.

* Prospective Councillors should not ignore what businesses are saying.

Over [180 Exeter businesses](http://exetercyclingcharter.org.uk/organisational-signatories/) have pledged support for the [Exeter Cycling Charter](http://exetercyclingcharter.org.uk/) , amongst them are the city’s largest employers.

These businesses are calling for Exeter to be a city where:

* + children can cycle to school or college safely
  + people can travel to work safely, directly and easily on a convenient and connected cycle network
  + our roads and public spaces prioritise people and make cycling the safe, natural choice for a large proportion of everyday journeys
* Prospective Councillors should note the growing body of citizens calling for them to make Exeter a city where cycling is the normal travel choice for everyday journeys.

## Other key information

In any discussion with prospective Councillors try and avoid getting sucked into negative and distracting non-issues like red-light jumping, helmets and Exeter being too hilly to cycle. Have a look at the [Cycling Fallacies](http://cyclingfallacies.com/en/) site for responses to these distractions.

* Cycling is good for the wellbeing of employees: people who cycle are more physically and psychologically more healthy, they are more alert and have fewer days off sick than others.
* Cycling is good for our business - people who cycle have lower absenteeism rates.[[1]](#footnote-0)
* (For retail businesses) enabling cycling leads to higher retail purchases.[[2]](#footnote-1),
* The Department of Transport’s own research shows how enabling cycling means stronger sales and healthier employees.
* Congestion is stifling business. We need to move people across the city more efficiently - cycling does that.
* When space is at a premium, the space taken by 1 car can provide parking for 8 bicycles.
* Cycling is the most efficient way of moving people across a congested city. You can get *seven times* more people through a junction on bicycles compared to cars.
* We face a health crisis in our country: 1 in 6 deaths directly attributable to physical inactivity and 42 people dieing in Exeter every year due to pollution. A recent Public Health England report concluded that building walking or cycling into daily routines are the most effective ways to increase physical activity.

## Background documents

“‘The Value of Cycling’”, DfT sponsored research from University of Birmingham & Phil Jones Associates. Mar’16:

* Economic growth can result from high density, cycle friendly urban design
* Reduced infrastructure maintenance costs come with catering for active travel and are typically 33% lower
* Cycle parking allows 5 times more retail spend than the same space for car parking. Furthermore, a compact town optimised for walking and cycling typically delivers a ‘retail density’ (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than typical urban centres
* Residential property values rise 1% when motor traffic is reduced 50%
* Facilitation of cycle to work leads to lower staff turnover
* Cycling can reduce absenteeism
* Children who walk or cycle to school tend to be more attentive and achieve greater results

### Public Health England: “Working Together to Promote Active Travel A briefing for local authorities”

Walking and cycling are good for our physical and mental health. Switching more journeys to active travel will improve health, quality of life and the environment, and local productivity, while at the same time reducing costs to the public purse. These are substantial ‘win-wins’ that benefit individual people and the community as a whole

* Physical inactivity directly contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and costs £7.4 billion a year to business and wider society
* The growth in road transport has been a major factor in reducing levels of physical activity and increasing obesity
* Building walking or cycling into daily routines are the most effective ways to increase physical activity
* Short car trips (under 5 miles) are a prime area for switching to active travel and to public transport
* Health-promoting transport systems are pro-business and support economic prosperity. They enable optimal travel to work with less congestion, collisions, pollution, and they support a healthier workforce

### Cycling UK (formerly CTC) - business benefits of cycling briefing

* Our excessive dependence on motorised road transport imposes significant economic costs on society. These include: congestion; road casualties; physical inactivity and the ill health caused by it (e.g. obesity); pollution (and the associated damage to buildings, ecosystems, agriculture and health); as well as the geopolitical costs of maintaining fossil fuel supplies in an increasingly unstable global environment
* Cycling could substantially reduce these risks, while strengthening local economies in both urban and rural areas; supporting local businesses and property values; boosting the economic productivity of a healthy and satisfied workforce; and enabling disadvantaged groups to gain skills and access employment opportunities
* The average economic benefit-to-cost ratio of investing in cycling & walking schemes is 13:1
* Academics who studied the cost benefit analysis used by Copenhagen to decide whether to build new cycling infrastructure, concluded that cars cost society and private individuals six times more than cycling
* On average, cycle commuting employees take one less sick day p.a. than non-cyclists and save the UK economy almost £83m
* Although cyclists may spend less than car-borne shoppers per trip, their total expenditure is on average greater because they tend to visit the shops more often
* On 9th Avenue (Manhattan), where a high quality cycle lane was rebuilt in late 2008, retail sales increased by up to 49%, compared to 3% borough-wide

### From Devon County Council’s “Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy” March 2015:

* “Our walking and cycle network supports our economy and enables people to enjoy being active”
* “Cycling supports the local economy in urban and rural areas; supports local businesses and property values by reducing vehicular traffic and congestion; it boosts the economic productivity of a healthy and satisfied workforce, and enables disadvantaged groups to gain access to training and employment opportunities”
* “ Cycling, multi-use trails and public open space are seen as an intrinsic part of the solution for a modern growing economy”
* “We will develop a segregated, high quality multi-use network of routes and trails that provide access for all and promote healthy, active lifestyles in Devon”
* “Exeter is the economic hub of Devon and is where the payback in investing in cycling, walking and leisure routes is multiple”

1. ‘Benefits of Investing in Cycling’. British Cycling: https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc\_files/campaigning/BENEFITS\_OF\_INVESTING\_IN\_CYCLING\_DIGI\_FINAL.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. ‘The value of cycling: rapid evidence review of the economic benefits of cycling’. Department for Transport, 2016: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cyclingrapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling [↑](#footnote-ref-1)