



Will Exeter's leaders take businesses' support for the Exeter Cycling Charter seriously?

Organisations across the city have pledged support for the Exeter Cycling Charter. Will our Councils and LEP¹ take this seriously?

The [Exeter Board council meeting](#) on Feb 2nd considers [sustainable transport options for the city](#). Will our city leaders listen to the voice of Exeter businesses and be bold in building a better city, with cycling at its heart.

Some of the city's largest employers are supporting the Exeter Cycling Charter. Among them are South West Water, The Met Office, Ashfords Solicitors, Devon & Cornwall Police, The RD&E and Devon County Council².

By endorsing the Charter, Exeter organisations are showing they understand how cycling supports local business, boosts economic productivity and contributes to the health and well-being of their workforces.

They are putting their weight behind encouraging our city's leaders to actively work to build a network of safe, convenient and connected cycle paths.

Over 150 of Exeter's organisations across the city are echoing the Department of Transport's own research³ which shows how enabling cycling means stronger sales and healthier employees.

Cycling is good for business.

South West Water's Business Services and Sustainability Director, Monica Read, said: *"We recognise that an active workforce is a healthier workforce, which is good both for the wellbeing of our staff and for our business. South West Water is pleased to support the Exeter Cycling Charter as a demonstration of our organisation's commitment to a more sustainable way of doing business."*

"When you consider the facts about the benefits of enabling cycling it is obvious", says Mike Walton, a member of the Exeter Cycling Campaign, *"cycling benefits both the physical and psychological well-being of employees, leading to reduced absenteeism⁴."*

"At the Exeter Board we will be asking our leaders to take seriously the message coming from the city's businesses about support for cycling" Mike Walton continued *"and be bold in committing to planning a city-wide network of safe cycle paths. This is good for business and good for the citizens of the city".*

¹ Heart of the South West Local Enterprise partnership: <http://heartofswlep.co.uk/>

² For a full list of organisations supporting the Exeter Cycling Charter see [here](#).

³ '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-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling>

⁴ '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



In signing up to the Exeter Cycling Charter, organisations are showing their support for cycling as an everyday means of transport for people of all ages and abilities. They are pledging to support Exeter and Devon's leaders in delivering a better future for all Exeter citizens, where cycling is a key means of tackling the congestion, pollution and unhealthy lifestyle challenges that the city faces.

The Exeter Cycling Charter can be found [here](#) and a FAQ [here](#).

Signatories of the Exeter Cycling Campaign can be found [here](#).

The Exeter Cycling Campaign will be making the case at the Exeter Board on Feb 2nd for building a dense, connected and convenient cycle network in the city. The Campaign's paper for this meeting can be found [here](#).

Some facts about the business case for cycling:

- In contrast to roads for cars and lorries, investment in cycle paths can have a benefit-to-cost ratio of 13:1.
- The average economic benefit-to-cost ratio of investing in cycling & walking schemes is 13:1.⁵
- Physical inactivity directly contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and nationally costs £7.4 billion a year to business and wider society. Health-promoting transport systems are pro-business and support economic prosperity. They enable optimal travel to work, with less congestion, collisions, pollution, and support a healthier workforce.⁶
- Cycling saves a third of road space compared to driving, helping cut congestion.⁷
- Cycling is the most efficient way of moving people across a city. By bicycle 14,000 people per hour can cross a junction typically compared with only 2000 per hour when driving. That's a seven fold more effective way of moving people.
- Pollution in Exeter, of which transport pollution is the greatest contributor, contributes to the premature death of 42 people per year in Exeter alone.⁸
- High street walking and cycling projects have shown to increase retail sales, sometimes by as much as 30%.⁹

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Public Health England: 'Working Together to Promote Active Travel A briefing for local authorities' 2016

⁷ '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

⁸ Exeter City Council: Place Committee - Sep'16: 'Local Air Quality Management report' from the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager

⁹ Dr Rachel Aldred, University of Westminster: West Sussex Cycle Summit - 2016



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Notes for editors

About the Exeter Cycling Campaign

We want to see cycling being a normal, everyday choice for people of every age and ability on safe, direct, connected and convenient paths. This is something that every citizen of Exeter will benefit from.

Cycling delivers a clean, space-efficient way of moving people across the city. It is a significant contribution to tackling the city's key challenges of pollution, congestion and unhealthy lifestyles.

Website: <http://www.exetercyclingcampaign.org.uk/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ExeterCyclingCampaign/>
Twitter: [@ExeterCycling](https://twitter.com/ExeterCycling)