



April 2018 Blog

The Image of Cycling- Is there an image problem for UK cycling?

If we are to increase the uptake of cycling in this country as an alternative mode of transport, there might be some significant image problems to overcome.

Cycling in the UK seems to have been split into three main factions.

1. The casual cyclist
2. The enthusiast sports and recreational cyclist
3. The urban guerrilla cyclist.

Each of the above appears to have their own dress code which seems to define the cyclist and may be off putting to other prospective cyclists. The most worrying is the third category as this is the area where we should be making the most progress in increasing numbers and it is this group of cyclists who generate the most bad feelings from other road users. For some the commute to work has developed into a battle ground with faults on both sides and not doubt exacerbated by the lack of road space for all users.

If you compare the commuter cyclist on the continent with those in the UK you see a dramatic difference in attitude. On the continent people don't get dressed up in hundreds of pounds/euros of specialist gear, they just get on your bike in their normal cloths and head off to the office or shop or wherever. Therefore, they appear to be still a part of the general commuting community and not anyone to be battled with;



Compare this to the typical scene from a UK street;



Add to this head cams and piercing LED strobe lights and you get a very different picture of someone using a cycle to get from A to B.

UK commuter cycling seems to have been claimed by the lycra clad, specialist equipment bristling, urban cycling evangelists.

Maybe they should tone it down a bit and relax into the commuter bike ride and become just another commuter using a different transport mode.