

Why would I not cycle (in Darlington and elsewhere)?

The weather in Britain is awful. How can I cycle through the rain?

Answer: There is not much difference between the weather in Bremen and in Darlington. Girls in Bremen cycle with umbrellas or waterproof jackets. Rain is greatly over-rated. In fact, there are very few days in the year when the rain is so bad that a 20 minute journey gets you really wet.

I cannot be fashionable on a bike.

Answer: On a Dutch bike with a low entrance and a skirtguard, you can even cycle with a long skirt.

Cycling makes me sweat. I cannot wear office clothes on a bike.

Answer: Gentle cycling for 15 to 20 minutes does not make you sweat. You do not need a shower when you arrive in your office.

Cycling is not cool. No one from my peer group cycles.

Answer: Now then, there is a challenge! You can be the *avantgarde* of your school or college. Try to find allies and cycle with them in style through town.

Cycling is dangerous, I might be hit by a car. Car drivers are often aggressive against cyclists or they do not know how to behave with cyclists on the roads.

Answer: Most motorists like to think that they are good, courteous drivers. But they are not used to dealing with cyclists. Once more people cycle, their behaviour starts to change. And anyway, there will then be less cars out in the streets. Town cycling in Britain is as much an education for motorists as it is for cyclists.

Cycling is dangerous, car drivers are too fast.

Answer: Main roads with fast traffic need cycle paths. Most councils in the UK ignore this fact. But even the government recognises that if a road is too dangerous, cyclists have to use a pavement until such time as a cycle path is built. Police have been instructed not to prosecute pavement cycling in such circumstances. Cycle on pavements to protect yourself, but be careful with pedestrians and explain to them why you share their space. If there are too many pedestrians, dismount.

Cycling is dangerous, there are hardly any cycle paths in my town.

Answer: Join Darlington Cycling Campaign or your local cycling campaign to fight for cycling infrastructure. Or start one in your town. Make your voice heard by politicians and people in your community.