

From: Richard Monk
Sent: 17 September 2009 11:12
To: gazette.newsdesk@nqe.com
Subject: Ghost Bike – a moving memorial – we do need more people cycling AND safer streets

Dear Sir

I have just been past the ghost bike. It is a very sombre and moving tribute to Daniel Andrew.

I am particularly moved because I run a CTC Cycle Champions project to get more people cycling. I am passionate about encouraging people to enjoy the health benefits and sheer pleasure of the activity.

In fact, people are more likely to benefit from cycling than otherwise. Studies have shown that regular cycling results in people having physical health and fitness equivalent to people 10 years younger. Cycling reduces the risk of heart conditions, and high blood pressure. It improves body strength and co-ordination and is a great way of burning calories. And, of course, it is great tonic — just ask my health riders and see the photos on my web pages www.ctc.org.uk/colchester.

Evidence suggests that greater numbers cycling actually results in lower casualties — as seen in central London. This is a central plank of the CTC's national Safety in Numbers campaign (www.ctc.org.uk/safetyinnumbers). However, many people I speak to are worried about traffic going too fast.

If I had to suggest a priority it would be making the conditions on our streets safer. Cyclists and pedestrians need to be protected by properly enforced, lower speed limits, particularly in areas where people live and shop.

I appreciate that won't bring back Daniel but it may prevent more tragic events happening.

If anyone wants to chat the issues over, send me an email to richard.monk@ctc.org.uk.

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