



alliance helping Milton Keynes people cycle more



assembling for

MK Cycling Summit 2026

Increasing cycling participation, Closing the Gender Pedal Gap

Thursday 15th October 2026, 9.30am-3.30pm

at The Hub Theatre, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA



Aims:

1. Bring alliance members together to report issues they face increasing cycling (Part 1)
2. Hear from local and national experts about best practice to address these issues (Part 2)
3. Prepare asks of Council, police, business and other city leaders to address these issues (Part 3)
4. Win pledges of action from powerholders to address these issues (Part 4)

Invitees: Members of Cycling Citizens MK, leaders of MK City Council, businesses, schools and civil society.

Moderator: Baroness Ann Limb, DBE. **Keynote speaker:** [Susannah Walker, In Her Place.](#)

Guest powerholders being asked to pledge actions:

- Cllr Jenny Wilson-Marklew, Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainability, representing Labour Group
- Cllr Shazna Muzzamil, Leader of Conservative Group
- Cllr Kerrie Bradburn, Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport
- Cllr Paul Trendall, MK Mayor
- Cllr Marie Bradburn, Active Travel Champion
- Andy Dickinson, Deputy Head of Highways, MK City Council
- Murray Woodburn, Head of Traffic & Transport
- Fiona Robinson, Strategic Lead for City Projects, MK City Council
- Sgt Simon Norman, Thames Valley Police (MK)

Research contributors evidencing MK need (bios below):

- Dr. Victoria Hands, Director of Sustainability, The OU
- Dr. Miguel Valdez, Senior Lecturer in Technology and Innovation Management, The OU
- Dr. Jitka Vseteckova, School of Health Wellbeing and Social Care, The OU
- Dr. Linda Plowright-Pepper, Children and Young People's Wellbeing Research Group, The OU
- Dr. Alex Chapman, Head of Economic and Environmental Policy, New Economics Foundation
- Dr. Jonathan Flower, University of West England, 'Back to the Future - MK' research findings
- Dr. Paul Troop, Lecturer in Law, barrister, chair and founder of Bicester Bike Users' Group

[REGISTER HERE TO ATTEND](#) | [Slideset here](#) | [Live webcast here](#) | [Photo story of last year's event](#)

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Activity	Speakers
8.30	Optional 'bike bus' group ride from MK Central Square at 8.30am, arrive at The OU 9am. Free Dr.Bike safety checks at Walton Hall Car Park, The Open University by Cycle Saviours , up to 12pm. For ride or repairs, register at link above. Bike parking (up to 38 bikes) in bike shed behind Jennie Lee building, close to The Hub (see image and map).		
9.00	Speakers arrive at Reception. Coffee/tea sponsored and provided by The Open University.		
9.15	CCMK video reels showing as delegates take seats.		
Welcome & Introduction			
9.30	Welcome	• Welcome and what CCMK is • Aims of summit • Process of summit, appointment of timekeeper • Message from Leader of Council	• Ann Shrimpton, Co-chair of CCMK • Simon Rudiger, Co-chair of CCMK • Ann Limb, Event Moderator • Cllr Jane Carr, Leader of MK City Council (on video)
9.40	Roll call of alliance member institutions	Each member calls out name and number of delegates present (up to 8 people).	CCMK member representatives stand up in turn, following list on screen - just 10 seconds each)
9.45	Why OU hosting	Importance of OU role in local community, teaching leadership on sustainability, and research partner for CCMK	Dr. Victoria Hands, Director of Sustainability, The Open University
9.50	Why cycling important to MK - local research evidence	• Sustainability: 41% MK's greenhouse emissions from transport (MKCF Vital Signs 2023) • Health: 25% MK residents unhealthy due to sedentary living; learning new habits with 'Take Five'. • Social justice: 20% of MK's households don't have access to a car; findings of travel unfairness from discovery phase of MK PEP	• Dr. Miguel Valdez, Senior Lecturer in Technology and Innovation Management, The Open University • Dr. Jitka Vseteckova, School of Health Wellbeing and Social Care, The Open University • Dr. Linda Plowright-Pepper, Children and Young People's Wellbeing Research Group, The Open University
10.05	How cycling helps growth	Economy: Role of cycling in community wealth building	Dr. Alex Chapman, Head of Economic and Environmental Policy, New Economics Foundation
10.10	What residents of MK say about the Redways	Redways not maintained consistently, unfairly affecting women, and CMK a big 'hole'	Dr. Jonathan Flower, 'Back to the Future - MK' research, University of West England
PART 1: Our issues - alliance members report their issues with increasing cycling participation			
10.15	Issues experienced by alliance members – presentation of evidence/ testimonials (3 mins only per speaker)	1. Gender Pedal Gap - we know we need 50% cyclists female for 7% trips by cycle, we think currently 23% MK cyclists female. Current Redway design and maintenance doesn't factor in gender differences, leads to perception of unsafety 2. Need more reliable data - routine monitoring and reporting 3. Super Redways Rating going well, but Redway 'hole' in CMK; and cycle theft rife 4. Need better Redway safety, lighting, and path quality; La Tour Hotel underpass and cycle path running along Silbury Boulevard to Skeldon Gate is overgrown and dark: issue	1. Ann Shrimpton, Co-Chair 2. Jane Whild, Gender Pedal Gap taskforce 3. Deborah Cooper & Rob Rieke, MK Cycle Forum 4. Rhiannon Smith, LEAP MK PEP; Jacqui Hunter, Trek Bikes; Steve McNay, Woughton Community Council; 5. Sarah Kotulecki, Grant Malloch and children of Coldharbour School; Jake Saville and children of Two Mile Ash School; Caroline Holliday, Ellie Frost and children of Loughton School 6. James Cairncross, The Parks Trust 7. Phil Murphy, Cycle Forum 8. Stephen Williams, MK BMX Club

		with Redways at north of Saxon St - Groveway junction 5. Cars at school gates - need for active travel and a School Street 6. Housing developments not connected to cycling infrastructure and developers not sticking to plans 7. Planning consultation not recognising Cycle Forum as an expert group 8. BMX Club track under water	
10.55 BREAK 11-11.10 Photo of children/summit leaders with Ian Pickup, OU Pro-Vice Chancellor			
PART 2. What can be done - local and national experts share best practice in addressing the issues. Written questions for panel to be delivered to Co-Chair Ann Shrimpton before 12.00.			
11.15	Keynote address: Imagine 50% of MK people cycling are women	Understanding why gender differences matter and how to incorporate accessible, safe and inclusive spaces for women and girls into design and planning.	Susannah Walker, In Her Place
11.40	Five ways to improve cycling for women	Lessons to be learnt from Norwich and Belfast	Sophie Gordon, Campaigns Manager, Cycling UK (video)
11.45	The Bicester experience	Lessons to be learnt for closing the gender pedal gap in MK.	Dr Paul Troop, Lecturer in Law, The Open University, and Chair of Bicester Bike Users' Group
11.50	East-west Redway through CMK	Plans for CMK Greenway up Midsummer Blvd	Fiona Robinson, Strategic Lead for City Projects, MK City Council
11.55	Walking & Cycling Index	Value of benchmarking data - how it is it produced	Tim Burns, Head of Policy, Walk, Wheel & Cycling Trust
12.00	Expert panel Q&A	Answers to questions from members about how to tackle their issues, seeking information, not accountability	Panel: Susannah Walker, Dr. Paul Troop, Fiona Robinson; joined by David Lawson, Senior Engineer, Highways Development Management, MK City Council, and Sgt Simon Norman, Thames Valley Police
12.20	What MKCC is already doing and plans to increase cycling	Success of last two years and future of Redway network, including CMK	Murray Woodburn, Head of Traffic & Transport, MK City Council
PART 3: What we want from powerholders – members work together to rehearse SMART asks of named powerholders. Individuals can move table to support whichever ask(s) they wish.			
12.30	Who are the powerholders at 2pm	List of powerholders and what is their power (see top of programme)	Ann Shrimpton
12.35	What are SMART asks and why they matter	Clarification and illustration of what a SMART ask is: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound	Simon Rudiger
12.40	Power of personal testimony in ask	Why and how to include personal testimony of issue in presentation of ask, and importance of 'pinning'	Tom Bulman, Community Organiser
12.45	Issue teams rehearse asks	Reminder to be back in the room by 13.45	Ann Shrimpton
13.00-13.45 WORKING LUNCH in the Hub – Issue teams continue to work on presentation of their asks 13.00-13.45 CYCLING BUSINESS LUNCH for employers in Medlar and Juniper rooms - Employers discuss how to make cycling easy and attractive for employees, to/from work and/or at home, for personal health and business benefits - experiences and ideas (max 3 minutes each) from: The OU (Jodi Houghton), MK City Council (Hayley Roche), Network Rail			

(Rafal Switaj), Volkswagen Financial Services (Mel Welburn), MK University Hospital (Luigi Straccia) and Santander (Claire Kennedy by [Teams video link](#)).

PART 4: Our Asks of powerholders and their responses - Council, business and other city leaders pledge actions to address the issues.

14.00	Mayor's Cycling Awards & celebration	1. Why MK Community Foundation as sponsor wants to celebrate cycling - <i>1 min</i> 2. Mayor's Cycling Awards - <i>10 mins</i> 3. Bikeability Awards: School of the Year 2025 and 2026, Cold Harbour and Two Mile Ash, Large Organisation 2026 MK City Council - thanks to all instructors - <i>3 mins</i> 4. New Bike Bus Award: Haversham School, Bushfield School - <i>1 min</i> 5. Special Award: Hayley Roche - <i>1 min</i> 6. Song from children - <i>4 mins</i>	Active Travel Champion Marie Bradburn introduces: 1. Ian Revell, CEO, MK Community Foundation 2. MK Mayor Paul Trendall, and Sam Robinson from Love To Ride, each speak for one minute before presenting Love to Ride Cycle September Awards for Top Cycling Companies (overall points): - o The Open University (6645) – Ross Kearns - o MK City Council (5568) - Raeesa Chowdhury - o The Parks Trust (3738) - James Cairncross - o Network Rail (3618) – Rafal Switaj - o Red Bull Technology (3307) - Macgowan Hunt - o Camphill MK (3127) - Lucy Davies - o Sustainable MK (2333) - Helen Innes - o VW Financial Services (1766) - Mel Welburn - o MK Hospital (1762) - Michael Fell 3. Khadija Ahmed, Bikeability Trust; Grant Malloch, Cold Harbour; Jake Saville, Two Mile Ash, Hayley, MK City Council 4. Jenna Hulbert, Haversham School; Jade Jones, Bushfield School 5. Hayley Roche 6. Cold Harbour School Choir
14.20	Introducing the powerholders - My role and power	Each powerholder introduces their role, power and interest (up to 30 seconds each)	Powerholders (see list at top of agenda)
14.25	Asks of powerholders - clarifying/ 'pinning' commitments (what exactly will you do?) for accountability	Asks (and alliance leader asking) 1. School Streets for children and parents: <i>Murray, will you establish a School Street at Cold Harbour and Two Mile Ash by December 2026 and Loughton School by July 2027? If so, will you meet before Christmas to agree the pathway, responsibilities and timetable needed to make this happen?</i> (Cold Harbour children and Jake Saville from Two Mile Ash) 2. Redway planning a. <i>Kerrie, will you ensure the Council strives to achieve gender balance among people cycling in MK, and safety of women and girls, taking into account gender differences when planning, designing and delivering cycling infrastructure and active travel culture, and actively seek to consult both men and women as part of this process?</i> (Ann Shrimpton) b. <i>Kerrie, will you commit to enrolling Directors of CLT, including Environment & Property, Planning & Placemaking and Public Health, on the two-hour Healthy Streets training (already purchased by MKCC) and also a two-hour gender perspective training relating to Active Travel led by Susannah Walker?</i> (Jane Whild) c. <i>Party leaders: Kerrie (on behalf of Cllr Carr, Lib Dems), Jenny (on behalf of Cllr Townsend, Labour), and Shazna (Conservative), will you do the same for a group of your councillors?</i> (Ann Shrimpton) d. <i>Murray, will you commit to publishing the Redway Design Manual before January 2027, including ensuring provision for a variety of cycle types?</i> (Phil Murphy) e. <i>Kerrie, will you champion a pilot of Redway-prioritised road crossings, e.g. Bradwell Windmill and Giffard Park road crossings for a continuous Railway Walk/cycle?</i> (Deborah Cooper) f. <i>Marie, will you organise with Murray and lead a delegation of senior councillors and officers on a study tour to exemplar locations for inclusive active travel in the Netherlands?</i> (Simon Rudiger)	

		3. Monitoring and reporting a. Murray, will you organise for MK City Council to produce a data-based report for MK like the Walking & Cycling Index and use this to monitor the proportion of cyclists who are female? (Jane Whild) b. Kerrie, will you deliver to Full Council and Environment Scrutiny Cttee an annual data-based report, including the proportion of cyclists who are female, and also annual reports on the quality of Super Redways and improvements made? (Ann Shrimpton) 4. CMK Redway & secure cycle parking a. Fiona, will you ensure adherence to Healthy Street principles in Greenway development? (Ann Shrimpton) b. Kerrie, will you install a secure cycle parking hub for MK Central station users and meet with Cycle Saviours to discuss their involvement? (Simon Rudiger) c. Sgt Simon Norman apologises he has had to leave early. He has agreed to meet with us before Christmas to discuss the issues relating to cycle theft in CMK and discuss a campaign to address the issues (Simon Rudiger) d. Jenny, will you support a celebration of Redways, including a temporary closure of Midsummer Blvd to cars on 27.6.27 as part of MK's 60th birthday celebration? (Simon) e. Jenny, can you confirm permission has been granted for a parade of Cycling Santas through CMK on 12th December? (Ann Shrimpton) 5. Redway maintenance: Kerrie/Andy, will you prioritise/investigate maintenance of the La Tour Hotel underpass and cycle path running along Silbury Boulevard to Skeldon Gate (Jacqui Hunter), and a programme of works for the Redways either side of Saxon St immediately north of Groveway, with agreed timescales for improvements, and meet with us to discuss both? (Steve McNay) 6. Developers' accountability a. Jenny, will you ensure that future developments which include a park will be connected to existing cycling infrastructure? (James Cairncross) b. Jenny, will you ensure any cycle infrastructure agreed in new developments is actually delivered? (Phil Murphy) 7. Planning consultation: Jenny, will you ensure MK Cycle Forum is routinely informed by email of any transport-related planning applications and proposals, and receive their comments? (Clive Faine) 8. MK BMX Cycle Hub: Jenny, will you arrange a pre-application meeting between the planning team and MK BMX Club before the end of November 2026, and come to one of our race nights? (Stephen Williams) 9. More resources: Kerrie, we've been impressed and pleased by the commitment and quality of the work of Murray and his small team, including Hayley and Raeesa. Will you commit to providing sufficient human resources to ensure that team can achieve its Active Travel ambition, specifically two new assistants? (Simon Rudiger)
15.15	Closing remarks, next steps and evaluation	• What's been agreed • Thanks and please join our upcoming rides, Glow Ride 22.10.26 and Cycling Santas 12.12.26, and think about being a female Bikeability trainer • Next steps - growing alliance power; please fill in brief evaluation that will be emailed to all delegates. • Ann Limb • Ann Shrimpton, Co-chair of Cycling Citizens MK • Simon Rudiger, Co-chair of Cycling Citizens MK
15.30 END		

, ORGANISING ROLES

- Stalls management – Ann/Jane
- Registration on the day, inc greeting team, delegate name label stickers, and table-name cards (one member name per table), lectern logo, banners - Avril
- CCMK Impact reports (for tables), opening CCMK video reels – MKT Mix
- Moderator's assistant/scribe, timekeeper – Ann
- Slideshow production – Tom
- Mayor's Cycling Award certificates – Tom & Raeesa

- Photo/videography – MKT Mix
- Pre- and post-event press release - Paul Scoins, FCDO Services.

Stands at back of Hub Theatre:

1. MK Climate Action Network - Jane
2. Sustainable MK - Helen Innes
3. Team MK - Rose Ashbourn
4. Glow Ride MK - Ann

Bike parking

Parking for 38 bikes at the back of the Jennie Lee building - see [photo](#). Security are happy to disable the staff pass access requirement for the day of the Summit. This [map of campus](#) shows the location of the shed in relation to the hub theatre with red circles, and the locations of the two nearest bike hoops circled in black. The hoops outside the Hub are not for e-bikes due to the potential fire risk, but e-bikes can be parked in the bike shed and at the hoops located at the front of the Walton Hall building.

Car parking

When driving to The Hub area, use the Brickhill Street (V10) campus entrance, proceed past the security lodge and library, and park in the nearby Church or South West parking bays ([map](#)).

PRESENTER BIOS

Dr Victoria Hands, Director of Sustainability, The Open University

Dr Victoria Hands empowers individuals and organisations to discover and adopt regenerative practices through collaborative strategy development and delivery, training, innovation and research. As Director of Sustainability at The Open University, Victoria coordinates a pan-institution matrix team to deliver sustainability, upskilling over 700 staff and students to become 'carbon literacy' certified. Victoria authored a 100-hour microcredential 'Climate Change: Transforming your Organisation for Sustainability' drawing on her research of the five ways of working for sustainability (long-term thinking, prevention, involvement, collaboration and integration). Victoria holds a PhD on implementing sustainability from the London School of Economics & Political Science, where she also initiated the LSE sustainability team. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/drvictoriahands/>

Dr Miguel Valdez, Senior Lecturer in Technology and Innovation Management, The Open University

Miguel's research is centred on urban experiments to anticipate, govern and develop more sustainable urban futures. This has included several sustainable transport demonstrators in Milton Keynes. Following a rapid-response grant in the context of the Covid pandemic, Miguel's work has increasingly focused on how applications of urban AI and robotics may improve the sustainability and resilience of cities, and on the mutually constitutive relationship of artificial intelligences and cities.

Robots increasingly share public space with pedestrians, cyclists and users of mobility scooters, as well as pets, children, and many other human and non-human actors with a right to urban spaces and their futures. While this use of shared spaces is often framed in terms of competition or exclusion, Miguel's research investigates more harmonious urban futures, exploring for example how cities may be designed to simultaneously encourage shared use of active travel infrastructures by humans and robots while also reducing car dependency.

Dr Jitka Vsetckova, Chair of Carers Research Group, Senior Lecturer in Health and Social Care, The Open University

Dr Jitka Vseteckova is Founder of Take Five to Age Well. She has held over £2 million in research funding (PI&Co-I), and her research aligns with governmental priorities related to integrating health and social care meaningfully, emphasising prevention and self-management through inclusive and participatory methodologies and capacity building of academics as well as non-academic audiences and partners, empowering wide and diverse UK public to learn and stay well.

Her role is multifaceted and encompasses research, teaching, supervision, and collaborations within and beyond the institution locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Jitka has recently joined the NIHR-funded (18m) Applied Research

Collaboration Thames Valley Capacity Building team that mobilises skills, knowledge and capacity across the Thames Valley region.'

Dr Linda Plowright-Pepper, Honorary Research Fellow, Open University

Linda trained as a secondary school PE teacher before engaging in a 30-year career in community recreation and physical activity. She passionately believes that an active lifestyle and mindset can be life enhancing for everyone. For her the key challenge is to help people discover how we each enjoy activity in our lives. She now continues this passion in her collaborative community research at the Open University.

Her recent work with Leap, (the Active Partnership for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes) is informing the shaping of active opportunities for young people. Meanwhile she and her team have worked with whole communities with the Milton Keynes Expansion Project (MKPEP) to highlight aspirations and barriers to residents getting more active. She will draw upon these experiences in her contribution to the Cycle Summit.

Dr Alex Chapman, Head of Economic and Environmental Policy (parental leave cover)

Alex works on the economics of energy, transport and climate change. He leads NEF's programme of work on air transport and tourism. Alex's reports for NEF have looked at topics such as a frequent flyer levy, a national energy guarantee, and the distribution of access to nature across the UK. Previously in NEF Consulting, Alex led a wide range of economic impact assessments and advised the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales on carbon impact assessment of the Welsh Government budget.

Prior to joining NEF Alex completed his PhD at the University of Southampton and held multiple research and consultancy positions through which he provided support to decision makers in governments and development banks on adaptation investment and climate risk assessment.

Dr Jonathan Flower, Senior Research Fellow, University of West England

Dr Jonathan Flower is a Transport Planner and social scientist at the Centre for Transport and Society, at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He is a board member for the Transport Planning Society, creating a link between academia and practice. His research centres around inclusive street design and road safety, with a particular focus on walking, cycling, micromobility and public transport. Use QR code for link to final report of 'Back to the Future - MK' project.



Susannah Walker

Susannah Walker runs the consultancy In Her Space, which works with councils, developers and designers to ensure that the needs of women and girls are designed into public space. Much of her recent work has focused on active travel, working with both the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and Active Travel England on developing more inclusive infrastructure and creating outline guidance on this.

Before this, as one of the co-founders of the charity Make Space for Girls, she campaigned for better facilities for teenage girls in parks and other leisure spaces. She is also an author and has a past career as a television producer for the BBC and Channel 4.

Dr. Paul Troop, Lecturer in Law, barrister, chair and co-founder of Bicester Bike Users' Group

Paul Troop is a barrister, lecturer at the Open University School of Law, and co-founder and chair of the Bicester Bike Users' Group. He specialises in international, human rights, and equality law. He also writes an open access handbook on cycling law (available at: <https://paultroop.github.io/bikebook/>)