

From: Alisdair Massie
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To: editorial@thecomet.net
Subject: Snow



Snow brings transport chaos & or so the headlines shout. What those headlines didn't report was that in fact most main roads were passable by car without much difficulty within hours of snow falling. Contrast this with the situation on footways, cycle paths and residential streets. Even now, a week after the snow fell, many are treacherous sheets of ice, trapping elderly and infirm people in their homes and forcing cyclists out onto the main roads.

Get onto a main road and you could drive from one side of the country to the other in relative safety. But walk your children to school and you were likely to spend the day in hospital nursing a broken collar bone.

I have friends in the Netherlands. They are aghast at our inability to cope with two successive days of snow, and our unwillingness to make foot and cycle paths safe. Across the North Sea the canals froze so hard that people skate to work on them and yet their cycle paths are ice free. Why do we find it so difficult?

We talk a lot about encouraging people to live more active, healthier, less oil dependent lifestyles so why is this not reflected in our transport policies? Why do we presume that a journey is less important if it is a short one? If we continue to favour motorised travel at the expense of less demanding modes then that is what we will get? more motor traffic. And who does that help?



Regards

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CTC is Britain's largest cycling organisation with 70,000 members. Formed in 1878 we have actively campaigned for better, safer roads, locally and nationally since our inception. We have a large and active section for North Herts and Stevenage.