



ARTICLE FROM THE BOOK:

Cyclists & Cycling Around the World – Creating Liveable and Bikeable Cities

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2. Liveable and Bikeable Cities

This chapter deals with the local and global environmental problems confronting our world today as well as the challenges we are facing to develop our cities into places fit for the citizens to live in. The five articles illustrate a broad range of initiatives being taken to create liveable cities as well as describing the variety of benefits cycling offers in terms of city life, the environment and health.

In his article ***The Benefits of cycling***, Gil Peñalosa calls for urgent action to generate global and individual well being. Gil has written an inspirational article, where he sees the global problems we are facing not only as unique challenges but also as fascinating opportunities to transform our cities into great places for people to live in a sustainable way. He emphasises the city's relentless search for quality of life, placing cycling at the centre of urban development. He calls for public engagement and political will to make riding a bicycle safe for all citizens. He mentions two key actions to increase the number of cyclists, reducing the speed limit in all residential areas and building a network of protected bikeways on all arterial roads. He also looks in some detail at the benefits of cycling as well as its political, bureaucratic and organisational aspects.

In her article ***Sustainable mobility***, Tanja Ballhorn Probstgaard describes two cases, commuter cycling and city logistics in Copenhagen. Tanja raises the question as to how we choose which form of transport we are going to use when going about our daily business. She explores how a sustainable form of transport can be implemented in Copenhagen by instituting a consultative process with various stakeholders such as local citizens, local committees, interest groups, trade associations and universities, surrounding municipalities and the state. How can more people be encouraged to cycle? The answer is to introduce Cycle Super Highways, which will ensure commuter cyclists feel safe and arrive at their places of work or study by a direct, fast and comfortable route. She looks too, at how the inner city can be made more sustainable by the introduction of an innovative logistics structure for goods delivery to reduce considerably the amount of heavy traffic in the congested city centre.

In his article ***Quality of life and bicycles***, Fábio Duarte recounts how Curitiba has become one of the world's most liveable cities. Since the 1980s, Curitiba has created a vast

network of bike paths in order to improve the quality of peoples' lives. Fábio adopts a statistical approach to urbanisation, cycling and quality of life. He shows how the rapidity of urbanisation in South America is posing a number of problems. The rapid rise of car ownership is producing a number of effects, both short term as well as long term. Fábio explores various aspects of the promotion of cycling, including its relationship to the public transport system. He looks at creative ways the city of Curitiba has used to develop its cycle network and ends his article by taking a historical as well as a current, positive look at the situation with regard to cycling in Curitiba.

In his article ***Cities for people***, Lars Gemzøe describes the method, Copenhagen Studies in Urban Life, which was initiated 40 years ago by the architect Jan Gehl with a team of students and researchers from the School of Architecture in Copenhagen. The studies were a recording of the pattern of public life based on observations in the old main street in Copenhagen after it was changed in 1962 to a pedestrian street. These studies have been repeated every ten years and the data shows that the result of quadrupling the number of car-free square meters was almost four time more activity. City life has blossomed and is now a brand for the city "people in motion". Lars describes the significance of reliable data for urban planning and the political process and shows how the collecting of data for pedestrians and also for cyclists has influenced the transformation process from a city full of cars to a city full of people.

In his article ***Cycling and health***, Philip Insall states that public health experts recommend more cycling. Philip makes an overwhelmingly strong case for the advantages of cycling with regard to public health. Pointing out the increasing obesity in England and what it will ultimately cost the government to foot the medical bill, he shows how cycling can combat this problem as well as providing many other advantages to public health. Philip has two recommendations to public health policy -1. change the physical environment, thereby making it easier to walk and cycle and restrict private motor transport -2. shift in public investment priorities from expensive road projects to walking and cycling facilities. He emphasises how important it is that professionals in transport work together with those from public health, because each can help the other. Such collaboration has been very successful in Bristol, where the Director of Public Health appointed urban planning, sustainable development and transport specialists to his team to ensure that physical activity, including cycling, is written into the city's strategies and plans.