



Fill That Hole makes reporting defects child's play

Left: Robert Spanning

Road safety

FILL THAT HOLE

*Fed up with dangerously cratered roads? Cycling UK's pothole-reporting website and app have just been relaunched, as **Sam Jones** explains*

There are national days and weeks celebrating pretty much everything now; National Pothole Day was on 15 January. It was less a celebration and more a gentle mocking of a serious problem. It was also a fitting day for the relaunch of Cycling UK's refreshed Fill That Hole road defect reporting tool, funded by Fletchers Cycle SOS.

As old as the iPhone, our Fill That Hole app and website was launched back in 2007. We knew our members and the wider cycling community had had enough of potholes and wanted to see the problem fixed. Potholes plague roads across the UK. While media attention is often on the problem they present for driving, when cycling they can become a hazard that far too often has resulted in serious injury or even loss of life.

Prior to Fill That Hole, there was no easy way to report potholes and other road defects without working out which highway authority was responsible for each stretch of our road. So we created a simple one-stop shop and have since seen nearly 200,000 potholes reported.

It's easy to blame local authorities for our poorly maintained roads, especially on those

quieter country lanes more regularly used by people cycling. The reality is that governments in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are not funding local roads well enough, meaning the full-scale repairs to our crumbling road network that Cycling UK believes is necessary just isn't possible.

Local authorities nevertheless have a responsibility to keep the roads in good repair. It's impractical for them to monitor all their roads all the time, and therefore they prioritise the roads they survey. This means the busier A-roads are checked more regularly, the quiet lanes less so. That's where Fill That Hole comes in. Reports via the app or website go directly to the relevant highway authority. The highway authority then has a legal responsibility to check the defect and repair it where necessary.

If the authority fails to take action, these reports can help individuals should they need to claim for damage or injury against the council if that road defect caused them to come off their bike. More often than not, however, we hear of potholes reported and soon fixed, and hope to see this continue with the updated version. fillthathole.org.uk



Media

CYCLING UK WINS AWARDS

Last year saw Cycling UK scoop three gongs from the cycling press for our campaigning work and our efforts to make the UK a better place for the wider cycling community. We won the BikeBiz award for Advocacy. Cycling Plus recognised head of campaigns Duncan Dollimore (pictured) with a lifetime achievement award. And Singletrack World gave us their Community Builder award. Here's to mirroring that success in 2024!

Honours

MBE FOR CYCLE CAMPAIGNER

Cycling UK member, 100 Women in Cycling recipient, chair of Cyclox in Oxford and long-time cycling campaigner Dr Alison Hill received an MBE for her services to cycling in the New Year Honours list. Alison has been a fantastic advocate for cycling over many years and we are thrilled that her dedication and hard work to improve cycle safety has been recognised.