

Using CCTV to keep cycle lanes clear

On average, every week, from 2011 and 2016, two people lost their lives and a further 62 were seriously injured while cycling on UK roads, according to the UK's Department for Transport (DfT).

Improving road safety can help increase the number of people taking up cycling and this can help to reduce congestion and emissions, ultimately improving air quality.

Local authorities in the UK are already starting to take action against illegal parking on cycle lanes and pavements to remove obstructions that often force cyclists to ride on main roads. According to the DfT, such obstructions currently account for 15% of UK cyclist casualties.

CCTV enforcement

Duncan Dollimore, head of campaigns at Cycling UK, believes changes need to be made to save lives on the roads. "Although it's already an offense to park in a mandatory cycle lane, the reality is that as a result of the decline in police traffic numbers, this has been widely ignored and rarely enforced," he says. "Giving local authorities the power to enforce this offense with CCTV cameras is one of the simple solutions Cycling UK has proposed in its response to the government's cycling and walking safety review."

CCTV cameras provide a cost-effective way of enforcing cycle lane contraventions, either fixed on a nearby lighting column or deployed on a mobile enforcement vehicle (MEV). Significantly, Videalert's unique digital video platform supports multiple traffic management and enforcement activities simultaneously, often with the



Need to know

Videalert offers automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) solutions for traffic applications, including:

- Traffic management and enforcement
- School safety
- Parking management
- Data-sharing for smart cities
- Clean air zones/low emission zones

same camera assets. This means that the capability of MEVs – whether they be cars or bikes – that are already in use to enforce illegally parked vehicles in schools' marked 'keep clear' zones, bus stops, bus lanes and red routes, can quickly and easily be extended to capture the license plates of vehicles parked in cycle lanes.

This highly flexible mobile system integrates with all back-office penalty charge notice processing systems to ensure timely enforcement, as well as with police systems for the identification of blacklisted vehicles for improved community safety.

With the introduction of clean air and low emission zones in some of the UK's worst polluting cities, perhaps some of

Left: **CCTV is in place at many cycle lanes in the UK to improve safety for cyclists**

Below: **Videalert's digital video platform integrates with penalty charge notice systems**

the revenue generated should be reinvested in encouraging active transport. This belief is supported by Sustrans, a walking and cycling charity that states that clean air zones will not solve air pollution on their own – a behavioral shift away from vehicles is needed. What is now clear is that improving air quality requires a variety of approaches, including encouraging people to see cycling as a real alternative to their cars, particularly when traveling to and from the workplace.

"Investments that are being made in promoting cycling and installing the infrastructure are just the start, and significant change will only happen when roads are safer for cyclists," says Tim Daniels, sales and marketing director at Videalert. "A behavioral change from motorists is required to achieve this, whether it's by them getting on their bikes or adopting a more considerate approach when parking. Simultaneously, to increase compliance, enforcement technologies such as those provided by Videalert will enable councils [local authorities] to play their part in further reducing the unacceptably high level of accidents involving cyclists." ○

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