

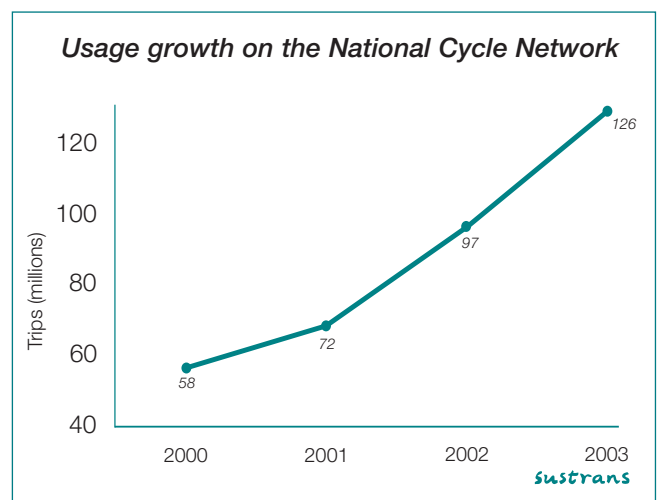
National Cycle Network usage reaches 126 million trips

The National Cycle Network (NCN) is a comprehensive network of safe and attractive places to cycle and walk throughout the UK. 8,200 miles of National Routes were open by the end of 2003, with a projected length of 10,000 miles by 2005.

This is a summary of the main Route User Monitoring Report for the NCN to the end of 2003.

The National Cycle Network is leading the growth in cycling in the UK

- In 2003, the NCN carried 126 million trips by cyclists, walkers, and other users
- Of these, 77 million were trips by cyclists and 49 million by pedestrians
- On a like-for-like basis (i.e. not including growth resulting from extensions to the NCN), this represents a year-on-year growth of 10% in the number of cycling trips
- Traffic free routes (which account for one third of the NCN) were critical to this growth, with 13% year-on-year growth between 2002 and 2003, compared with 6% on road sections of the NCN
- During 2003, total open length of the NCN National Routes grew by 18%, leading to a total use increase of 30%, from 97 million trips in 2002 to 126 million trips in 2003



Significant and consistent growth in levels of use on pre-existing sections of the NCN

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
National Routes	+2%	+3%	+10%	+10%
Traffic free	+3%	+4%	+18%	+13%
On road	-1%	+1%	+6%	+6%

The National Cycle Network continues to grow

The partners developing the NCN are continuing its expansion and in 2005, when it reaches its 10,000 mile target, usage is forecast to reach 173 million trips. Of these, 108 million will be cycling and 65 million pedestrian trips.

Sustrans' research and monitoring is wider than just the NCN

A comparison between Sustrans' route user figures and government cycling statistics reveals certain inconsistencies. Both show an increase in on road cycling trip levels but Sustrans' figures also demonstrate significant increases on traffic free sections. While the National Travel Survey is now based on a significantly expanded sample, it continues to exclude trips on traffic free routes. Sustrans' figures demonstrate that the greatest growth is being realised on these routes, and reinforce the importance of the NCN to achieving targets for growth in cycling.

Cycling on roads: DfT and Sustrans monitoring compared

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Traffic in Great Britain - DfT				
Billion kilometres cycled	0.0%	+2.4%	+4.8%	-4.8%
National Travel Survey - DfT				
Distance cycled per person per year	-11.9%	0.0%	-10.8%	Data not yet available
Bicycle trips per person per year	-5.9%	-12.5%	+7.1%	Data not yet available
Route User Monitoring Report - Sustrans				
Number of trips (non-NCN road monitoring points)	-2%	-3%	+3%	+2.7%

Cycling on NCN routes compared

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Route User Monitoring Report - Sustrans				
On road cycling trips	-1%	+1%	+6%	+6.1%
Traffic free cycling trips	+3%	+4%	+18%	+12.7%

Further information

Data presented in this report is derived from automatic bicycle counters owned and operated by local authorities throughout the UK. Further information about the data and methods used is available in the full NCN Monitoring Report.

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