

Shared use paths:

In recent months there has been an increase in concern about conflict between fast cyclists and other users of shared-use paths, including sections of the National Cycle Network.

In particular users of challenge apps are increasingly sharing and recommending shared-use paths as places for recording times.

Shared-used paths are not suitable for speed, and the following code of conduct, supported by all organisations involved in the promotion of cycling whether for everyday travel, recreation or sport, should be observed.

A code of conduct for cycling on shared use paths:

Shared-use paths help many people make their everyday journeys safely without the need for a car, and they are also important for leisure. Many young, elderly and disabled people benefit from shared paths, which provide valuable opportunities both to travel in a traffic-free environment, and to relax, unwind play or let their minds wander.

All users of shared use paths have responsibilities for the safety of others they are sharing space with. It is important not to startle other people, particularly those who are frail or who have reduced sight, hearing or mobility. The tranquillity of these paths is something people value greatly, and all path users need to respect this.

Cyclists tend to be the fastest movers on these paths and therefore Sustrans asks cyclists to respect a code of conduct when using shared paths, to make sure everyone can benefit from them:

- give way to pedestrians and wheelchair users and take care around horse-riders leaving them plenty of room, especially when approaching from behind
- be courteous and patient with pedestrians and other path users who are moving more slowly than you – shared paths are for sharing, not speeding
- slow down as needed when space is limited or if you cannot see clearly ahead
- be particularly careful at junctions, bends, entrances onto the path, or any other 'blind spots' where people (including children) could appear in front of you without warning
- keep to your side of any dividing line
- carry a bell and use it or an audible greeting – avoid surprising people, or horses
- however, don't assume people can see or hear you – remember that many people are hard of hearing or visually impaired
- in dull and dark weather make sure you have lights so you can be seen.

Sustrans, British Cycling and the national cycling charity CTC all support safe and responsible use of shared use paths. They are for sharing, not for speeding. If you wish to travel quickly, train for fitness or to record personal best times, this is better done on quiet roads