Twitter Thread by Faith



Faith
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Took the 6 yo old out for some local lock down exercise on his bike. Park too busy to cycle through, so we did a loop on local roads because that's the only other option without driving somewhere. Here's how it went (a thread) @CycleSheffield @CyclewalkSCR @DameSarahStorey

The 6yo doesnt cycle in a complete straight line yet so one of us cycles abreast of him just in case. Lots of drivers waited patiently for a long time before overtaking slowly and safely. Thank you for this. Sudden accelerating engines make the 6yo less likely to stay straight.

Some drivers, sadly not an insignificant number, decided they needed to get past more quickly and more slowly than was safe. Where were they all going to and why the need to be so impatient? It's not like there is anything to get to quickly at the moment.

Drivers coming the other way were generally the biggest threat. The roads were double parked with people using the park (worst I have have ever seen) resulting in narrow road space. Drivers did not slow down to adjust to this or to us cycling alongside the 6yo.

One driver overtaking a parked car had to encroach on to our side of the road. Instead of waiting he pushed out and shook his head at us. Did he think we shouldn't be on the road with a small child or did he just think he had priority? Either way he was wrong.

I understand problem might questions why we cycle with him on the roads. Perhaps they think we are putting him at unnecessary risk. Perhaps we should wait until he's more confident and faster. I tried this approach with my older two. It just means teenagers who cant use the road

They have to learn to cycle on the roads sometime and he's perfectly able to cycle on local roads. The problem is the lack of low traffic networks, segregated routes over busier parts and driver behaviour.

Cycling through the park would have been less safe and impossible given how busy it was today. One of the positives of the first lockdown was the chance for children to cycle safely locally. It's a shame that this is no longer the case.

The 6yo enjoyed his ride oblivious to the fact that both his adults found it completely stressful and were relieved to get home! That's one positive I suppose but it shouldn't feel like that.

Thank you again to the drivers of Sheffield who see younger (and all) cyclists and give them extra time and space. It may be a few extra minutes for you but gives us hope each time it happens ■