Cycling in Later Life in the UK

The share of journeys made by bicycle is low for all age groups, but particularly low in older age.

1. **LOW LEVEL OF CYCLING AMONG OLDER PEOPLE IN THE UK**
   - Share of journeys by people aged 65+ in England:
     - 1.8% for 40-49 yrs
     - 1.2% for 50-59 yrs
     - 1.0% for 60-69 yrs
     - 0.8% for 70+ yrs

2. **DIFFERENT STORY ELSEWHERE**
   - Cycling is an important method of transport in older age in other parts of Northern Europe.
   - Share of journeys by people aged 65+ in other countries:
     - 15% in Denmark
     - 23% in the Netherlands
     - 9% in Germany

3. **OLDER PEOPLE MAKE SHORTER, MORE LOCALISED CYCLE JOURNEYS**
   - Older people’s cycle journeys are shorter than younger adults and are usually for personal business or social purposes (as opposed to commuting).
   - Average distance cycled:
     - 1.8 miles for 70+ yrs
     - 4.8 miles for 40-49 yrs

4. **OLDER MEN CYCLE MORE THAN OLDER WOMEN**
   - Older men are twice as likely to cycle as older women, raising concerns over equity.

5. **LACK OF CONFIDENCE TO CYCLE ON ROADS**
   - Nearly half of older people feel it is physically difficult for them to cycle and only one in five are confident cycling on roads.

6. **BUT THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR MANY MORE OLDER PEOPLE TO CYCLE**
   - 27% of 60-69 year olds own a bicycle but only 1 in 9 regularly use their bike
   - 42% would cycle (more) if more dedicated cycle paths
   - 43% of current non-cyclists would cycle if more e-bikes were available

7. **MORE CYCLING WILL BENEFIT HEALTH IN LATER LIFE**
   - Physical activity declines with age to the extent that by 75 years only 1 in 10 men and 1 in 20 women are sufficiently active for good health.

8. **ABSENCE OF OLDER PEOPLE CYCLING IS GETTING NOTICED**
   - Public figures are starting to draw attention to the unequal distribution of cycling amongst the population.
   - “At the moment cycling is disproportionately young and male and that’s because of the conditions. I suppose those are the people who feel able to cycle…What I want to see from these changes, and I think we will see, is far more women doing it, far more older people doing it.”
   - London’s Cycling Commissioner Andrew Gilligan discussing the Mayor of London’s plans for cycling in the capital.

**SOURCES**

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