

Transcription of an interview conducted 08 March 2018

Interviewees: MICK FREED (MF)  
Interviewer: JAREK ZABA (JZ)  
Kingston-upon-Thames, England

Transcription: JAREK ZABA

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**[00:03] JZ: OK so we are here in the Kingston History Centre for the Wheels of Time project in Kingston upon Thames. I'm Jarek Zaba and today I am interviewing -**

MF: Mick Freed.

**[00:14] JZ: Mick Freed. And Mick for the purposes of the type could you just confirm your place and date of birth.**

MF: I was born in Guildford, Surrey in 1955, 23rd March.

**[00:26] JZ: Great. Just to start with could you just tell me your relationship to the borough of Kingston.**

MF: I've lived in Chessington in the royal borough for 32 years now in the same house. Erm prior to that I visited Chessington Zoo when I was a young child.

**[00:43] JZ: Excellent, excellent. So - um - so - err - sorry what age did you say when you moved to Chessington?**

MF: Uh - I was 30 years old when I moved to Chessington.

**[00:52] JZ: Right, OK OK. And it was Guildford before that?**

MF: Guildford via London and Peterborough and then back south to Chessington.

**[01:01] JZ: And can you tell me you first started working for the royal mail as well?**

MF: I've been - I've worked for Royal Mail in two periods - from 1995 to 2000 and again from 2005 to 2016. Um. On both occasions the idea was a temporary job til I found a real job - a proper job in IT which was my main career. Um 2nd time I was there for 10 years I never found another job being a older and my experience was more out of date as time went on so the last 10 years of my life - working life and I was Royal Mail.

**[01:39] JZ: And tell me about your work at the Royal Mail. What exactly does it involve?**

MF: Er it involves, getting up early, going into the office. Preparing the mail for delivery, that's letters, magazines, brochures, all the marketing stuff, uh, parcels and packets. Erm - put into a delivery sequence which you then take out and - and deliver in as efficient as you can think of. Erm - postman with more experience will suggest a route but everybody adapted to their own purpose as you're going along. You just learn with experience, you can find shortcuts and easier ways of doing things. Erm - the first five years between '95 and 2000 I used a bike all the time. Erm - when I joined again in 2005 I used a van for a brief period. Then I was back on the bike again until I were phased out by Royal Mail.

**[02:32] JZ: Did you prefer the van or the bike?**

MF: I preferred the bike. Because the van involves a lot of jumping up and down. And carrying heavier parcels and packets. And driving around the narrow streets of Chessington in a van isn't my favourite thing.

**[02:47] JZ: And tell me about your routes - is it mainly Chessington? Or have you -**

MF: I - I always worked in Chessington. Occasionally some of my colleagues were - erm moved out to other areas like New Malden or Surbiton if they were understaffed or they - er but I never drew that particular short straw so I always delivered in Chessington yes.

**[03:07] JZ: OK, OK. Um - and what do you sort of - what do you like about being on the bike as opposed to -**

MF: I like the - er - the freedom to go at your own pace. You deliver - the way I worked was put the bag of mail on the bike, go to the start point and then I - I would tend to work in loops so park the bike up, walk up one side the road, and back on the other side with a handful of mail or bagful of mail and then cycle onto the next stopping point. So I'm doing a series of loops which was easier, it was - you couldn't always do that, you wouldn't want to do it - to do that on er - on a main road erm - it would involve crossing over too often so y-you just go along one side of the long road and then cross over once and then come back the other side of the long road but in general if you could do smaller loops it's easier. Err - so you're walking for a bit and then sitting down on the saddle, albeit briefly in between times and having a bit of a rest, taking the weight off your feet.

**[04:02] JZ: And how many letters would - or packages would you deliver on a typical day?**

MF: On a typical day we would deliver to between 5- and 600 houses. Number of letters was in the thousands - on a heavy day maybe 1500 on a fairly light day.

**[04:20] JZ: And w-what period of time is that over?**

MF: Initially the delivery period was three and a half hours. As time went on that increased to probably five or more hours per day now.

**[04:32] JZ: That's 500 in three and half- I'm trying to do - I'm trying to figure out the maths now.**

**[Laughs] Y'know that's - that's - it seems like a pretty intense amount of-**

MF: I did work out at one point on average I cycled between eight and ten miles a day as well as all the walking in between. And when subsequently the bikes course replaced with trollies I was walking about 12, 13 miles a day. And then included up and down people's paths and up and down stairs and blocks of flats and so on.

**[04:56] JZ: It's good exercise as well.**

MF: It was very good exercise but just a bit too much when - **[05:00]** so you're on your feet all day now whereas at least on a bike you could sit briefly now and again and have a bit of rest, take your weight off your feet. So the - the mechanics - the stress on the body certainly changed over time. And the nature of the mail change - initially it used to be mostly letters with your magazine and brochure and odd parcel

and packet. Erm - now because of internet shopping the bulk of the items is erm - is from people's internet shopping so either the item itself or the stream of catalogues that they persist in sending you afterwards. You order one item and you'll get their catalogue forever and ever afterwards. And that - that makes it a lot heavier than it needs to be.

**[05:42] JZ: So the - so recent technological advances have actually changed the-**

MF: Yes. It's certainly changed the nature of the job, the nature of the items that are delivered, yeah. Yeah. There are certainly far few letters but the weight and the bulk is a lot lot higher now I would say.

**[06:00] JZ: And I just wonder is there - do you have any specific err - memories of unusual days or - or - or unusual packages that you've had to deliver or anything like that?**

MF: The er - the best one I ever delivered was obviously a boomerang. And they put a sticker on - do not bend. That made my day. Erm - there we- there were some funny ones. Erm - some of them were in plain [brand] wrappers so you - er the name and address of the recipient and er - just a website address. And no return address. Er - so curiosity you'd always look up the website of this and there were some dubious items that you don't want the postman knowing about. That was one of the things you do find out about people's private lives - you find things that you don't really need to know. [Laughs]

**[06:53] JZ: Absolutely. Erm - and I've got to ask - any - any big dogs? Or anything like that?**

MF: Dogs was the bane, yes erm - in - when I went out the bike I was told that some of these dogs was barking at me because it didn't like the noise my bike made. Another one didn't like me wearing my helmet. Erm - a dog owner's just don't realise how annoying dogs are. Probably 99% of dogs are OK but you don't know that. This might be number 100 running at you across the road. And it's - it's really unpleasant yeah. But to be told it doesn't like the noise the bikes make is a bit strange. Equally I was told the dog doesn't look my trousers. The dog doesn't like the red jacket. Y'know silly things like that. I got bitten once - or twice in fact. Y'know in two separate er periods. And it wasn't very nice. The second time the owner didn't believe - I said your dogs just bitten me, oh he wouldn't do that. I had to show him my bare bum and say there's a bite mark - it's - it was - and erm - and Royal Mail at that point they - they didn't really care. They do now more - it's 400 post-postal workers are injured each year by dog bites. Or there certainly were when I was working there. And some are quite serious - I mean mine was just minor. Just annoying. But it - it does put you off. Yeah - y-you're a lot more wary subsequently of any other dog. And as I say most of em are perfectly innocent but you just don't know.

**[08:24] JZ: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. Erm - yeah. I've always got the image of th-the dog chasing the postman down the garden. Is that - has that actually happened to you?**

MF: Well - er - I've - I have been chased - erm. There was one day, erm - I delivered the mail - I had to knock on the door, it was a parcel that wouldn't fit through. And the woman left the door open and the dog ran out and I didn't see cos I was walking up the path, I opened the gate to leave and the dog ran out through the gate. And I - and I got shouted at because it was my fault for letting the dog out when she'd let it out of the house in the first place. And I thought I'm not arguing with this because this is an argument I'm never gonna win. She - she can't see how stupid she's being. And that's the sort of thing y-you have to put up with and it's - it can ruin your day if you let it. And yeah.

**Absolutely.**

And even on the bike for instance y-you lean the bike against a lamppost or fence or something. Erm - I got told off for leaning my bike against somebody's rickety old fence because the weight of the bike will push the fence over. And yes it was quite rickety but a gust of wind could have blown it over just as easily and if it's that rickety you should have fixed it in the first place cos it's a danger to anybody, not just me - my postman's bike. Erm. Erm - wh-helmets yeah. The Royal Mail encourage you to wear a helmet for safety reasons and I always did anyway. But it was more useful not - when I wasn't riding the bike - some people like people their hanging baskets above the letterbox on the door. So when you're walking up the path you sort of looking down so you don't trip over anything. You're looking at their letters, [10:00] it's - it's picking up the right ones - so with your head down you don't realise there's an object at head height. So I've collided with a hanging basket a few times, a hurricane lamp that's there for decoration. So I always have my helmet on.

**Yeah, yeah.**

Even when I wasn't actually using the bike at that moment.

**[10:18] JZ: Sounds like a much more dangerous job than people would-**

MF: It is. I mean those are a few incidents.

**Yep.**

But when you deliver to 500 houses a day one or two things go wrong. You trip over the smallest step and one day I counted the number of stairs, steps I was walking up and I was erm - over 2,000. So that's like walking up the Monument half a dozen times or whatever. And er - and then the next day - as a - pretty early on I tripped over a small step, about half an inch high, just a gap in the paving ti-in the paving stones. That was my own fault, I wasn't looking where I was going that day. Err -

**[10:55] JZ: And er - I mean just going back to the sort of th-the 500 houses you have to cover. I mean you think yo-you may have touched upon this but erm - was it a case of a different route each day? Or was it a case of - sort of one route really memorised?**

MF: You - well over the years I did get put on to every single round in erm - the walk as they called it in Chessington. Erm and typically you would be on a walk all the time. But then you're working 5 days out of 6 - on the sixth day somebody else would fill in and that person was sort called floater, they would do a different walk each day. Erm - so if you had that duty you would do 5 different walks each week. And that makes it more interesting. It's - it's nice when you get to know a walk, erm - but once you've been doing it for years and years, does get a bit boring as well, so it's nice to be able to change. Every now and again.

**[11:48] JZ: And do you get to know lots of the people - the residents?**

MF: Yeah, most - most people all OK and very friendly and chatting. Er - there was one day, I remember - there was me, the local bobby and the milkman all standing around in the middle of the road having a chinwag. And a couple of neighbours came out and joined in as well and I thought this is what a community should be like, erm - not like its portrayed in the 50s. Everybody knows each other and stand around passing the time of day. Erm - I'm not sure you get away with that now because the delivery span is so long. Y-you feel that any time talking to a customer or somebody else is a waste of time. You just want to get on and get finished as quickly as possible.

**Right, so, so -**

There was a bit more flexibility - y'know years ago, t-10, 15 years ago. There was a bit more flexibility - you didn't mind spending a bit of time because you were still finishing in good time. But now you're rushing to finish by - by the er finish time. And - and it's hit and miss whether you do or not because it just takes that much longer.

**[12:48] JZ: So there's a sort of increased demand on posties these days isn't there?**

MF: Yeah - oh definitely yeah, yeah. Th-there's far fewer postmen - when I was there in the late 90s I think there were a 140,000 delivery workers at Royal Mail. I think it's less than 100,000 now. So it's gone down by 30, 40%. But delivering to the same number of delivery points, houses or more. And - and more - and more bulky items as well. So more items that involve you knocking on the door because they won't fit through the letterbox and that will - always slows you down.

**[13:22] JZ: Yeah, yeah. It's interesting, I didn't think that - so what is the reason for that big decline in posties? Is it simply -**

MF: Er - Royal Mail want the pla- it's a private company now. It's profit driven rather than service driven. So if they can get - if they can force you to deliver twice as much as you used to know then they get rid of a bloke. That's what it boils down to.

**[13:43] JZ: And on that subject - obviously the way I came across you in the first place was through this campaign around - around - erm the Royal Mail - erm - ta-essentially taking bicycles away from the - away from the way they deliver mail. Maybe you can tell me more about that. I mean wh-what - what can you tell me about that?**

MF: Well this was all part of the - erm - making Royal Mail more streamlined for privatisation. To make it more interesting. Erm - investment for people. And the idea was that the nature of the mail was changing with internet shopping or parcels and bulky packets were being delivered by the Royal Mail. They realised that erm if you fill your mailbag with parcels, you can get less mail so you need more bags. That would mean going backwards and forwards on your bike to get the second, third and fourth subsequent bags. And the way to address that they felt was to give - to replace the bikes with so called high capacity trollies. Erm - in some cases or send the postman out in vans with basically golf carts where they could walk around and the people who - with two bags of mail on. Erm. Most postmen and women liked working with bikes, that was one of the **[15:00]** attractions of the job. Y-you could cycle to work. Erm, cycle to the delivery point. Get on with it and at your own pace. Erm. But the reasons Royal Mail came out with were very flimsy. Erm. It makes sense to deliver parcels and packets in a van, certainly. But that could've been one of the solutions, have more people in vans delivering parcels. And leave postmen with their bikes delivering mail. You still - yes on occasions you'll have two postmen turning up at the same address each day. But then that's happening anyway, we were having a second delivery in those days. And if it's a very big parcel it was going out in the van anyway so there were occasions you could have two postmen visiting on the same day. What really annoyed postmen was when Royal Mail said the reason was for health and safety. Erm I never had any health and safety issues on my bike. I had far more accidents tripping over people's paths or - or [pause] erm, letterboxes in obscure places where you had to bend over and twist and contort to deliver the mail. Th-that didn't do anybody's back any good. Erm but bikes themselves - people did have accidents over the years, there

was so many - so many bicycles and postmen, it was bound to happen. In - certainly in Chessington erm I'm not aware of any - any bad accidents. Erm when - when the bag of mail is on the - in the basket on the front of the bike, if you could lean it against lamp post but didn't wait a couple of seconds it would spontaneously - the front wheel would rotate because of the way it balanced. And it would fall over. But it never happened when you were riding it or sitting on it. Erm - the worst thing I had was broken spokes - well that can happen any time on a bike. Erm, and worst day was probably when the saddle stem broke. Erm - so the saddle was hanging on by - by a thread. And that meant I had to stand up and pedal for the rest of the day, trying to finish and got back to the office. Cycle maintenance. Postmen weren't allowed to maintain their own bicycles because they hadn't been trained. They - it had to be sent back to a special - erm person in- in a special place. Even people like myself who knew about bikes weren't allowed to - which also annoyed us because erm - when you, er, on a van duty. As a driver. You had to do all the vehicle checks on a - on a Monday morning. Or preferably everyday but especially on a Monday morning. Well I hadn't been trained for that either but I was expected to do it. Those sort of things were really annoying. So when erm Royal Mail came along and said 'oh, we want to replace the bikes with trollies' - erm, I think a lot of us took it personally. Erm. Cause it was a nice way of working. And we could see the trollies were gonna be more - more trouble than they were worth.

**[17:53] JZ: So if erm - proportionally the health and safety of bikes isn't that bad. What do you think the Royal Mail's real motivation for - for winding them down was?**

MF: I think erm because they wanted the workforce to be more efficient and deliver more parcels and packets they didn't want to invest in too many vans. Cause that wouldn't - they try and portray themselves as a green operation. Erm. And also each of the delivery offices have only got parking for a certain number of vans, they wouldn't be able to fit anymore in. Erm and so the solution they came up was trollies. Er - which from the first day weren't big enough. The idea was that you'd go out with a trolley full of mail and do your loop with the trolley and then come back to the office. From the first day they weren't big enough to carry a day's worth of mail. So y-so you still had to have extra bags of mail dropped off to pick up on your way around. And that was one thing they wanted to restrict. Cause it was some-it was somebody's duty to drive a van around with all the bags for the postman to - and if they could get rid of that particularly duty that was another man you could save. But it never worked in the end.

**[19:03] JZ: So I think you've al-you've already touched upon this. So just to summarise - you've obviously opposed this - this decision of the Royal Mail's. I mean what is the - what are the main advantages of maintaining bicycles within the postal service?**

MF: You - if erm. If you realised you've missed out a house y-y-you know the numbers and you get to 35. And you're now at 45, it's just been missorted. You could cycle back down the road and deliver it no problem. If you've got to walk back, you tend not to bother. So they're not gonna get that letter til the next day. Erm. So there's probably - it doesn't happen very often but if you can just nip up the road quickly on a bike, no problem. If er - if you were a certain age, like I am and you need access to toilet facilities. It's much easier to cycle somewhere than walk somewhere. [Laughs] Or look for a bush. When you're on a trolley, er, with the trolley - unless you know where the watering points are y-it's very difficult.

**[20:00]**

**[20:01] JZ: What are these trollies? I'm trying to picture them, are they-**

MF: High capacity trollies, they're like old - erm - ice cream trollies. I-you've probably seen pictures from the 50s and 60s, people used to push trollies around with ice cream in. With two lids on the top that faced each other when they were both open. And y-you plunge your hand in to get the bu-mail out. Cos they're quite deep. Eh - on the top it says do not exceed 75 kilos. Well you want to take out as much as you can. You can cram an awful lot more in than 70 kilos. Which is no good for your back but that does - that means you can carry on for long before you have to backtrack and pick up extra bags to deliver. Erm. They're just big - big perambulators - big bulky perambulators. And they use em all over Kingston. Erm. Apart from places where there's a vanshare duty - in that case two - two posties will go out together in a van. And each one will go out and do a separate loop with their golf carts, with the bags on. And then drive to the next place. That's for - erm - places - including in Chessington - where it's well spread out and you need to drive from one point to another. And they use them in Kingston and Surbiton as well. And I think there's one or two postmen in Surbiton that are allowed to use bikes still. Purely because one of the duties entails crossing over the A3 and doing Hook Rise South as part of the duty when the rest of the walk is north of the A3. And it's easier - take your postman's bike through that, the underpass and push a trolley or in - or drive around in a van. So - and I'm sure that's the same tru-it's true throughout the country really. There's probably the odd one here or there on a bike still.

**[21:45] JZ: Yeah that - that was actually going to be my next question which you've just answered. I was gonna say how- how effective were the Royal Mail in-in completely ridding the service of bicycles? It sounds like yeah there was-**

MF: They were determined to to the point - when - years ago they used to send old bikes. They [?] them up and send them to Africa - for small villages in Africa. So that the children there could ride a postman's bike and get their water and go back and that helped out. That stopped suddenly and we don't know why. Erm. And we're thinking well they're getting rid of hundred thousands postman bikes, why can't they send them to Africa? But it wasn't happening. In fact they were going around with bolt cutters - er, on - on the day. And they would cut the chains on the bikes so that they couldn't be used. I-in - until such time that they could pick them up and take them away and discard them. Which we thought wasn't very good. A so called green organisation-

**JZ: Absolutely.**

MF: The perfect opportunity to make use of the bikes even you don't want use to. And that just seemed an unnecessary - unnecessary destructive - erm waste of resources.

**[22:49] JZ: Well especially as they had this existing scheme of sending them to Africa. So that was wound down was it?**

MF: It was - well, they used to boast about it in the - in the inhouse magazine, it used to be a regular feature. And then suddenly it stopped. And we don't really know why.

**JZ: That's a shame.**

MF: It is a shame yeah.

**[23:07] JZ: Erm. On that note - speaking about the bikes themselves. Did you-did you like the bikes themselves? The actual mechanics of it.**

MF: I wouldn't have wanted to ride London to Brighton on one. But th-they were sturdy enough, yeah. Only three speeds. Quite heavy. But they had to be sturdy to carry the weight.

**[23:24] JZ: Cause do you have a - do you have another bike - a sort of personal bike separate to your professional bike?**

MF: Oh yeah.

**JZ: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Erm. And so th-the the post office ones would be much more heavy and-**

MF: Yeah they were all made my Pashley and y'know, it's a go-it's a good make. And they were very sturdy and if erm - and on the whole quite well maintained but sometimes y-you'd want something to be fixed. Erm. And it would take weeks if not months. And you know-you knew that given the equipment and the tools you could do the job yourself in five minutes. But as I say, you wanted allowed to use- you were certainly discouraged from doing any proper maintenance on the bikes.

**[24:00] JZ: Because my understanding is that these manufacturers - Patchley is that what they're called?**

MF: Pashley.

**JZ: Yeah. Erm. My understanding is that they make those bikes only for the Royal Mail. They're not like a commercially available model.**

MF: I think - I think TNT when they started delivery they used the same - same model with their own logo on. Also made by Pashley at the time.

**[24:19] Erm. And just separate to the Royal Mail - errm - erm - I under-I think in your email to Alex you said you also used to sort of cycle commute from Chessington to Kingston, is that right?**

MF: I did. Yes. I used to work at Kingston University between '88 and '94. So I - I commuted in from Chessington. That's about 3 and a half miles each way each day. And th-that was good. I - I used to enjoy that. Erm - er even if the cold weather - erm. At that point I had a much bushier beard. And er - on a cold day in winter I'd go home and - and my children loved it when I'd give them a kiss with a cold solid icy beard. **[25:00]** They loved it. Erm. Th-that was good. Erm. It would've been nice if the university as an employer had facilities. To change or shower. Or something. But they didn't at that point. But that's OK. [Laughs]

**[25:14] JZ: Yeah. Erm. So er - I mean th-that's presumably you could've got a bus? But you chose to cycle.**

MF: I - when I first got the job I did take the bus for the first two or three weeks. Erm - I decided actually I used to like cycling. In Peterborough I gave up cycling because it was so unpleasant, erm. Cos it's flats there and there's nothing between Peterborough and the [?] so there was a slight wind from the east, it was a strong horrible wind from the east. There's no escape from it. So I - I gave up cycling in Peterborough. It was only after I'd been here for a few years - oh yeah, I used to enjoy that and got - went back to it. And that - that helped get me to fit again by commuting into Kingston. Err. Kingston University's over multiple sites. And one of the things I used to do when I had to visit - I was erm - erm - worked for the er - administrative computing unit as it was called then. You used to look after the erm - the er software - the administr-administrative software. Do user training and so on. So I used to have to visit users at different sites and I used to cycle from one er site or campus to another. And that was



quite nice. Erm - cos on a nice day and I - between Kingston and Kingston Hill. I go via Richmond Park one way or the other, if not both. Er and I thought well that's fair enough. I'm not getting a mileage allowance which I would if I had a car so sl-slight perk there, that was good. [Laughs].

**[26:43] JZ: And as someone who's done so much cycling in the borough. Do you think it's a cycle-friendly borough in general? And how do you think it's changed over the years?**

MF: Er. It's certainly improving slowly. It would be nice to see more cycle lanes. It would be nice to see erm more erm [pause] er, how can I put this? A lot of people park their cars on cycle lanes and - and that's annoying because you've got a cycle lane there and you have to veer out into the road into the line of traffic to get past somebody that's parked there. It would be nice if that was erm clamped down on a bit. But then Hook Road near where I live there's a red line and some vans there they park across half on half off the pavement. On a red line. On a cycle lane. So triple whammy there. An-and they get away with it. Erm. The cycle path along Portsmouth Road now, I like that. In - the only thing I don't like about it is if you're going south you have to cross the road twice to get onto it and off it again, when it - when it peters out at the end. But other than having segregated - segregated pa-cycle paths on each side of the road, I don't know how that can be improved.

**[27:53] JZ: And I'd just like to sort of wrap up by looking to the future I guess. Erm - back to the Royal Mail, I mean is-is there a future for cycling in the Royal Mail? Or is it done now do you think?**

MF: I - I think it's all - I think it's gone now. It's five or six years since the last erm cycle duty in - in Chessington and beyond. I - I don't think they'll go back. Erm. People aren't suddenly going to start sending out more letters and less parcels and packets now. I think - I think there's only going to be er - well I was gonna say it will only get worse but it's progress. I think that's just gonna change more and more. So Royal Mail deliver parcels. Plus a few letters now rather than the other way around which it used to be.

**[28:32] JZ: But interestingly you do see cycle couriers quite a [le] - Deliveroo with the big packages on the bag. So-so cycling to deliver things is still going.**

MF: Cycling to deliver things is still carrying on. And policeman - you see policeman around on bikes every now and again. Sometimes on their own, sometimes in pairs which is quite nice, it's still going on. Be nice to see more obviously. But erm - I see them. Er - yeah in London, especially you see a lot of couriers. On bikes, they're all mad. Doing that job in London. Erm but err - no it's nice to see people out on bikes and it's nice to see so many people in - in Kingston and Richmond Park and all around. Cycling around for leisure. I think it's - th-the more the better I think.

**[29:17] JZ: Do you think there's been an increase in that?**

MF: I think so yeah. Yeah. When I - when first moved here and first time I cycled to Richmond Park I felt quite er vulnerable in the park. Erm. That was before the 20 mile an hour limit was in-imposed as well. But now if you go on a Sunday - erm there's more bikes than cars. Which is great for the cyclists, not so good for the cars. But there's a speed limit and it shouldn't really bother them. Erm but i-it's good and I think the more cyclists became a-become visible the less er problems th-there'll be. The more visible they are, yeay.

**[29:51] JZ: I just-there's one thing I forgot to ask about actually. I think in your email to Alex you said you - or it might have been in your original letter. You said you were CT- CTC member?**

MF: CTC **[30:00]** is now Cycling UK, yeah. They changed their name.

**JZ: Oh they're now Cy-what is that sorry?**

MF: Er CTC, Cyclists Touring Club. And that was formed in 1880 or something and they kept that name until last few years. Erm. And they changed it because they also campaigned for erm - cyclists other than tourists. So it'll be commuters. And - and sports cyclists. So they changed their name to be more inclusive. Erm. Almost doing the same job as Cycling UK - which is another organisation for cyclists. And they - they look after all the sportsmen and women in - in the UK. As well as ordinary riders like myself.

**[30:43] JZ: OK. So it's a sort of public interest group, sort of?**

MF: Yeah.

**JZ: Yeah - and just finally I think you mentioned you have children?**

MF: I have two children. They're grown up. One's in Manly in Australia and one's in Stockport, near Manchester. An-and she's just - erm - had a second baby so I'm now a granddad of two.

**[31:03] JZ: And erm my question is gonna be do they cycle? And will the grandkids cycle?**

MF: I like to think the grandkids will, yes. Helen in Manly doesn't because she - she's a hairdresser. So she has to drive around. Erm. Quite big distances. Bigger distances than we would as a - as a local hairdresser in Kingston. And Jenny in Stockport hasn't cycled for a long time either sadly. They might come back to it one day. Erm. Both their partners are quite sporting. So who knows? And certainly we'll encourage the grandchildren to cycle in the fullness of time yeah.

**[31:42] JZ: Good stuff, good stuff. Excellent. Thank you so much Mick, that's perfect.**