



City of  
Amsterdam

# Cycling Matters

How Bicycles Power Amsterdam



- 1 Smooth Cycling
- 2 Easy Parking
- 3 Better Biking

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1

Smooth  
Cycling

2

Easy  
Parking

3

Better  
Biking

**736  
KM  
BIKE LANES**



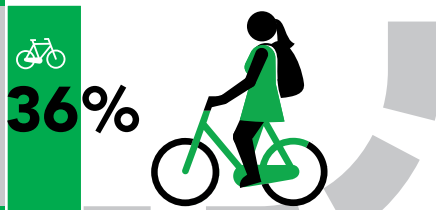
**BIKE-SHARING  
2,500  
BIKES  
483,500  
TRIPS**



# 2018 Bikes by the Numbers



**CLIMATE CONTROL**  
ANNUALLY, CYCLING SAVES  
40,000 TONNES OF CO<sub>2</sub>  
THE POSITIVE EFFECTS ON AIR  
QUALITY ADD UP TO € 9.2 MILLION

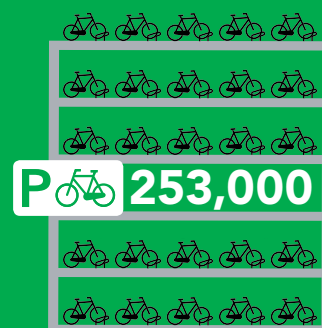


**24%**  
CHOSEN MODE OF  
TRANSPORTATION  
FROM/TO/WITHIN  
AMSTERDAM BY  
RESIDENTS ON  
WEEKDAYS

**20%**  
**865,187**  
INHABITANTS



**BIKE  
PARKING  
PLACES**



## Cycle of Life

If you're born in Amsterdam, you are virtually born on a bike. Babies on bikes are a familiar sight on our streets. Safely tucked away or sheltered by a windshield, our youngest city dwellers swerve through traffic, propelled by the pedaling power of their parents.

As soon as an Amsterdam child can walk, their parents insist they learn how to ride a bike. It is one of the most important rites of passage in a young person's life: having your parent take off the training wheels, getting that final push, and feeling the rush of moving forward on this wonderful two-wheeled vehicle, using just the power of your legs and the ability to balance. Freedom.

Then, it's off to school, to study, to work, to play and, yes, to court another rider in this city built for romantic cycling. Until you find yourself mounting a kiddie seat onto your own bike. Indeed, a never-ending cycle of life. At City Hall, we share a great responsibility to provide freedom of movement for every person living in or visiting Amsterdam. Generations of cyclists have shown us the way forward: a city where cycling sets the standard for healthy and safe mobility, and accessibility for work and play, for the youngest and the elderly. We are working on smart ways to reduce car traffic in order to allow more space for people on foot and on bikes. In Amsterdam, cycling truly matters.

Sharon Dijkma  
Deputy Mayor of Traffic and Transport,  
Water, and Air Quality, City of Amsterdam





# BIKE CITY AMSTERDAM

HOW AMSTERDAM BECAME THE CYCLING CAPITAL OF THE WORLD



**FRED FEDDES** in collaboration with **Marjolein de Lange** UITGEVERIJ BAS LUBBERHUIZEN

*Bike City Amsterdam,*  
Fred Feddes with  
Marjolein de Lange  
ISBN: 9789059375345



**ME AND MY BIKE** Marjolein is a mobility consultant specialising in sustainable mobility. At home she has a choice of a folding bike, a city bike, or a tandem bike. She lives with her partner in Bos en Lommer, Amsterdam West, and loves the quiet of the Amsterdam canals early in the morning.

## Protest Turned Policy

### How a grassroots movement boosted Amsterdam's modal shift

It looks like the definitive record of the history of cycling in Amsterdam has been written. Marjolein de Lange, formerly employee and currently active member of the Fietzersbond (Cyclists Union), headed a team of volunteers who diligently sifted through some forty metres of archives. They ended up with eight metres of historical material, which was transferred to the Amsterdam city archives in 2019. From this treasure trove, historian Fred Feddes distilled a 200+ page book, called *Bike City Amsterdam*.

#### Provocative pose

The cover of the book shows a woman sticking out her tongue at the photographer's lens. The black and white photo seems to reflect the anti-authoritarian attitude of the era that gave birth to the Cyclists Union. This grassroots movement proved a formidable force against the automobile lobby, at a time when the historic city centre threatened to be cut into pieces by four-lane boulevards. 'To me, it expresses a carefree, defiant spirit,' says Marjolein about the image. 'Cycling is not only a rational solution for urban mobility: safe, clean, efficient with space, energy, and resources. It also offers a great sense of freedom and autonomy.'

#### Yes Future

The book provides an overview of the changing attitude of the city and its inhabitants towards the bike. It also documents how the Cyclists Union evolved from a protest movement to a policy partner, in the aftermath of the Sixties. According to De Lange, the seminal document in the Union's archives is the so-called 1977 Bottlenecks Report. Published in the same year that

punk was born, Feddes calls it the 'most thorough expertise document regarding bicycle cities so far.' Crucially, far from embracing the contemporary 'No Future' ethic, the writers accepted the car as a given, but had a long-term vision for a city with more and better space for people. They promoted a pragmatic approach rather than proposing a radical rejection of motorized mobility, and were open to cooperate with the city on actual improvements. 'Alderman Michael van der Vlis embraced this collaborative approach, and step by step many of the Union's ideas were implemented on the streets of Amsterdam. Report authors and long-time activists Dick de Jongh and André Guit should have streets named after them. Or at least bike lanes,' says Marjolein.

#### State of the Union

With some 4,000 paying members – 'one in 200 Amsterdam citizens is a member' – and a large volunteer base, the Cyclists Union is still a force to be reckoned with. For instance, it has – together with the City of Amsterdam – recently successfully lobbied to ban scooters from bike lanes. De Lange is hopeful for the future as bicycle policy has a solid base, both in the population and across the political spectrum. But she also stresses that the bike city is never finished – there is always more work to do, new bottlenecks to be solved, new chances to be taken.



All of a sudden I was the world's first Junior Bicycle Mayor. It started with a talent class at school. They asked us to come up with ideas for making cycling safer and more fun for children. I did have an idea. See, in the Netherlands we have these bicycles called OV bikes, or public transport bikes, to cover the last kilometres of your journey. You will find them at train stations in many Dutch cities. Renting a public transport bike is cheap and easy. But there are no such bikes for children. My family does not own a car, and not everyone we visit lives close to a railway station. Sometimes we have to walk, take a bus, or a public transport bike. So when we go to visit relatives, I have to ride on the back of my mom's or my dad's bike, which is very uncomfortable. My idea was that we should also have junior public transport bikes. Or more and cheaper tandems, so kids and parents can ride together.

The organizers of the Junior Bicycle Mayor competition picked twenty ideas by kids from different Amsterdam schools. We were all declared Bicycle Heroes and got together one Sunday

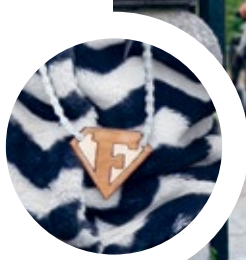
afternoon, to present our plans. Then a jury elected me Junior Bicycle Mayor. That was quite a strange moment. I wondered if I was up to the task. But so far, it has been fun. I was invited to kick off a cycling contest. Together with Bicycle Mayor Katelijne Boerma I handed out bike lights to cyclists riding without lights. I have been interviewed by several newspapers, and I have been on the radio. Sometimes it feels like I am doing grown-up things. But I'm still only nine years old, and

I would rather stay young for a while.

Katelijne tried to get the Dutch national rail services to adopt my idea. They said they were too busy right now. Bikes for grown-ups are taking up all of their time. So, I'm not sure if I will be able to ride a junior public transport bike before I grow up. In July 2019, a new Junior Bicycle Mayor will be elected. I do hope his or her ideas will grow up to become reality.

**LOTTA CROK**

## A Grown-up Idea



When I was a teenager, I fell in love with cycling. It gave me freedom of movement. All my life the bicycle has been my trusted companion. When I posted a photo of my new bike on Twitter, someone dubbed it the Dutch minivan. It holds three children – two on the back seat, one in front – and still has room for groceries. In the Netherlands, the car simply cannot deliver that kind of freedom. Whereas a car can become a ball and chain, the bike has the power to

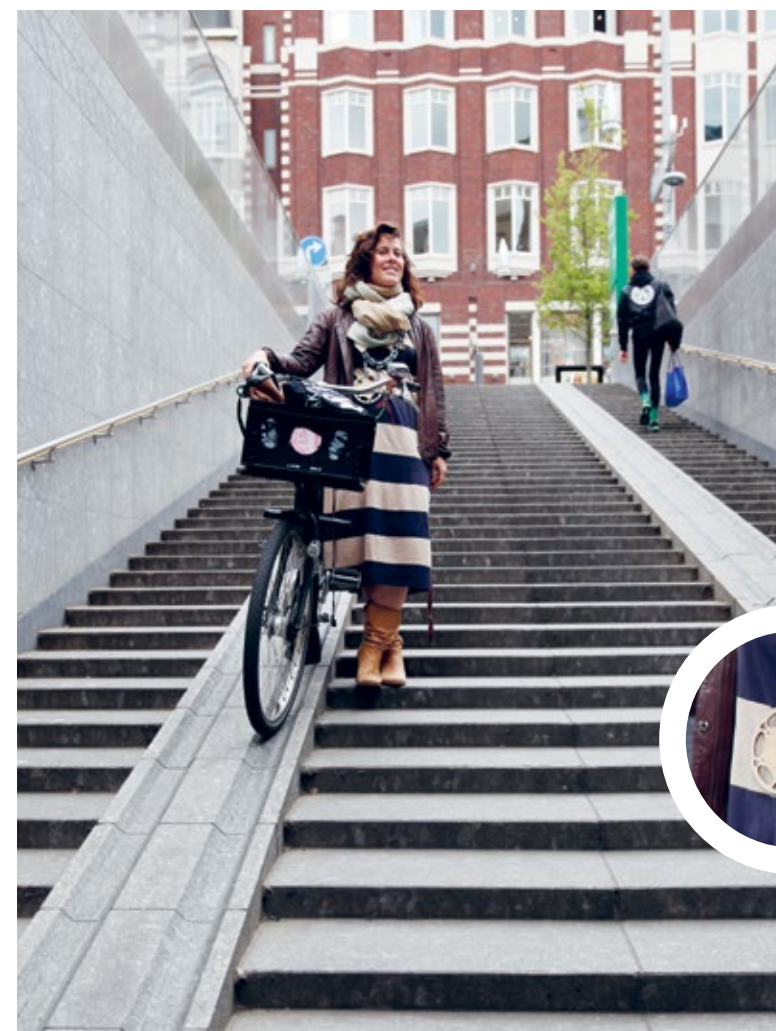
liberate us on so many levels. You could compare it to a Swiss army knife. It powers mobility as well as specific social and cultural interactions. Events like Amsterdam Dance Event and the annual Museum Night, two hugely popular events attracting tens of thousands of visitors, would be unthinkable without the option to bike between the many different locations in the city.

I recently met Melissa and Chris Bruntlett, authors of the must-read *Building the Cycling City*:

*The Dutch Blueprint for Urban Vitality*. They told me that in their hometown of Vancouver a cyclist is seen as making a statement against driving a car. In Amsterdam, cycling is the 'old normal', which we tend to take for granted. During my term as Bicycle Mayor I helped launch the Fietshelden (Bicycle Heroes) campaign. Its aim is to ensure that every child in Amsterdam from the age of four to fifteen has the skills necessary to navigate traffic in the city. Adults play a big part in making this happen. Our role is to literally create a safe space for every one of the 126,000 children under the age of fifteen in our city. My mission was to get the people of Amsterdam to commit to this goal. International visitors are sometimes inclined to say that parents with young children had better move out of the city. To me, that is a seriously flawed way of thinking. It would mean that the city loses its youth, its vitality. A city that cannot accommodate children is a city without a soul. Fortunately, Amsterdam has plenty of soul.

**KATELIJNE BOERMA**

## The Dutch Army Knife



**KATELIJNE** is a programme manager/lecturer at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. In 2017 she was elected as Amsterdam's second Bicycle Mayor. The Bicycle Mayor Programme is a global programme to accelerate the progress of cycling in cities and help get the next billion people onto bikes.





# Perfect Fit for the City

**SHARING SECRETS** Matthieu van der Poel is a Dutch rider who bends the rules of the peloton. He is a very versatile talent, the current world champion cyclo-cross, winner of the Amstel Gold Race, and an ambitious mountain-biker. How would he tackle our busy city streets?

Before we get to bikes, let's talk a bit about phytopathology. Or in plain English: the study of plant diseases. It is the field that Bicycle Infrastructure Manager Martijn Simons was originally trained in, and it still influences his perspective on city planning. Most importantly, it has instilled in him a firm conviction that tackling complex problems is a matter of getting experts from different fields to collaborate.

1

## Smooth Cycling

'To combat plant diseases you need a team of virologists, entomologists, pest specialists, and so forth,' says Martijn. 'It usually affects the whole ecosystem.' The same goes for today's challenges involving mobility. In phytopathological terms, Amsterdam has been overgrown by an exotic species: the car. 'Our city was never built to accommodate the amount of cars that have flooded it. For over a century, there were hardly any restrictions, despite the obvious negative effects on traffic safety,' Martijn explains. 'Also, we allowed cars to affect the air quality and the sound level. And they were given a lot of space. Now is the time to dial it back. Cycling is one of the most effective natural countermeasures to achieve a healthier, more balanced ecosystem. In a city like Amsterdam, the bike is simply a better fit.'

### Frontier spirit

Today, Amsterdam aims to facilitate smooth cycling by optimizing every step, from parking,

to riding, to interacting with other modalities and users in traffic. In some spots this leads to radical changes, such as the extra wide red asphalt lane providing cyclists with a spacious and safe corridor that allows easy access to the city centre. Martijn points out how one infrastructural development affects the other. 'The parking garage under the canal next to the Rijksmuseum has enabled us to eliminate car parking above ground in some surrounding streets, a transformative intervention.' Another far-reaching example: in parts where Amsterdam is expanding, the new norm for car parking is 0.2, meaning that just one in every five households will have a space to park their car. Obviously, this has huge implications for the way people get around and the infrastructure needed. 'We are at the frontier of a paradigm shift in urban transport and urban development. Bicycle infrastructure is a key factor in that shift and it's very exciting to be part of it.'

**ME AND MY BIKE** Martijn lives with his wife and their two children in Houthaven, a redeveloped district. He rides a 1960 Fongers bike, which he has owned for 25 years. He uses it to go to work as well as for longer trips, as far as the city of Enschede, some 170 km from Amsterdam. His favourite route is the Brettenzone, a green corridor in West.



## Looking ahead

One of Amsterdam's frontier streets is the hugely popular Haarlemmerdijk. With its charming shops, restaurants and cafes, this kilometre-long stretch is an irresistible magnet for visitors and tourists. Problem: its combined car and bicycle lanes are a mere five metres wide. No wonder this urban artery is permanently clogged. The city has designated the 22-metre wide Haarlemmer Houttuinen, which runs parallel to the Haarlemmerdijk, as an alternative route, favouring public transportation and bicycles, rather than the cars that zoom by today. 'This will provide immediate relief for locals as well as benefit commuters from Haarlem and Zaanstad, both some twenty kilometres away. And in a few years' time it will be utterly indispensable, as the revamped Houttuinen will be a main cycling corridor into the city centre for the residents of the Haven-Stad development, resulting in an estimated 50,000 new houses within the city limits.'

## Plough and plant

Some ten years ago, cycling policy was a matter of a few lone souls at City Hall. Today, Martijn is part of a growing team. They collaborate closely with colleagues in other departments, such as public space design and car-traffic calming. Navigating the networks of fellow professionals in the departments of the city is as important as navigating the concrete and brick streets. 'We need to own it together,' Martijn nods. 'We aim to always have the wind in our backs. Most of our successes have benefitted from the slipstream of others. "Don't beat them, join them," is my motto.' His advice to policy makers around the world: 'Be aware of what your colleagues are doing and plant your seeds when they are ploughing the fields.'



Just five metres wide, the Haarlemmerdijk traffic lane is permanently busy.



# Ride of a Lifetime

## Why do you cycle?

For me, riding a bike is simply the most efficient way to get around the city. For instance in the way I handle traffic lights: I will edge to the front of the queue, to be on my way as soon as the light changes.

## Have you changed your cycling style now that you're a senior citizen?

My passport says I am 72, but I feel like I am in my fifties. So, no, not at all, perhaps with the exception of leaving my recumbent bike in the garage. The only reason I'm thinking about buying an e-bike is that it would increase my cycling range.

## Where do you cycle?

Usually around town, but this month my girlfriend and I are planning a bike trip to the UK. We'll ride to Hook of Holland and catch a ferry. And then we will take the country roads to Cambridge. The British will probably think I'm crazy, riding without

a helmet. I am more concerned about staying on the right side of the road. In England that will be the left.

## Have you ever been in an accident on your bike?

Eleven years ago I slipped in the rain and got stuck in the tram tracks. But that happens to all of us in Amsterdam.

## Do you fix your own bike?

I can, but I've gotten lazy. These days I even take a flat tyre to my bike repairman, a Syrian immigrant who does an excellent job.

## What would you change if you were the mayor of Amsterdam?

It really is time to ban motor vehicles from the city centre. I myself own a VW Transporter, an old diesel powered vehicle, which will soon be banned from driving in Amsterdam. And that's perfectly fine with me.



### PAUL MEIJER

- was born in 1947
- lives near Artis Zoo, Centre district
- is a retired language professor (teaching Dutch as a second language)
- owns a 21-speed Gazelle hybrid bike
- cycles to his rowing club twice a week (8 km)
- averages 1,200 kilometres per year





Where did I put my phone?

They'd better not try to cut in front of me.

Is that old guy going to brake on time?

Finally no longer alone, finally an inner light.

Mommy, when are we getting a dog?!

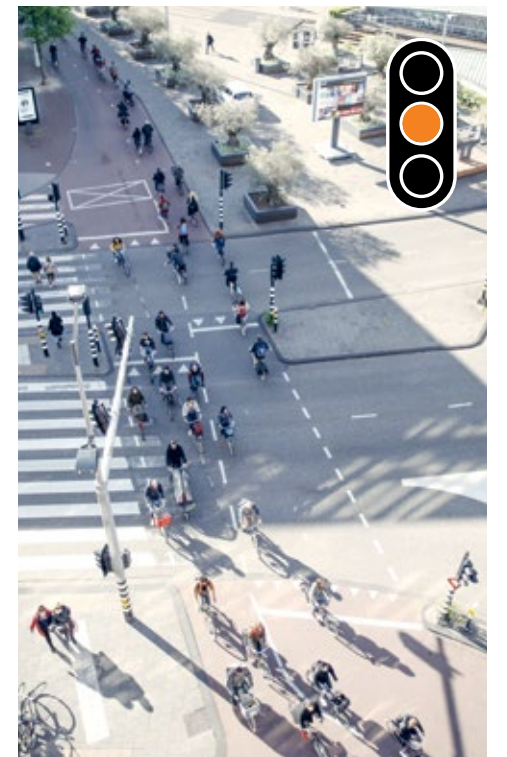
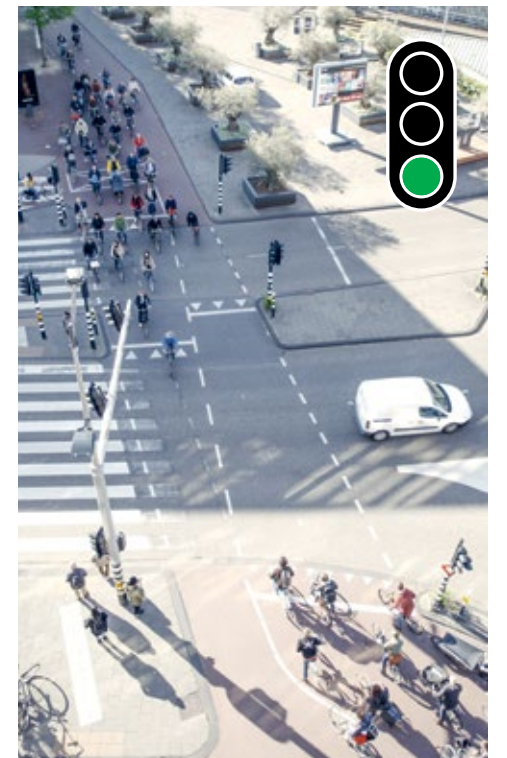
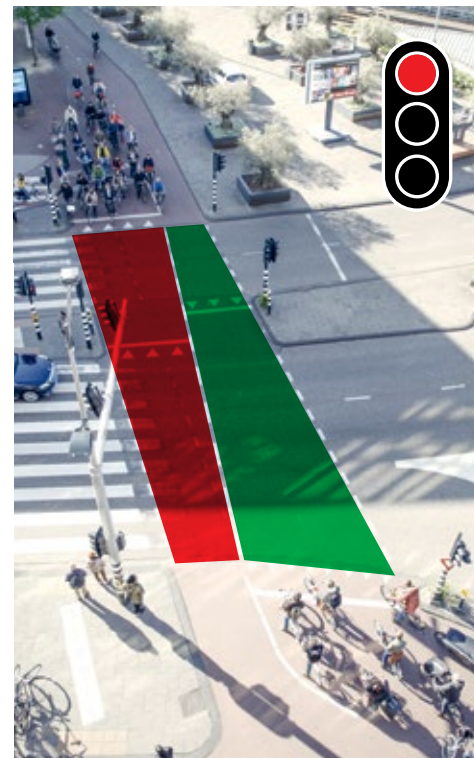
Today I'm going to tell her.

Woof!

Oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh  
All I know, all I know,  
Loving you is a losing game

Woof?

**SMART DESIGN FOR BETTER BIKING**  
A tapered lane allows for better distribution of cyclists waiting at the junction and faster crossing. On both sides of a busy junction, cyclists can form a wide queue while waiting for the light to turn green. As they pick up speed, riders will merge.



# Mr. Visserplein

8:30 AM



2

## Easy Parking



Amsterdam, the city with a reputation where anything goes, is changing its tune. While other places may remind visitors about local dress codes or social customs, the Dutch capital is warning the world about its new strictness in bicycle parking. As manager of Bicycle Parking Maaïke Nicolai-Geerling puts it: 'We are promoting a radical change in parking behaviour in order to provide a sustainable future for cyclists as well as for pedestrians.'

### Bicycle boom

It is a challenge other cities might secretly covet: too many bikes, too little parking space. As a result of a recent boom in cycling, Amsterdam has had to implement strict rules for bicycle parking. In an 80 km<sup>2</sup> area, unused bikes are allowed to remain parked for a maximum period of six weeks. A drastic measure, aimed at keeping pavements accessible for pedestrians instead of using public space to store unused bikes. 'When we did a survey, we found that in Amsterdam bikes outnumber residents. There were 850,000 residents, but over 880,000 bikes,' Maaïke explains. 'We cannot control the number of bikes people own, but we can manage the location and number of parking spots. For instance by creating space in parking facilities for cyclists who use their bike regularly. Also, when parking spaces for cars are scratched, some of this public space is reserved for bike parking.'

**ME AND MY BIKE** For a long time Maaïke lived in Amsterdam, near the busy Albert Cuyp market. These days she takes the commuter train from Haarlem, hops onto her sturdy Swedish Kronan bike, with its stand out red colour, and rides to work. Between them, Maaïke, her husband and their two daughters (10 and 8 years old) own eleven bicycles. Maaïke loves to ride along the Amstel River. Her tip for visitors is to get out of the city and ride to Durgerdam, a former fishing village.

# Benefits of Better Parking

**SHARING SECRETS** I think it would be fun to ride with John Bercow, Speaker of the UK House of Commons. I would take him to the busiest spots, expecting he would call for 'order!'

### Transformative trade

A case in point is the West district, where a former tram depot was transformed into a hot spot, featuring a film theater, a public library, shops, and offices. Its main attraction is the indoor food market Foodhallen. After it opened in 2014, this quickly became a magnet for locals, visitors and tourists. And a magnet for bicycles, with hundreds of them spilling onto the surrounding streets, much to the chagrin of local residents. On her phone, Maaïke pulls up a photo of dozens of bikes randomly parked outside an apartment building. Something needed to be done. Fortunately, a big part of the solution had already been built, although with a different purpose in mind. 'We had anticipated that more people would drive, so the Hallen features a sizable parking garage,' says Maaïke. One of the keys to smart parking proved trading in sixty car spaces for 830 bicycle spaces.

### Guiding principles

The Hallen approach reflects the five guiding principles followed by Maaïke and her colleagues. 'First, we aim to keep Amsterdam super bicycle

### Simply irresistible: the Amsterdam bait bike





## ANNUAL REPORT 2018



4,977

Bicycle wrecks picked up for recycling and waste disposal

approx. 15,000



water<sup>2</sup>net

Bikes hauled from the canals by the Amsterdam water company

friendly. Secondly, our mission is to provide plenty of parking facilities. The other three principles: clear rules, clear communication, and consistent enforcement.' Cyclists are informed about parking rules by traditional traffic signs as well as markings on the street surface. 'After all,' Maaïke smiles, 'cyclists tend to focus on what's directly in front of them.' She stresses that the goal is to inform as well as motivate people. 'The main thing is to get people to think before they park. So we use temporary paint to tell visitors why they should park smart: to make room for emergency services, for pedestrians, and for children to play. If we can create a climate that people will intuitively adapt to, we will have succeeded.'

### Fake bike, real results

Another smart solution is the 'bait bike', a fixed metal fake bike, doubling as a frame to lock bikes to. 'The bait bike prevents cars from using these spots to load and unload, and it attracts cyclists.' Maaïke is optimistic that most parking problems can be solved. 'At the Hallen, we have achieved amazing results in just two years. Especially for the local residents, the impact is really positive. Where once bikes blocked the pavement, the area is now populated by people enjoying ice cream and kids drawing hopscotch tracks.'

Check out the *Surprise Parking* video, shown as a preview at the Hallen cinema to promote the underground bicycle parking, on [vimeo.com](https://vimeo.com).



# One Handshake Away

All over the European continent, cities are struggling with challenges involving accessibility, sustainability, and mobility. Increasingly, policy makers, urban planners, and local administrators are turning to cycling as a solution for many of these challenges. A recent European project, funded by the European Union as part of the Horizon 2020 programme, brings us one handshake away from inspiring each other and exchanging know-how and expertise in the field of cycling policy.

Aptly called Handshake, the project aims to strengthen ties between cities. Five future cycling cities have opted for a strong Amsterdam connection: Rome, Turin, Bordeaux, Dublin, and Bruges. Five other cities – Riga, Helsinki, Cadiz, Manchester, and Krakow – have partnered with the two other mentor cities Copenhagen and Munich. Handshake runs until 2022 and incorporates several pilot projects from the Amsterdam Bicycle Plan 2017-2022. Collaboration is a two-way street, and Amsterdam is also looking to learn from partner cities. It's all about exchanging valuable knowledge on influencing behaviour, and on gathering and processing cycling data.

In April 2019, representatives of all Handshake cities visited Amsterdam. They were taken on a tour of a number of project locations. A comparison of old photographs to the current situation showed the impact of transforming the city from car-based to bike-based mobility. Amsterdam is a living lab, where new ideas are tested and insights are shared with the world. The Dutch capital challenges and invites others to follow suit and develop the perfect recipe for transforming their own cities.

More info: [www.handshakecycling.eu](http://www.handshakecycling.eu)



Koen van 't Hof was doing research on bicycle theft when he heard about a newly-created position with the city's bicycle team: Behaviour and Innovation Manager. 'I had no idea this job existed, but I thought it might fit me like a glove as my background is in both civil engineering and psychology.' Today, Koen is responsible for the Better Biking part of the Amsterdam long-term Bicycle Plan. 'My main job is to increase cyclist satisfaction.'

As the streets of Amsterdam become busier with people on bikes, moments of overcrowding during peak hours occur more frequently, sometimes resulting in stressful and dangerous situations. Koen likes to compare the city's infrastructure to computer hardware and the people riding bikes to software. As bike lanes become clogged, some riders act like viruses or malware, disrupting the flow of traffic and causing system overload. If you might think the simplest solution would be to install increased disk space, you'd be wrong. Koen prefers to tinker with the software: us. 'Although Amsterdam continues to work on low car traffic policy, sometimes it is impossible to change the infrastructure. The historical city offers literally no room for physical interventions.'

#### Smart options

Ideally, influencing behaviour is much more than what is popularly known as 'nudging', says Koen. 'In Amsterdam, we prefer to integrate insights from behavioural psychology during the design process as much as possible.' All the same, nudging can be quite effective. An example is how cyclists respond when they are given extra options in route choice. 'Our research shows that people who are not particularly in a hurry, are willing to take a short detour if that improves the quality of their journey. The reward could vary from pleasant scenery or a calmer route to cleaner air.' In such instances, the right form of communication becomes as important as the infrastructure. 'Yes, you absolutely have to highlight these alternative options.'

# Cycling Etiquette

#### Map of likes

Amsterdam studies cyclists' behaviour in order to come up with solutions that are evidence-based. An innovative tool to collect research data is the Ping if You Care! programme. Koen explains: 'We handed out a so-called ping button to 700 volunteers, to attach to their handle bars. If they hit this button during their journey, the location would be recorded. After the trip, participants would give specific feedback about their experience at those locations, using an app.' The results – over 30,000 pings – provided policy makers with a detailed cycling map, which not only identifies bottlenecks, but also marks positive experiences, such as an appreciation of the surroundings, air quality or smoothness of the ride. ➤

**SHARING SECRETS** I would invite the Silicon Valley crews responsible for developing self-driving cars. Riding in Amsterdam, they can experience the benefits of self-propelled motion. Virtual contact via smartphone can't match the immediate sensory interaction with the environment that a bike offers.

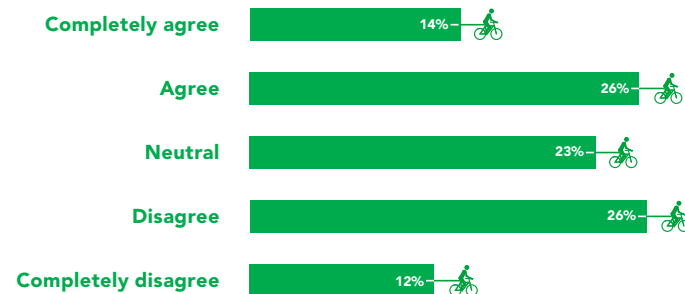


**ME AND MY BIKE** Koen is single and lives in Utrecht, another Dutch city renowned for its bicycle culture. In the city Koen rides a Belgian Achielle bike or a traditional granny bike. Out in the countryside he rides his racing bike along the river Lek.



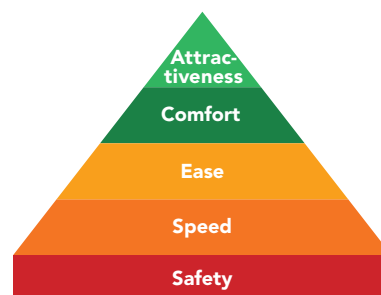


### PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT CYCLING IN A HIGH-TRAFFIC AREA IS STRESSFUL



#### Top of the pyramid

In order to chart policy priorities, Koen uses a pyramid model, not unlike Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. This pyramid was developed by the Dutch national rail service NS, and integrates existing research into cyclists’ motivations. It distinguishes between dissatisfiers at the bottom and satisfiers at the top. ‘Dissatisfiers are factors that lead to disappointment when they are not present to a certain extent, such as safety and speed. Satisfiers provide added value and can increase satisfaction levels. Examples are the degree of variety a route offers or the quality of the air you breathe,’ Koen explains. ‘The bottom of the pyramid is quite firm in Amsterdam, so we have the luxury of also investing in the top.’



CUSTOMER WISH PYRAMID FOR CYCLISTS

#### Tunnel fun

One particular area that Amsterdam is looking to improve is tunnels and underpasses. ‘Tunnels tend to make people feel exposed and vulnerable. We want Amsterdam cyclists to enjoy tunnels, so we will be looking for ways to change them into fun places where people can relax. We might for instance offer sensory stimuli, such as pleasant sounds or attractive visual art.’ Koen mentions the Cuyperspassage (cyclists and pedestrians only) at Central Station as a good example. With its breath-taking panoramic design depicting a scene of tall ships at sea, made of 77,730 Delft blue tiles, it is quite the show stopper. Any cyclist who sees it for the first time is sure to slow down to a crawl.

#### TOP 3 MOST ANNOYING CYCLIST BEHAVIOURS

Among cyclists		Among non-cyclists	
1	Telephone use (31%)	1	Cycling through a red light (45%)
2	Cycling through a red light (24%)	2	Cycling on the pavement (35%)
3	Cycling against the traffic (23%)	3	Cycling without lights (25%)

# Flying Colours

#### What does your average cycling day look like?

My parents won’t let me ride to school, because of a dangerous crossing between home and school. I mostly use my bike to ride to choir and handball practice, and when I go horseback riding.

#### At what age did you learn how to ride a bike?

I was four years old. And when I was five, my dad and I rode to the Artis zoo in the city centre. I used to wear a helmet, but it’s very annoying when you have an itch. Sometimes I wear my horse riding cap for protection. When our family goes mountain bike riding, I wear a helmet to avoid hurting myself when I brush past trees and bushes.

#### At your age you are taught traffic rules in school. How did you do on the test?

I got 23 out of 25 questions right, so I passed. Knowing the traffic signs and rules comes in handy as traffic in Amsterdam is very busy. I like knowing how to handle situations.

#### What would you change if you were the mayor of Amsterdam?

I would build more bicycle lanes especially for cyclists. That would make it even safer to ride.

#### Who would you like to show around Amsterdam on a bicycle?

Karol Sevilla would be nice. She’s the lead actress in *Soy Luna*, my favourite TV show. I’d take her to the A’DAM Tower, behind Central Station. There is a cool swing on the sky deck which takes you back and forth over the edge, 100 metres above the ground.

#### LIZZY MOL

- is 11 years old
- is in primary school
- lives in Amsterdam West, near ring road A10
- owns a seven-gear violet-purple, mint-green Gazelle bike
- rides her bike to choir practice (Bachstraat, South, 3.8 km)
- plays handball at Westsite (2.1 km)





# Lycra-free by Dutch Design



**John Pucher (right) is a Professor Emeritus Urban Planning and Public Policy, at Rutgers University, New Jersey. He lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, and is co-editor of the upcoming publication *The Future of City Cycling* (MIT Press, 2020).**

'If you asked an American city planner for a tour, they would only show you to the best things. Americans like to brag. When I visited Amsterdam a few years ago, Ria Hilhorst of the city's cycling programme team did the exact opposite. She took me to the problem spots and missing links. "We need a bridge here; these lanes should be wider." To me, that is typical of the Dutch city planning culture, always looking where something can be improved.

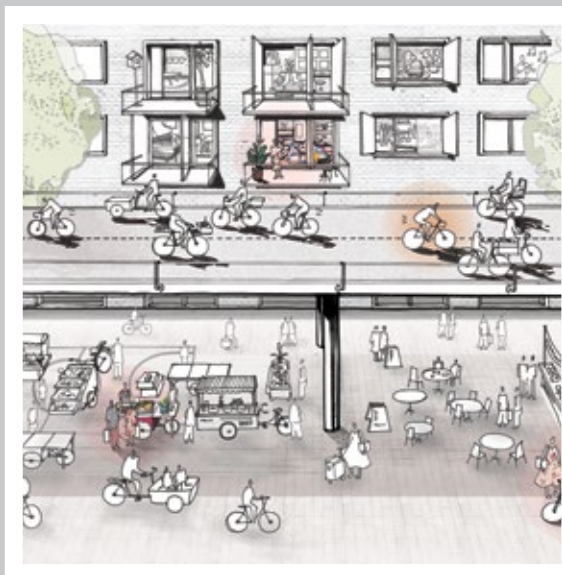
I sometimes wonder if the people of Amsterdam know how lucky they are. Compared to the United States, where in some areas cyclists evoke homicidal impulses in motorists, Amsterdam is nirvana. My research shows that of all major cities in the world, it has the highest bike mode share. This despite the fact that it is a large city with very limited space.

Statistics show that Amsterdam is growing in population. Living in the city has become very popular, for young people, but also for empty nesters. It is not a city built for cars, so giving the space to the most sustainable mode of transportation – the bicycle! – makes perfect sense. Also, to facilitate smooth cycling by widening bike lanes, to accommodate the increasing volume of cycling is a wise strategy. Still, Amsterdam could do even more. I remember walking through the canal district of Amsterdam – a World Heritage site – and seeing all those parked cars made me furious. Such a waste of space, truly a desecration of the canals. The last time I visited, Amsterdam was about to finish a large bicycle parking garage in front of Central Station. Convenient, sheltered parking facilities are essential if you want to stimulate bike use and prevent parking chaos.

Over the past fifteen years the Dutch model, with its excellent separation and protection of cyclists from motor vehicles, has become the model for best design of bike facilities. Many American cities are now adopting the successful bike infrastructure design from the Netherlands, particularly for their centres, where there are enough potential cyclists to use it. We should remember that one of the crucial factors in the success of Dutch cycling policy is how it integrates a number of policies. It all starts with ample, convenient, and safe bike infrastructure. But Amsterdam also puts limitations on car use, for instance by designating traffic calmed zones. And motorists are discouraged by making routes annoying and slow to navigate.

One more crucial aspect: when I go to a Dutch city, I know that motorists are on the ➤

## DUBBELSTRAAT / DOUBLE STREET



### NEW AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam is planning to transform its old industrial harbour zones into a residential area for some 50,000 households called Haven-Stad. In order to provide a sustainable urban environment, its infrastructure will be tailor-made for cyclists. But what would Haven-Stad look like entirely without cars? Could we design a district exclusively accessible for pedestrians and cyclists?

## KRUISPLEIN / CROSSROAD SQUARE



Commissioned by the City of Amsterdam, the Regional Traffic Authority Amsterdam, and the national advisory board (CRA), urban planners De Urbanisten have researched and designed this 21st century cycling city. They present their radical perspectives in the form of a graphic novel. In several episodes De Urbanisten showcase their designs for a cycling city and their impressions of the urban life that takes place in its streets and squares.



defensive. They are held legally responsible for crashes involving cyclists. When I lived and worked in New Jersey, motorists would honk, yell out the window, or drive close to cyclists to intimidate us and force us off the road. In Holland, just about every motorist is also a cyclist, which creates a different mindset. Moreover, cyclists are held accountable too. Every time I have been to Amsterdam, I have seen a police officer – on a bike, no less – give a ticket to a cyclist. This never happens in the US.

I am not an expert cyclist. I never wear Lycra and have a sturdy, simple upright bike, definitely not a racing bike. In my hometown, I ride on the greenways and quiet streets. I am not going to compete with cars and trucks going sixty kilometres per hour. To me it is so exciting to see women, children, and seniors on bikes in Amsterdam. People from A to Z, of every conceivable ethnicity and income group, people in regular suits, not Lycra, handicapped people on custom bicycles. The world is looking to the Dutch

for guidance. With the long-term cycling plan, Amsterdam is doing exactly the right thing, building on its strengths. My motto has always been that cycling should be possible, safe, and convenient for just about everybody. Amazingly, in Amsterdam this is everyday reality.’

DRIESPRONG / TRIDENT SQUARE



STADSPLEIN / CITY SQUARE



**ACCESSIBLE CITY**  
Cycling keeps the city moving. Pedalling citizens save motorists **60,000** hours of traffic time, worth a whopping **€60** million.



**SUPERCENTENARIAN**  
Every year, Amsterdam cyclists produce an extra life span total of **120** years, worth **€8.3** million. As an individual, this would be the oldest person on earth.



**HEALTHY PEDALS**  
On average, people who cycle regularly call in sick less often than colleagues who don't pedal.

It is estimated they save a total of **50,000** sick days, representing an economic value of **€15.3** million.



# Bike Benefits\*

Amsterdam's cycling boom is a boost for the city's economy and the health and well-being of its citizens.

**RELAX, JUST DO IT**  
Work in progress: relaxed routes aim to offer cyclists a smooth, stress-free ride by avoiding obstacles and cluttered streets. Instead, these routes offer pleasant, calming surroundings, easy crossings, and wide lanes, making them eminently suitable for older cyclists, children, and families.

**CHEAP RIDE**  
More bikes mean lower costs for public transportation: **€27** million saved.



## ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CYCLING\*

**€21,600,000**  
Health



**€13,700,000**  
Quality of life



**€87,600,000**  
Mobility

**TOTAL**  
**€122,900,000**

\*2017





# City of Amsterdam



## CYCLING MATTERS 2019

**INTERVIEWS AND DESIGN**  
de zoele haven

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
**Djinn Kwekkeboom** cover, p. 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15,  
16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23  
**Beeldbank Amsterdam** p. 6  
**Marlise Steeman** p. 19

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