When British Cycling launched its women’s strategy in 2013, we deliberately set ourselves a tough, ambitious target of encouraging one million more women to ride bikes by 2020.

At that time, we were riding high off the back of the amazing performances of our female athletes at London 2012, but we were faced with the hard truth that from the grassroots up, cycling was still largely a male-dominated sport. Our own research had shown that there were specific barriers to cycling that women particularly face – such as a perception of cycling being unsafe – and these are notoriously challenging obstacles to overcome.

Four years on, I am proud to say that the sport is in a very different place. Our perseverance with seeing through the seven elements of our strategy is paying off and we are thrilled to announce that 723,000 women who have not previously cycled have been influenced by British Cycling initiatives to take up cycling since 2013.

Of course, the fact that our female elite riders have continued to go from strength to strength has provided the inspiration, and we are delighted to have been able to harness that through our numerous participation initiatives.

Our partnership with HSBC UK has led to a number of refreshed initiatives integral to driving up women and girls’ participation. Our women-only rides programme, HSBC UK Breeze, has been a great success, attracting over 150,000 participants and recently expanding into Wales. We have trained up over 1,500 further Breeze Champions since 2013, while the number of female coaches has soared by 70% over the same time period.

The HSBC UK City Ride programme, which we are taking to 14 cities across the UK in 2017, provides further opportunities for women and girls to enjoy cycling in a safe and friendly environment and hopefully inspire them to cycle long after the event finishes.

We’ve also seen significant increases in female race licence holders, female British Cycling members, women-only races and the proportion of women taking part in British Cycling events, all of which is testament to the hard work of those involved.

Of course, we did not do this alone and many successful initiatives such as Sport England’s fantastic This Girl Can campaign have certainly played a part, as has the willingness of the media to feature women’s sport more prominently.

However, none of us in sport can be complacent when it comes to closing the gender gap. There is still a lot of work to be done through to 2020 to ensure we hit that one million target and we will continue to strive to get more women involved in cycling at all levels.

Whilst our overall target remains firmly in sight, we have refreshed our strategy aims to include four key themes: participation, people, performance and philosophy. There’s more information throughout this update and I hope you join us in supporting more women to cycle more.

Julie Harrington
Chief executive
British Cycling
Our aim: inspire one million more women to ride, race and be part of British Cycling by 2020

Participation
More women cycling more often

- Participation programmes supporting women and girls
- Creating and promoting a journey of opportunities to ride, race and engage with cycling
- Improve retention levels
- Increasing female membership

People
More diverse women representing cycling at all levels of the sport

- Increase female leadership throughout the governance of British Cycling
- More women working, coaching and volunteering in the sport at all stages of the pathway
- Increasing female membership

Performance
More girls and young women engaged and supported through the rider pathway

- Rider pathway – talent development
- Rider pathway – performance
- Increasing the talent pool

Philosophy
Create a change in culture and opportunities for all girls and women

- More women feeling confident/comfortable on the road
- Campaigning for support from advocates
- Role of ambassadors – all levels
Laura Kenny – Britain’s most successful female Olympian
“For someone who has spent a lifetime on a bike, the boom in cycling in Britain has been fantastic to see. More cyclists commuting to work, taking advantage of this country’s beautiful, scenic routes or getting on their bikes to race is a great thing for our sport and for our nation’s health.

“However, it is impossible to escape the fact that – like most other sports – cycling is traditionally male-dominated, and to change this certainly isn’t an overnight process.

“British Cycling’s bid to encourage one million more women to cycle by 2020 was ambitious, but the news that they are over halfway to achieving that target is very encouraging. I am thrilled that we’ve made such great progress and can’t wait to see even more women and girls getting out there and experiencing the true happiness of life on two wheels.”

Shanaze Reade – British Cycling Ambassador
“Cycling was just something I grew up doing – spending summer evenings at the BMX track with my friends – but I realise that it isn’t like that for everyone. In 2017 – with so many distractions like social media keeping girls less active – it is an even harder challenge to get young women into sport – or even just a leisurely bike ride. I am passionate about helping to inspire more women to give cycling a try. We’re three quarters of the way there but there’s still a way to go.”

Jennie Price – chief executive, Sport England
“Women are still less likely to cycle than men, and less likely to do exercise in general, so we can’t stop here. Sport England are trying to close the gender gap with the This Girl Can campaign and wholeheartedly support British Cycling’s continuing work on their women’s strategy.”

“I am thrilled that we’ve made such great progress and can’t wait to see even more women and girls getting out there and experiencing the true happiness of life on two wheels”
Laura Kenny
Participation

More women cycling more often

The number of trained Breeze Champions now stands at over 2,000, with more than 1,500 of these trained since the strategy launch in 2013.

The fact that 723,000 more women have been influenced by British Cycling to cycle regularly since 2013 is fantastic news, and demonstrates the growing appetite for cycling in this country.

The challenge facing British Cycling when its #WeRide Strategy launched in 2013 was how best to harness that appetite; how best to encourage women to either get back on a bike – in some cases after many years away – or take up cycling for the very first time.

**HSBC UK Breeze**

British Cycling’s flagship initiative is HSBC UK Breeze – a nationwide network of guided rides run by women, at a leisurely pace and with an inclusive atmosphere.

Breeze Champions – the volunteers who lead these rides – are integral to the initiative. They inspire and encourage other women who may be apprehensive about getting back on a bike. The number of trained Breeze Champions now stands at over 2,000, with more than 1,500 of these trained by British Cycling since the strategy launch in 2013. Many of these women have their own story to tell whether this is tackling mental health problems or recovering from cancer.

The invaluable work of these champions has led to more than 150,000 female attendances on the HSBC UK Breeze programme since its launch. More than 47,000 of these have been in the last 12 months alone – each one gaining confidence, experience and fitness, as well as experiencing the social and mental wellbeing benefits that cycling brings.

For many women, HSBC UK Breeze acts as a starting point on their cycling journey, opening up a host of other opportunities for them to ride socially, recreationally or competitively. Growing the HSBC UK Breeze programme will be a key part of the strategy from now to 2020, and part of the plan is to establish a female entry-level mountain bike programme through HSBC UK Breeze. This will be a great opportunity to introduce and engage more women into mountain biking. We believe there is an appetite from women to try mountain biking and by having more female leaders to inspire women to get involved, this will help women feel comfortable in trying something new.

Mountain biking is just one way we intend to provide a more diverse type of ride which we hope will help younger women to take part. For many mums, childcare is a barrier to participation and cycling is one activity that mums and youngsters can participate in together in traffic-free environments and with the support of other mums. Diversifying our participation offer will be a priority within the HSBC UK Breeze programme.
HSBC UK Go-Ride

One of the key aims at the launch of the strategy was to establish a genuine, easy-to-follow pathway for female cyclists – providing increased opportunities at every level of the sport, and ensuring that these opportunities link together in a clear and visible way, in order to keep participants engaged.

Depending on the participant’s age, the starting point on this pathway can vary. British Cycling’s HSBC UK Go-Ride programme provides a fun and safe way to introduce young female riders to the world of cycle sport, as well as providing a platform to improve bike handling skills.

In 2016, HSBC UK Go-Ride delivered 182 female-specific rider development sessions, creating 1,570 opportunities to ride. In addition, 364 female-only HSBC UK Go-Ride races were delivered, enabling girls to take that first step on the pathway.

Over the next four years we are looking to grow HSBC UK Go-Ride, particularly through our schools programme and women and girls rider development sessions with the aim to have 50% participation from female riders. We will also be looking to maintain 50% representation of female participation in HSBC UK Go-Ride Racing up to 2020.

Bikeability and cycle training

British Cycling aims to continue to be the leading provider of National Standards Instructor training. Through developing a campaign to encourage more women and girls to take part in Bikeability and cycle training, we want to ensure that cycle training is visible to everyone who has the desire to learn and improve their cycling skills.

HSBC UK Go-Ride Go is a new initiative developed and being piloted in 2017 with the aim of implementing an early years ‘learn to ride’ programme to inspire more young people aged three to eight years and their families to be lifelong cyclists. HSBC UK Go-Ride Go aims to inspire young people to develop their physical literacy and cycling skills through the delivery of fun, accessible activities. It also aims to support young people wherever they are on their cycling journey, ensuring everybody gets the most out of what cycling has to offer.
Creating and promoting a journey of opportunities to ride, race and engage with cycling

British Cycling has worked hard in the four years since the strategy was launched to ensure that women who want to take their riding and racing to the next level have the opportunity to do so.

An initial aim was to outline these opportunities digitally, making them accessible and easy-to-follow for existing and potential riders.

At the end of 2016 we launched new women’s cycling pages on our website to showcase exactly what is on offer and direct interested participants towards the best option for them. Up to February 2017, 60% of the traffic to these pages is from a female audience, compared to the 22% female audience viewing the rest of the website.

Of British Cycling’s 20,000 female members, over 45% have race licences

The newly-developed women’s web pages break the pathway down into four stages: beginner, developing, progressing and performance; providing riders with easily accessible and visually appealing information to allow them to plot the next stage of their cycling journey.

Moving forward, we will be looking at how best to visually display the pathway for female cyclists to get involved in all aspects of what British Cycling has to offer – from HSBC UK Breeze rides to riding towards the World Class Performance Programme.
Cycle Sport
The numbers of female-only road races and closed circuit races have both grown considerably since the launch of #WeRide, with increases of 54% and 68% respectively since 2013.

Providing beginner and developing female cyclists with the opportunity to join a women-only race has had a visible impact on the numbers of women choosing to ride in open events, whether they be non-competitive or competitive, as the increases in the proportion of female entrants into sportives (from 18% to 22%) and the number of female race licence holders (72% up on 2013) demonstrate.

In 2016, British Cycling ran a pilot project in which Breeze Champions took part in selected sportives, before documenting and sharing their experience as first-time sportive participants with others involved with the HSBC UK Breeze programme. Taking the learnings from this pilot, this year ten British Cycling registered sportives – all of which traditionally have a high proportion of female entrants – will be the subject of blogs and social media content from Breeze Champions. We have plans to provide more support for event organisers to build on this momentum, addressing the perceived barriers and sustaining an increase in the number of women taking part.
Earlier this year, it was announced that – for the first time – the prize money for the HSBC UK | National Women’s Road Series will be equal to the men’s HSBC UK | Spring Cup Series and HSBC UK | Grand Prix Series, a further step towards equality at the elite level of the sport.

Next steps include looking at developing specific marketing initiatives to make women aware of the various cycling disciplines. British Cycling is the governing body for six cycling disciplines – road, track, BMX, cyclo-cross, cycle speedway and mountain bike – and with strong role models such as Rachel Atherton and Evie Richards flying the flag in non-Olympic disciplines, we are determined to capitalise on this and engage and influence more women to compete in the sport through targeted discipline plans with a focus on improving the competitive pathway. By further increasing the number of women trying different aspects of the sport, this will hopefully translate into more licence holders as we provide more support for women to get into racing.

**Clubs**
British Cycling – along with its affiliated clubs – has worked hard to ensure that cycling clubs are no longer seen as solely the domain of men.

A new filter was added to British Cycling’s digital club finder tool to enable women to identify clubs which run women-only sessions (471 of British Cycling’s affiliated clubs currently do this, around a quarter of the total number).

The number of women-only club sessions has increased dramatically in the last four years. In 2013, 1,270 participants took part in 109 sessions, whereas 2016 saw 2,743 participants take advantage of 292 sessions.

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**Strong role models** such as Rachel Atherton and Evie Richards are flying the flag in non-Olympic disciplines.
Education and development for all coaches to support culture change and delivering in a female environment is a key aim.

**Education**

As we work to increase the number of women and girls participating, we are committed to increasing the number of female coaches through training and qualification and mentoring provided by our Ignite Your Coaching programme. Furthermore, providing workforce education and development for all coaches to support culture change and delivering in a female environment is a key aim.

We have continued to develop our provision of expert knowledge for cyclists through the development of the British Cycling Insight Zone – an online knowledge base. Continuing to produce content on female specific issues is a priority for us.

**Improving the retention levels in cycling**

Despite an increase in the number of new women taking up cycling, retention remains a challenge for the sport. Women may stop, or reduce their levels of cycling, for many reasons including changing job, moving home or starting a family.

A top priority for us over the coming year is to both understand more about the reasons for this and implement more support for these women and girls through better signposting, introducing women and children rides and a more diverse range of cycling opportunities to keep women engaged, such as mountain biking.
Increasing female membership
The target at the outset of the strategy was two-fold; to grow British Cycling’s female membership to 25,000 and increase the proportion of female members from 15% to 20%.

In the four years since the strategy launched, British Cycling has doubled its female membership with numbers rising past 20,000 for the first time in the organisation’s history.

Of British Cycling’s 20,000 female members, over 45% have race licences which entitle them to take part in competitive events throughout the country, while 52% own a ride membership – designed for commuters, sportive riders and leisure cyclists. The remaining 3% have a fan membership package.

The three membership packages on offer – Ride, Race and Fan – are designed to offer as many benefits as possible and are tailored towards the individual. Liability insurance and legal support, along with discounts at some of Britain’s biggest cycling retailers and priority access to tickets for major cycling events are all included in the various membership packages. We will continue to look at our membership offers to ensure that they appeal to female cyclists.

The target to hit a proportion of female members has also seen progress, with a rise from 15% of all members in 2013 to 16% at the halfway point of the strategy. British Cycling’s overall membership has grown to over 135,000. While this consistently strong growth is really encouraging, hitting the proportional target of 20% of female members is a challenging one. Nonetheless, we remain determined to meet it.
Female membership of British Cycling has doubled since 2013.

723,000

More women influenced to cycle since 2013

The number of trained Breeze Champions stands at over 2,000

Over 150,000

Female attendances on the HSBC UK Breeze programme
British women have won two Olympic and eight Paralympic cycling titles in Rio, and over 20 elite world titles since 2013.

- **70%**
  - Increase in the number of trained female coaches

- **72%**
  - Increase in female race licence holders since 2013

- **130%**
  - Growth in the number of female ride leaders since 2013

Over **470** Clubs across the country now offer women-only sessions.

Over **250** Female mountain bike leaders are now trained.
Increase female leadership throughout the governance of British Cycling
Narrowing the gender gap at the very top of the sport was seen as crucial in 2013, and that same view is held now. While there is still a way to go for us to go, we are currently at 27% of female representation on the board, with two female non-executive directors – Marian Lauder and Alex Russell – both appointed in 2014. In March 2017, British Cycling announced the appointment of Julie Harrington as its new chief executive officer. The chief executive also sits on the board.

In accordance with the government’s governance code for sport, British Cycling plans to change the way its board is recruited to encourage more women to apply for both elected and appointed positions. Through the governance code of sport, we will be adopting a target of a minimum of 30% of each gender on the board and greater diversity generally. British Cycling is also looking to use the valuable expertise of some of the best cyclists in the world with the appointment of a number of riders to positions within the organisation.

Four time downhill mountain bike world champion, Rachel Atherton, has joined British Cycling’s MTB Gravity Commission, the working group that acts as a sounding board for British Cycling’s policies on mountain biking. Females are now represented on all commissions.

After announcing her retirement, BMX and track cycling world champion Shanaze Reade was appointed as an ambassador for British Cycling with her role being focused on inspiring more women and girls to get involved in the sport, while double Olympic gold medallist Joanna Rowsell Shand has recently taken on the role of HSBC UK Breeze ambassador.
More women working, coaching and volunteering in the sport at all stages of the journey

In 2013, British Cycling identified that a key factor in closing cycling’s gender gap was to ensure that more women fulfil both voluntary and paid roles at all levels of the sport.

Although there is still work to be done, huge progress has been made in this area in the last four years.

Across our volunteer workforce, there are now over 2,000 trained volunteer Breeze Champions leading women-only rides throughout the country. That figure equates to over a 300% increase on the number of Breeze Champions trained when the strategy launched.

Elsewhere, the number of female mountain bike leaders has grown from 45 in 2013 to the current figure of over 250 (26% of the overall number) and the number of female ride leaders has grown by 135% – from 128 in 2013 to over 300.

Over the past three years, over 210 women have also trained as event officials – including roles such as commissaires and accredited marshals - conducting roles which ensure that competitive cycling events are safe and conducted in a fair manner – while 16% of our event organisers and a third of our cycle training instructors are female.

The number of female coaches trained by British Cycling has soared since 2013, increasing by 70%. More than 1,100 female coaches have been trained, with almost half of the total number having qualified within the last three years.

Currently, 20% of our overall coaching workforce is female. This is above the national average of 17% (source: Sport England) but is an area we’re determined to further improve.

In order to ensure this momentum continues and promising female coaches such as Jessie continue to flourish, British Cycling recently launched its Ignite Your Coaching programme, designed to establish solid support networks, and allow newer coaches to work collaboratively with experienced female mentors.

Another of the strategy’s initial aims in this area was to ensure that female representation was strong on our National Youth Forum, which was established to give young people the chance to turn ideas into opportunities and shape the future of cycling.

The Forum is made up of 12 proactive volunteers. Throughout the Forum’s first three years (2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16) at least 50% of these volunteers were female. In the most recent intake (2016/17) nine of the 12 positions are filled by females.

To continue to grow the number of females involved in supporting a range of cycling initiatives, we need to become better at communicating all the roles available to women and how we can engage and support them in their personal development across a range of coaching and volunteering opportunities.

As we look ahead to 2020, we not only want to continue to grow the representation by women across all roles but seek to diversify the background of our female coaches, volunteers, leaders, tutors, educators and administrators in cycling at all levels, to become more representative of communities as a whole.

One young coach who came through our volunteer and coaching pathway, Jessie Ansell, was shortlisted for the Heather Crouch Young Coach of the Year at the 2016 UK Coaching Awards.
Performance

More girls and young women engaged and supported through the rider pathway

There are now more opportunities than ever before for women to get involved in cycling. The ever increasing reach of the Go-Ride youth programme and the development of the competition pathway means that the entry point into the sport is much wider than ever before. This growth is also having a positive impact further up the rider pathway where the size and quality of the talent pool is improving.

Rider pathway – talent development
Future talent development activity will be closely aligned to the Go-Ride programme. There will be more opportunities than ever before for girls to get involved in Go-Ride from schools to clubs to competition across all disciplines. These opportunities will provide the first steps of the talent pathway where talented female riders will be identified and recruited into more formal talent related activity.

Female riders with talent potential will be invited to attend a range of regional and national girls-only talent development coaching sessions where they will receive high quality coaching as well as opportunities to access a range of off the bike educational workshops. This activity will enhance progression through learning and embedding the necessary tools and supporting the transition on to the Great Britain Cycling Team performance programme.

Rider pathway – performance
The Apprentice stage of the pathway is the first formal opportunity to work with Great Britain Cycling Team staff. Around 25 young women are provided with direct coaching support and a series of training days throughout the year.

The vast majority of the current cohort began cycling through British Cycling’s youth programme, Go-Ride, thus demonstrating how crucial this programme has been in developing the stars of the future.

The next rung on the pathway – the junior academy programme – currently has 17 female riders across the four squads. This is the highest it has been since the inception of a junior programme in 2005, and is testament to the work being done at youth levels. In past 12 months, we have also seen a junior female rider stand on the podium at every European Junior Championships in Olympic disciplines.

In relation to our senior academy, opportunities have further increased over the last two years. The women’s endurance group returned to Manchester in 2015, and the formation of Team Breeze – labelled by Sports Minister Tracey Crouch as “another exciting development for women’s cycling” – has given female academy endurance riders the opportunity to compete more on both the road and track, supporting their development into potential Olympians of the future. The establishment of a second European training base last year in Belgium has also significantly widened the racing opportunities available to women’s senior academy riders.

Elite success
A huge part of British Cycling’s success as an organisation over the last decade has been about harnessing the inspiration provided by the success of Great Britain Cycling Team athletes at major events and then providing the opportunities for people inspired by their success to get involved in the sport.
British women have won 10 Olympic and Paralympic titles and over 20 elite world titles since the women’s strategy was launched.

Since 2013, the Great Britain Cycling Team has continued to achieve unprecedented success, with world champions crowned across the cycling disciplines and Great Britain topping the cycling medal tables at both the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio in 2016.

The emergence of new female role models and the continued longevity of established riders cannot fail to inspire:

- At just 24 years old, Laura Kenny became Britain’s most successful female Olympian with her two gold medals (her third and fourth Olympic titles overall) in Rio. Since March 2013, Kenny has also added three world titles and seven European gold medals to her impressive palmares.

- Dame Sarah Storey also had a record-breaking Rio, as she added a further three Paralympic gold medals to her overall tally, making her Britain’s most successful female Paralympian of all time. At the age of 39, Storey continues to excel, and has won a further nine world titles since British Cycling’s #WeRide strategy was launched.

- Lizzie Deignan has also made British cycling history since 2013, becoming the fourth British woman to be crowned road world champion following her victory in Richmond in 2015.

- In 2016 Evie Richards won the under 23 world title at the UCI Cyclo-cross World Championships. A bronze medal winner in the same event in 2017, as well as a silver medallist at the 2015 UCI Mountain Bike World Championships, Richards is one of the most promising young riders on the Great Britain Cycling Team.

In all, British women have won 10 Olympic and Paralympic titles and over 20 elite world titles since the women’s strategy was launched.

Increasing the talent pool
There is little doubt that the growth in women’s participation through recreation and sport has resulted in a much broader and deeper talent pool. This in turn means that higher quality athletes are moving through the pathway, creating a more competitive environment for Great Britain Cycling Team programme selection.

- There are not many athletes who could ever claim to have achieved a ‘perfect’ year, but British mountain biker Rachel Atherton is one who can. In 2016, Atherton won every single round of the UCI Downhill Mountain Bike World Cup series, as well as the world championship title for the fourth time in her illustrious career.

- Achieving something that no Briton had done for over 30 years, Kadeena Cox also had a 2016 to remember. In winning Paralympic gold medals in both cycling and athletics, Cox became the first British athlete since Isobel Barr in 1984 to win titles in two sports at the same Games, a feat made even more remarkable by the fact that Cox suffered a stroke and a subsequent multiple sclerosis diagnosis just two years before the Rio Paralympics.
More women feeling confident and comfortable on the road
British Cycling is continuously working to create better conditions for people to cycle. Our priorities are campaigning for better places to cycle delivered through smarter investment and stronger leadership to both improve the experience of existing cyclists and encourage more people to commute or get around on two wheels.

This work is vital if we want to get more people cycling who better represent the population as a whole. Research clearly shows that the main barrier preventing people from cycling regularly is fears around safety on the road – and this is a bigger barrier to women than men.

Our campaigning work is centred on the aim of turning Britain into a true cycling nation, and for this to happen, cycling needs to be viewed as a safe and convenient mode of transport. Our lobbying of politicians has paid dividends. In 2013, then-prime minister David Cameron used a British Cycling event to announce a major policy commitment to ‘cycle-proof’ Britain’s roads, aiming to start a ‘cycling revolution’ with the single largest investment in cycling infrastructure.
We – along with other cycling organisations – successfully pushed for legislation setting out the first ever legal requirement for the government to produce a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

However, British Cycling’s target of £10 investment per head per year has only been met in a handful of cities – not the whole country. As an attempt to further instil in government the need to hit this relatively modest target, British Cycling took the then-transport minister, Robert Goodwill, to Copenhagen – a shining example of a cycle-friendly major European city – in 2015.

The message is slowly getting through. While the majority of our streets still don’t resemble Copenhagen, London has undergone a transformation with the recent introduction of cycle superhighways, and more segregated cycle lanes are being developed in cities across the country. Cambridge has shown what is possible when a city fully embraces cycling as a mode of transport.

British Cycling has actively encouraged other cities and political leaders to follow London’s example, and ahead of the mayoral election to replace Boris Johnson, we met with the four major candidates to establish their thoughts on how to continue to encourage cycling in London.

The eventual winner, Sadiq Khan, told British Cycling policy adviser Chris Boardman that he would increase the proportion of Transport for London spending on cycling. We have now seen new metro-mayors in Birmingham and Greater Manchester commit to putting cycling at the heart of their transport strategies.

One of our women’s strategy targets was to put women at the heart of our campaigning. This took a step forward in 2016 when we brought Dame Sarah Storey on board as our policy advocate.

Dame Sarah, Britain’s most successful female Paralympian, will continue to work alongside Chris Boardman to ensure that cycling gets adequate investment and political attention in the future, thereby encouraging more women to get on their bikes. A positive figure to build on is the fact that the amount of female ride members (the membership package designed for commuters) has more than doubled since the strategy launched, going from 4,750 to over 11,000.

Research clearly shows that the main barrier preventing people from cycling regularly is fears around safety on the road – and this is a bigger barrier to women than men.
It's incredibly heartening to read about all the progress that has been made since the launch of British Cycling’s women’s strategy in March 2013.

The goal to get one million more women cycling by 2020 was an ambitious one, but that’s what British Cycling has always been about: setting ambitious targets and achieving them.

Like British Cycling, I am passionate about getting more women riding bikes, as cycling has enhanced my life in so many ways. I’ve won multiple medals at Paralympic Games and world championships, but fundamentally, I just enjoy riding my bike, whether that is training hard for a major event or just heading out into the country lanes.

The news that 723,000 more women have been inspired to cycle in the last four years is fantastic and leaves British Cycling well on course to hit the one million target by 2020.

We know that there is so much more work that can be done. Research shows that one of the main barriers preventing women from cycling is that they don’t feel safe on the roads. As British Cycling’s policy advocate, my role is to work alongside the campaigns team to highlight potential improvements and push for greater investment and strong political leadership around cycling infrastructure.

In order to encourage more people to get on their bikes, it is crucial that politicians and decision makers take on board safety concerns, and ensure that our roads are appealing, safe, shared spaces which can be used conveniently by all road users, regardless of their chosen method of transport.

We will continue to promote this message at every opportunity. This work will not only result in more women getting into cycling, but could transform our nation into a healthier, greener, happier place – something we can all get behind.

Dame Sarah Storey
Policy advocate
British Cycling
“This work will not only result in more women getting into cycling, but could transform our nation into a healthier, greener, happier place – something we can all get behind.”

Dame Sarah Storey