



Cyclists call for protection

BEN JONES, South
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A South West cycling group has echoed calls by Bicycling WA for more legal protection for cyclists on the road.

A survey by Bicycling WA found 94 per cent of the 639 cyclists surveyed supported calls for the introduction of safe-passing laws which would require other road users to pass bicycles by more than one metre.

South West Cycle Club president Jo Moore said she supported any campaign which would raise awareness of the issue after a close friend was killed while riding on the Coalfields Highway in 2010.

However Ms Moore admitted any legislation on the issue would be hard to police and cause problems on narrow roads.

"Look at the Back Beach in Bunbury, there's no way anybody could legally pass on that road," she said.

"It's a mistake which has been made there, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that there's always going to be cyclists riding on that road."

Narrow roads were listed as a concern of the survey's respondents as well as roundabouts, chicanes and other traffic calming methods where roads narrowed to create squeeze points.

BicyclingWA chief executive Jeremy Murray said 76 per cent of respondents were confident in their own ability to ride on roads but were less confident with the actions of motorists.

Ms Moore said the club aimed for mutual respect between cyclists and other road users.

"We try and ride single file where appropriate and wherever we're possibly holding people up," she said.

"There will always be a degree of conflict between road users but it's about being able to put yourself in each others shoes, nobody's perfect but we can all try to be better."

The sport has grown in recent years and Ms Moore said the club had increased from 80 to 300 members in the past five years which meant there were more bikes on the road than ever.

South West Traffic Division Sen. Sgt Gerard Murphy said despite some common misconceptions it was legal for cyclists to ride two-abreast on roads however all road users needed to exercise common sense.

Sen. Sgt Murphy said it was illegal for bikes to be ridden on footpaths unless it was a dual lane path such as along Ocean Drive.

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