

London cyclists feel paranoid road users are out to get them

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A recent study published by researchers from Royal Holloway University of London and King's College London, has found that cyclists in the Capital feel paranoid that other drivers are out to get them when they are on the roads.

Dr. Lyn Ellett and Dr. Jess Kingston, from the Department of Psychology at Royal Holloway, and Prof Paul Chadwick from King's College London, surveyed more than 320 people who regularly cycle in the Capital, and asked them how paranoid they were about other [road users](#) during a typical [journey](#).

More than 70% of those who took part in the survey reported experiencing paranoia when [cycling](#) in London, thinking that other road users were hostile, wanted to deliberately cause them harm, and had it in for them.

This experience of paranoia while cycling was short-lived, and equally likely to occur in people who experienced both high and low levels of paranoia in other aspects of their lives.

When those who took part in the study explained how they felt on their bike journeys, one said 'I honestly view every driver as if he's trying to kill me.'

Dr. Ellett from Royal Holloway said: "We wanted to see how cyclists felt and how they reacted on their journeys in London. We found that paranoia towards other drivers is common when cycling in London, which we view as a normal and understandable response to an [urban environment](#) containing significant and very real threat.

"Normalising the experience of paranoia when cycling is vital, as tragically, we know the risk of harm by others is all too real when cycling in London. We frame [paranoia](#) in this context as a normal and understandable response to a high threat urban environment.

"Our research reinforces and adds a further dimension to the pressing public health need to focus on and protect urban cyclists."

More information: Lyn Ellett et al. State paranoia and urban cycling, *Psychiatry Research* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2018.03.035](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2018.03.035)

Provided by Royal Holloway, University of London

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