

Complete the sentences with an appropriate comparative or superlative form of the adjective in brackets.

1 Redbacks are among _____ spiders in this part of the country. Unfortunately, they're also the _____ (**common, venomous**)

2 The road seemed to be getting _____ as we drove _____ into the forest. (**narrow, deep**)

3 I know coffee isn't good for me, and certainly _____ than tea, but I'm at my _____ early in the morning after a couple of cups of coffee, and I would find it difficult to give it up. (**harmful, alert**)

4 It was the _____ I had ever come to a fully grown elephant, and I was terrified. But even then I realised that I was in the presence of one of the _____ creatures on earth. (**close, magnificent**)

5 The head of Presto Stores argued that without supermarkets to provide cheap and fresh food, we would all be _____ and _____. (**poor, unhealthy**)

6 When Emily saw Liam at the party, she thought he was the _____ man she had ever seen and went over to speak to him. But she soon realised that he was _____ with looking good than talking to her. (**handsome, concern**)

7 I couldn't have been _____ when Professor Park agreed to meet me to discuss my research. He's one of the _____ scientists in his field. But I was _____ than angry when he phoned to say that he couldn't meet me after all. I realise that he's a very busy man. (**thrilled, respected, sad**)

Read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line.

Cycling is good news - so what's stopping us?

The government's recent campaign, providing _____ **ENCOURAGE**
to leave our cars at home and get on our bikes, has been
_____ to some extent, with a slight increase in **SUCCESS**
the numbers cycling to work. We all now know that cycling is
_____ cyclists have fewer health problems than **BENEFIT**
non-cyclists, they have higher levels of _____ and **FIT**
they don't damage the environment.

But we won't become a nation of cyclists until we _____ **COME**
two major barriers. First, exhaust fumes in _____ **HEAVY**
congested streets can be as _____ to the lungs as **HARM**
cigarette smoke. So there must be a greater _____ of **SEPARATE**
cars and bikes in towns. Perhaps more importantly, town planners must
_____ that destinations for daily needs, such as schools, **SURE**
work and shopping, are within convenient cycling distance from home.

You are going to read a newspaper article about the writer's experience as a cyclist. For questions 1 — 6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

My life as a human speed bump

Giving up a car has not been quite the liberating experience that George Monbiot had hoped.

Seventeen years after giving up my car, I still feel like a second-class citizen. I am trying to do the right thing, but the United Kingdom just isn't run for people like me. Take our bus services. My home city, Oxford, has invested massively in a park-and-ride scheme: buses carry people into the centre from car parks on the outskirts. At first I thought this was a great idea. Now, having stood for what must amount to weeks at bus stops, watching the full double deckers go by every couple of minutes without stopping, I realise it's not just the roads which have been taken over by drivers, but also the public transport system.

Or take the bike lanes. Most consist of lines painted on the road where it is wide and safe, which disappear as soon as it becomes narrow and dangerous. One of them, in Oxford, has been surfaced with small stones, which shows that the people who designed them have never ridden a bicycle. When we asked for a bike lane on one of the city's busiest streets, the council chose instead to narrow the street and widen the pavements, in the hope that the bicycles would slow down the cars. The cyclists, reluctant to become human speed bumps, started travelling down the pavement.

Now there is almost nowhere reserved for people like me. Out of political cowardice, councils and the police have given up enforcing the law. Preventing people from parking on the pavement would mean cutting the number of parking places, as the streets are otherwise too narrow. In one part of Oxford they have solved the problem by painting parking places on the pavement. Since my daughter was born, and I have started pushing a pram, I have been forced to walk in the middle of the road. In one respect this makes sense: the pavements are so badly

maintained that she will only sleep when she's being pushed down the smooth grey carpet laid out for the cars.

My problem is that by seeking to reduce my impact on the planet, I joined a political minority that is diminishing every year. As car ownership increases, its only remaining members are a handful of strange people like me, the very poor and those not qualified to drive. None of these groups have political power. Our

demands run counter to the usual wish to be successful, and have a better home, job and car, and are therefore of little interest to either politicians or the media.

Now, to my horror, I find I am beginning to question even the environmental impact of my 17 years of moderation. It is true that my own carbon emissions have been reduced. It is also true that if everyone did the same thing the total saving would be enormous. The problem is that, in the absence of regulation, traffic expands to fill the available space. By refusing to own a car I have merely opened up mad space for other people, who tend to drive more fuel-hungry models than I would have chosen. We can do little to reduce our impacts on the environment if the government won't support us.

There are some compensations, however. About three or four times a year I hire a car. When I stop at motorway service stations, I am struck by the staggering levels of obesity: it appears to be far more prevalent there than on trains or coaches. People who take public transport must at least walk to the bus stop. The cyclists among us keep fit without even noticing.

Being without a car in Oxford has forced me to become more engaged with my home town. It throws me into contact with far more people than I would otherwise encounter. There are a couple of routes which make cycling a real pleasure: the footpath along the River Thames, for example, takes me most of the way to the station. But overall, as far as self-interest is concerned, I would struggle to claim that giving up my car was a wholly positive decision.

1 In the first paragraph, the writer says his view of the Oxford park-and-ride scheme is that

- A it has actually encouraged people to drive into town.
- B it has been an unqualified success.
- C it has had insufficient funding.
- D its popularity has become problematic.

2 The writer thinks that cyclists started travelling down the pavement in one of Oxford's busiest streets because

- A the council put in a speed restriction measure.
- B the pavement is *very* wide.
- C there is no bike lane.
- D in the bike lane cyclists are too close to cars.

3 In the third paragraph, the writer says he believes that Oxford city council has shown 'political cowardice' because it

- A is reluctant to stop cars being left in pedestrian areas.
- B doesn't want cyclists on the city's roads.
- C has narrowed some roads to discourage cyclists from using them.
- D is unwilling to improve the standard of pavements.

4 In the fifth paragraph, the writer suggests that the effect of his actions has been to

- A discourage the government from giving support.
- B lower maintenance standards for pavements.
- C create more room on the road for other cars.
- D encourage others to drive bigger cars.

5 The writer's observations at motorway service stations suggest to him that

- A car drivers are more overweight than public transport users.
- B people who own cars are thinner than people who hire them.
- C people who use public transport don't get enough exercise.
- D cyclists ride bikes in order to keep fit.

6 According to the writer, being without a car in Oxford

- A has been a completely positive experience.
- B has increased the number of acquaintances he has made.
- C has made him stay at home more.
- D has been a complete mistake.