

FREE / SPRING 2012 / ISSUE 03

Cycling Scotland

SPIN

CYCLING IN SCOTLAND
spring_2012

COMMUTER SPECIAL

EVERYTHING YOU NEED
TO KNOW ABOUT
CYCLING TO WORK

KIT REVIEW

TOP COMMUTER
BIKES UNDER £500

CYCLE INSURANCE

DO YOU NEED IT?

COMMUTER COURSE

BOOST YOUR
CONFIDENCE
WITH TRAINING





SCOTTISH BIKE SHOW RETURNS AND ADDS SPORTIVE RIDE

AFTER BURSTING ON TO THE SCENE WITH SUCH APLOMB LAST APRIL, THE SCOTTISH BIKE SHOW ALREADY FEELS LIKE A REGULAR FIXTURE ON THE ANNUAL EVENT CALENDAR, DESPITE ONLY ENTERING ITS SOPHOMORE YEAR.

Buoyed along by the success of packing over 5500 people through the doors of the Glasgow SECC last year, the show returns in 2012 with an extra day added and with a sportive ride around Loch Lomond thrown in for good measure.

With an expanded number of independent bike shops, distributors and manufacturers selling a huge range of the latest bikes, cycle gear, clothing and accessories; a central arena hosting cycle stunt displays, have a go bike test sessions and Scotland's cycling organisations offering expert advice, the show promises to have something for everyone.

The Scottish Bike Show Sportive will have two routes through the stunning countryside surrounding the Loch Lomond National Park on Sunday 15 April, taking riders up around Loch Katrine.



Rowan Mackie, TSBS Event Director from Magdala Media, said:

'We are very excited about the new Scottish Bike Show Sportive.

We are really excited about the prospect of showcasing the beautiful scenery around Loch Lomond for both rides.'

REGISTER NOW

Tickets prices for next year's Scottish Bike Show remain at the 2011 prices - £7.50 adults, £5.50 kids and £20 for a family ticket (2 adults, 2 kids) if you book online in advance. Tickets on the door cost £10.00 for adults, £7.50 for kids and £27.00 for a family ticket. Cycling Scotland will be at the show again this year so make sure you visit our stand for a chance to win some exclusive prizes.

Registration for the Sportive is now open – head to www.thescottishbikeshow.com

SUMMER OF CYCLING

SUMMER MIGHT STILL SEEM A LONG, LONG WAY AWAY, BUT IT PROMISES TO BE A CRACKING ONE FOR BRITAIN'S CYCLISTS AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE LONDON OLYMPICS; NEARLY TWO DOZEN CYCLING ORGANISATIONS HAVE JOINED FORCES TO LAUNCH A SUMMER OF CYCLING FOR 2012 AND BEYOND, WHICH PROMISES TO BE A CELEBRATION OF EVERY FACET OF CYCLING, FROM THE VELODROME TO THE CYCLE PATH TO THE BIKE SHOP.

The initiative was born in a meeting at the House of Commons in November hosted by the cross-party All Parliamentary Cycling Group, which wanted to encourage a campaign to promote cycling during the Olympic year.

Getting behind the initiative are a wide range of businesses and organisations, ranging from retailers like Halfords and Brompton alongside cycling organisations including British Cycling, CTC, Sustrans, the London Cycling Campaign, Cycling Scotland, the Bicycle Association, Bike Week, Transport for London, the Association of Cycle Traders, the Tour of Britain, Cyclenation, and the Cycle to Work Alliance.

The idea is to promote all cycling events and initiatives under one national banner across the UK, using the promotional might of multiple partners to take all cycling opportunities collectively to as wide an audience as possible. The idea is similar to the way events are grouped together to great effect for Bike Week, only this campaign looks set to last all summer long.

Phillip Darnton, former chairman of Cycling England and now vice president

of the Bicycle Association, commented: "2012 ought to be the year we sell more bikes than ever before. It ought to be the year more kids get cycle trained than ever before. More children should be cycling to school than ever before. And after the Olympics, more people than ever before should be lining the roads to watch the Tour of Britain."

It's not just organisations and businesses that can help make the Summer of Cycling a success, either; individuals also have a role to play. The partners behind the initiative are hoping people attending any Summer of Cycling activity will get behind the +1 concept, whereby bringing one friend will double the amount of cycling activity happening.

Keep up to date with progress at www.summerofcycling.net

**INTRODUCTION
FROM THE EDITOR**



Welcome to the third issue of SPIN Magazine, the only publication dedicated to bringing you the latest news about what's going on with cycling in Scotland.

As we are now slowly emerging from the depths of winter, it's the perfect time to start thinking about cycling to work. A few of you may have intrepidly continued to cycle throughout the winter (hats off to you), but in all likelihood the gale force winds and incessant rain have probably seen most bikes confined to the shed since the start of November.

So, with the worst of the dark and dreary mornings behind us, this issue is a Cycle to Work Special, with a range of features and articles hand-picked to inspire and inform you about commuting by bike.

We'll be debunking the myths about the cycle to work scheme, looking at how cycle commuter training can give you the confidence to cycle in traffic and we'll be talking to real-life cycle commuters to get their tips. We also review the best commuter bikes for under £500, weigh up the pros and cons of bike insurance and tell you how to get your boss to make your office more bike friendly.

Trust me, if this magazine doesn't inspire you to start cycling to work, nothing will. Well, except maybe the soaring costs of rail travel or petrol, traffic jams, road rage...

ANDREW PANKHURST
Cycling Scotland

COMMUTER CONFIDENCE

A CRASH COURSE

Imagine you grew up on a farm. You've been driving around on your own land since you were 12, you can drive a tractor, you passed your test first time and know the country roads like the back of your hand. You're about as comfortable behind the wheel as it's possible to be. The odds are that, in spite of all that experience and knowledge, trying to negotiate Glasgow city centre's one way system for the first time by car would still see you fill the swear box faster than Gordon Ramsay...

...THIS IS THE ISSUE faced by many people who thought they were confident cyclists when they first attempt the commute into work on their bikes. Those attracted to the idea by the enjoyment they experienced zipping leisurely around their local area on quiet roads and paths can find the experience of heading through Scotland's towns and cities at rush hour frightening, frustrating and maddening.

While some of this is down to inconsiderate behaviour from a minority of drivers, most of the problems stem from a lack of confidence about cycling in busy traffic. The environment of a busy



road can leave cyclists feeling pretty isolated and vulnerable. Training is one of the best ways to overcome this lack of confidence, and Cycling Scotland has developed a commuter course that aims to transform you into a paragon of active urban mobility in just 8 short hours.

SPIN caught up with **Lorraine Watson** from Aberdeen beauty salon Hat Stand Nelly, who booked a course for herself and a team of workmates, to see how they found the commuter course, and if it helped them to cycle around Aberdeen's busy streets with more swagger.



Top tips

We asked the course tutor for his top tips for cycling commuting:



1. Always look over your shoulder and make eye contact with other road/path users before changing your position
2. Keep your signals clear and confident, practice when you are on a quieter road/path
3. Try to maintain an assertive road position - don't skulk away by the kerb. Staying in the middle of the lane helps you see and be seen.
4. Don't filter down the side of large vehicles such as buses or trucks at junctions, Lots of accidents are caused this way as drivers turning left can't see cyclists.
5. Be courteous to other road users and pedestrians (follow the rules of the road - do to others what you would have done to you!) If someone slows down to let you out, say thanks by giving them a thumbs up

SPIN: What made you sign up for the commuter course?

Lorraine: After starting the cycle to work scheme I found information on the courses available on Cycling Scotland's website. Only a few of my team had taken advantage of the scheme and the results were amazing - happier, healthier people! I wanted to encourage more of my team to embrace the cycle to work scheme but some had expressed a fear of cycling in the city. I thought the commuter course may help them overcome it.

What was the group make-up like?

The group who got involved were all women, a mixture of ages from 24 - 44. Experience went from complete beginners to regular tourers.

What are the key things it taught you?

The people who don't cycle said they would be happy to cycle in town now, and those of us who do cycle on a regular basis felt more confident in claiming the road as well as changing



a tyre - the roadside repair part of the course is fantastic!

Did it change your perception of cycling in traffic?

Yes. Instead of trying to keep out of the way (to our detriment!) we are now bolder and get around more confidently.

Would you recommend the course to someone else?

Definitely. This is a brilliant confidence

builder, not just in terms of city cycling, but also for those who'd like a bit of help with roadside repairs. It's taken the fear of getting a puncture away for me. Alex, our trainer, was very good at delivering just what we needed. Because the groups are small the training can be specific for your team or group.

To book a commuter course call **Chris Johnson** at Cycling Scotland on **0141 229 5350**. Courses can be delivered anywhere in Scotland to groups of 6 and over. The course takes 8 hours in total - this can be delivered in one go or over several sessions.



CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Not all government schemes set the world alight (you never hear people reminiscing fondly about the poll tax for example), but amongst cyclists at least, one innovation from our right honourable friends that is widely regarded as a great thing is the Cycle-to-Work Scheme.



Image: Sustrans

Basically a way of buying a bike tax free in monthly instalments from your pay packet, the Cycle-to-Work scheme is the most cost effective way of buying a bike, and it avoids all that tiresome saving up to boot.

The only problem with it is that it can seem a bit head-scratchingly complicated, especially as the rules around it seem to keep changing. So, we asked travel planning expert Matt McDonald, from the Bike Station's A Better Way to Work programme, to clear it all up once and for all:

SPIN: *Matt, how exactly does the cycle-to-work scheme work?*

Matt: Well, put simply the scheme works by enabling employees to buy a new bike, pay it up over a period of 12 to 36 months and make significant savings. Put less simply it works like this:

An employer offering the Cycle to Work Scheme purchases a bike chosen by the employee;

The employer then rents the bike to that employee over a period of 12 to 36 months

Payments are taken from the employee's pay before tax and National Insurance are deducted (which is where the savings come in!)

At the end of the rental period the employee is given the option to buy that bike for considerably less than the bike was bought for

How much money could it save you on the cost of a bike?

Well, it depends on how much tax and National Insurance you pay but on average you'll save around 31%. This means that if you buy a £400 bike you would save £124!

Does it only apply to bikes or can you buy gear as well?

You can also buy gear as well, the government guidelines state that cyclists' safety equipment is included and "a common sense approach" should be used when deciding what can be included. So it is perfectly acceptable to buy cycle clothing, lights, helmets, reflective gear, panniers, child seats, bells, locks, and the list goes on...



Image: Sustrans

What are the potential drawbacks?

There aren't many but from an employer's perspective there might be a little time involved in setting up the scheme but this small investment should be offset by the savings that can be made on the employer's National Insurance contributions.

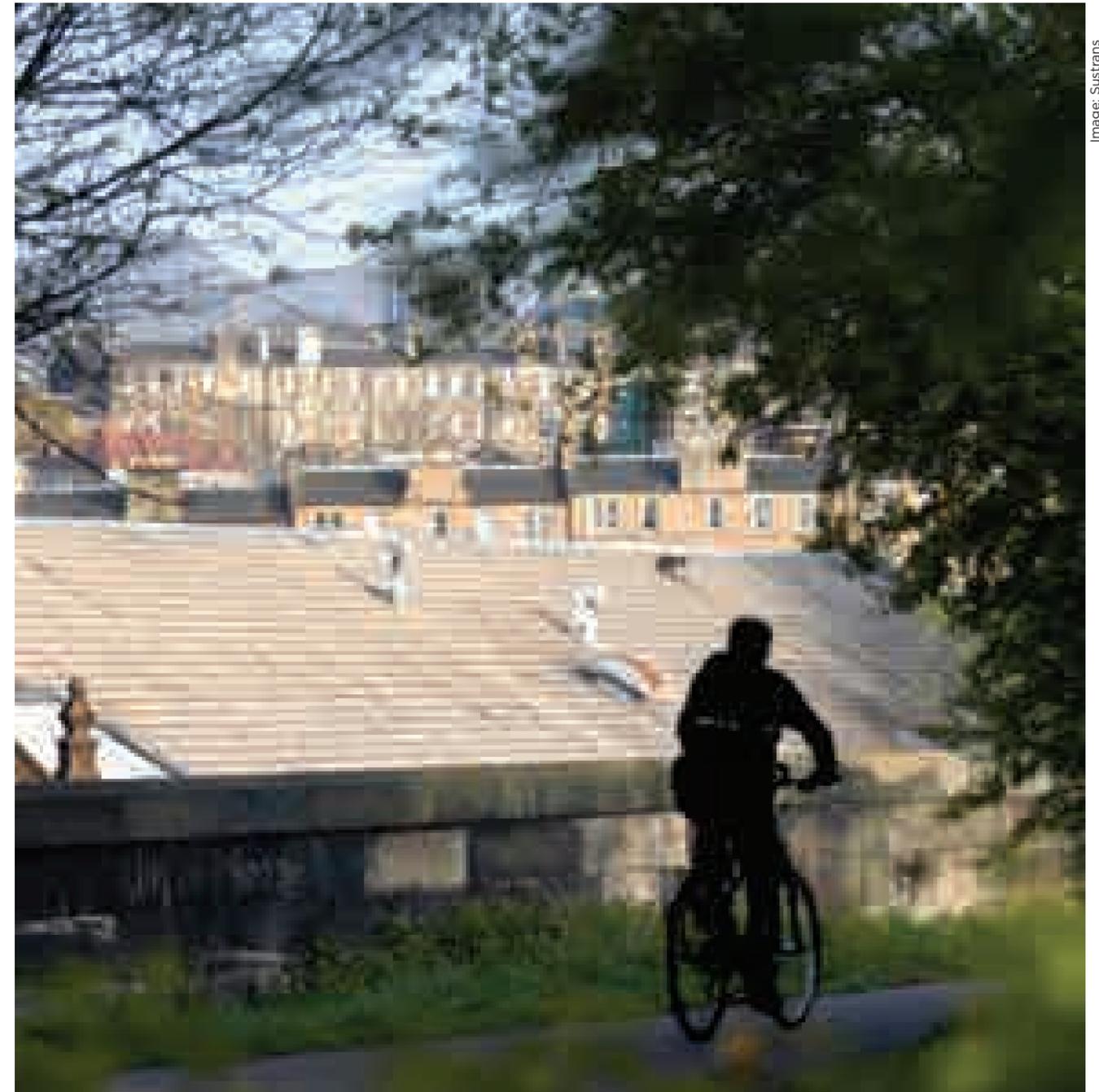


Image: Sustrans

Is there one provider, or can you choose from several?

There are many Employee Benefits Providers and there are also a few large bike shops that offer their own schemes. The large EBPs always make money so you should speak to a few before deciding on one if that is how you would like to run your scheme. Bike shops tend not to charge the employer at all and are a good option, the only limitation is that bikes can only be bought from that retailer. Remember though, an employer can run their own scheme using the HMRC guidelines and DfT advice.

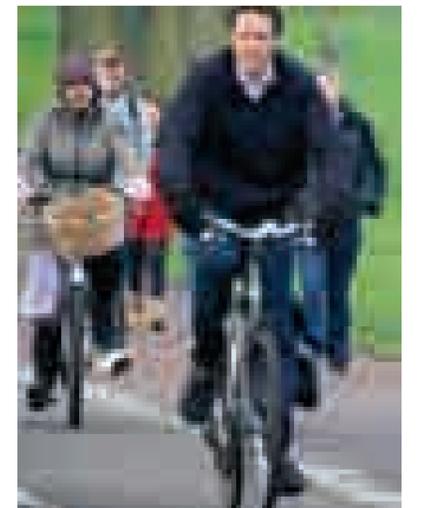
How do I get my work to participate?

Speak to your HR department or your finance department as both will probably

be involved in setting up the scheme and tell them about the benefits. Not only can the scheme save an employer money, it can boost productivity as employees that cycle regularly take less sick days! Then let them know it's actually easy to set up.

Some workplaces won't run the scheme because it has a reputation for being a hassle to administer. What's the best advice you can give to someone struggling to get their employer on board?

My advice would be to go with the easiest option which is to go to a third party such as Cyclescheme. They will provide all documentation and guide you through the simple process of starting your own Cycle to Work Scheme.



FRESHNLO

PEDAL FOR SCOTLAND

CORPORATE CHALLENGE

IF YOU LOVE RIDING YOUR BIKE TO WORK BUT GET A BIT FED UP OF BEING SEEN AS WEIRD OR DIFFERENT BECAUSE OF IT, MAYBE IT'S TIME TO START TURNING OTHER PEOPLE ON TO THE BENEFITS YOU'RE ALREADY REAPING.

One of the best ways to bring your colleagues around to getting on their bikes is to round up a team for freshnlo Pedal for Scotland. Work-based bonding and team building experiences are often centred around an activity which is a challenge and something a bit different, so the annual Glasgow to Edinburgh ride is an ideal way to engage non-cyclists in a bit of 2 wheeled action.

The event takes place in September, so no matter how out of practice you are on a bike, you've got the whole summer to get back in shape. The event is famous for looking after

riders, with free food and drink across the route and the option of transport for cyclists and their bikes back home again, but there's now an additional offer especially for corporate teams to make the day even better.

The corporate challenge offers a priority mechanic service at the start to put paid to any annoying technical hassles on route, a priority lunch service to beat the queues at Linlithgow Palace, a barbeque for staff at the finish and branding for the employer so everyone can see what a friendly and active place it must be to work in.



THE CHALLENGE PROVED TO BE A ROARING SUCCESS IN 2011, WITH TEAMS FROM HSBC, SCOTTISH GAS, MARRIOTT HOTELS, PORSCHE, LOTHIAN BUSES AND THE NHS TAKING PART AMONGST MANY OTHERS. WE ASKED A FEW OF THE TEAMS HOW THEY FOUND THEIR DAY:

7 OF US TOOK part from HSBC, as lots of members of staff cycle to work regularly and participate in various challenges. Personally, I only began cycling again last year after a break of over 22 years and bought a bike via the Cycle to Work Scheme. I wanted to participate in Pedal for Scotland to enhance my cycling experience and for the fitness challenge.

It was my first time participating in this type of event and I really enjoyed the experience especially

the sense of achievement when I completed it. There was a real camaraderie, cycling along with others at the same fitness level. The scenery was lovely too. I am hoping to participate again in 2012 and would definitely recommend it to others.

Helen Burns - Relationship Manager at HSBC

OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE in 2010 to enter the event as a company was to raise money for Maggie's Cancer Care. I really enjoy cycling and cycle to work every day. We currently have approximately between 7-10% of employees cycling to work, depending on the weather.

We hope to enter the event again in September and get more people participating. The event is very much a family day out, with people at all levels participating. It is very well organised and enjoyable.

Jackie Gates - Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa, Edinburgh

IT WAS, OVERALL, a fantastic event. The challenge of the ride really gave us all a sense of accomplishment, the event was so well organised that there wasn't a fear of struggling to find help in case of trouble, and the corporate team benefits gave that little bit of extra help in keeping us all motivated.

Personally, food is a good motivator so I really appreciated the supplies at the rest areas, and I especially appreciated the corporate lunch and BBQ tents that the corporate challenge organisers provided.

Matt Sanders - Queen Margaret University



IN BRIEF

Scotland's biggest bike ride

Glasgow to Edinburgh

Choose 47 mile Challenge Ride

Or 100+ mile Sportive Ride

Shorter family-friendly rides to be announced soon

Free food and drink across the route

Official charity partner is Maggie's

Registration for freshnlo Pedal for Scotland is now open at pedalforscotland.org



60 SECOND
INTERVIEW

Helen Darvill on her regular commute to work

In keeping with this issue's theme, for the 60 second interview we talk to a regular cycle commuter to find out what makes them a committed active traveller. Spin sat down with regular cyclist Helen Darvill, who commutes between Dunblane and Stirling to her job at Keep Scotland Beautiful.

SPIN: So Helen, what first inspired you to cycle to work?

Helen: I was a (poor) student studying sustainable development so it was important to me to practice what I preached.

What's the best thing about it?

Lots of things! The fresh air, the exercise, the extra cake you can eat, the money saved and the knowledge that you've helped the environment.

OK, what's the worst thing about it?

Bike maintenance!! I try really hard but I'm rubbish at it. I think people expect you to say the worst thing is the weather, but sometimes the rainy days are the best.

What's your commute like?

My journey is about 6 miles so it takes about the same time to cycle as it does to drive or get the train. I cycle on the roads in the winter but I'm lucky enough to have an off-road route in the summer.

How do you get on with other road users?

I've got lots of people that I wave to every morning. A few car drivers get a bit too close, especially when they've just come off the motorway and they've been used to travelling fast.

What kind of bike do you ride?

I've got a Giant mountain bike for bad weather days and a shiny new Specialized road bike for the summer (which I love).

Are the facilities at your work any good for cyclists?

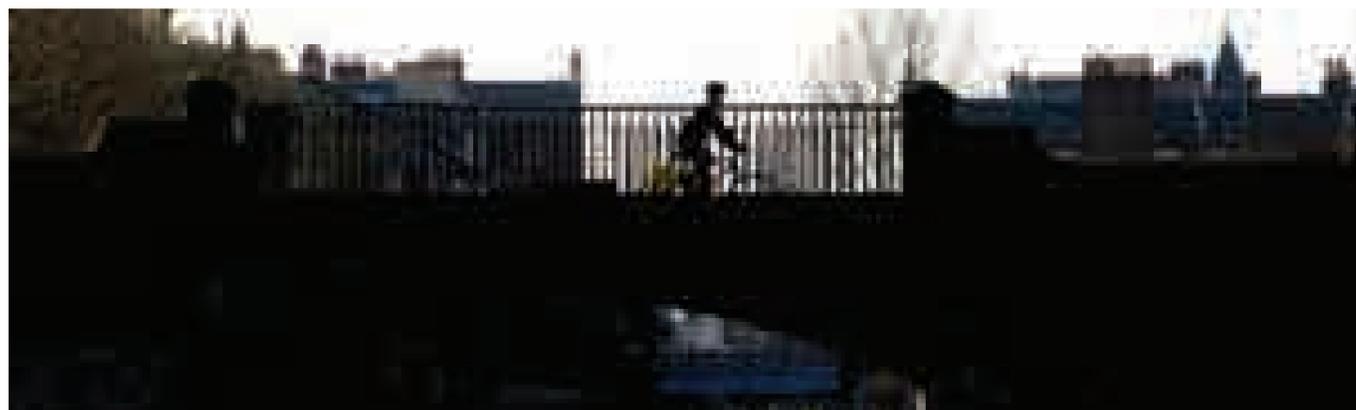
They're what you make them. We don't have showers but it's amazing what you can achieve with a packet of baby wipes and hot brush and everyone is used to me sitting at my desk with my cornflakes.

Is there a cycle culture at your office or are you blazing a trail?

There's probably about 10 of us who cycle regularly. I'm helping to write our travel policy so hopefully that will help encourage more people to join us.

Lastly, what would you say to inspire someone considering cycling to work?

Don't be afraid to have a go, it's so rewarding! Pick your route carefully and make sure your bike is set up for you - it makes it much easier.



DO I NEED CYCLE INSURANCE?



ARE YOU PAYING TOO MUCH FOR YOUR CYCLE INSURANCE?

Probably not actually, as many people don't have any. Whilst car drivers are breaking the law by getting behind the wheel without insurance, for cyclists insurance is seen as more of an optional extra. So why bother?

Cycling Scotland's CHRIS JOHNSON explores the pros and cons of third-party insurance for cyclists...

AS SOON AS I joined my local cycling club I was strongly encouraged to take out membership with either British Cycling or the CTC. This was for insurance, apparently. What a thirteen year old knows or cares about insurance I'll leave you to guess.



Fast forward a few years and I've been rather silly and found myself sitting beside a poor driver having entered his vehicle via the windshield. Hands up - he was at no fault but was now stuck a few miles from his home with a rather battered Nissan. Fortunately I walked away fine, just rather bruised. My shiny Italian racing cycle was written off to much expense, but all of a sudden I considered myself very fortunate that I had insurance. In this case my racing licence with British Cycling covered me for the not insubstantial damage to the driver's vehicle.

Now my story is quite unique, in that fortunately not everyone is reckless enough to bomb down single track roads with high hedges. However, I know of many other cyclists who have benefitted from having insurance for accidents involving no fault of their own.

There are many providers of insurance out there, but the appeal of CTC or BritishCycling membership remains for simplicity, value for money, and the knowledge you can rely on an expert team. Both organisations offer a great package, with quality cover for less than £40 per year.

The CTC is a UK cycling charity that promotes cycling and supports cyclists. All members are covered by £10m third party insurance and supported by the CTC's legal helpline team should you ever need it. Adult membership costs £39 per year with reduced rates for juniors, students, over 65's and family members. To find out more, visit www.ctc.org.uk.

British Cycling is the UK's governing body for sport. British Cycling offers a range of membership packages, including the popular Ride membership aimed at the recreational and commuter cyclist. Again, this comes with up to £10m third party insurance and access to free legal support, all for £24 a year. For more information visit www.scuonline.org

The insurance they offer covers you - not the bike, so it's akin to third party car insurance. It doesn't cover the bike for theft, so it's worth putting that on your home contents insurance.

With similar offers for insurance, choosing either British Cycling or CTC membership is a matter of preference. But when you weight up the benefits of third party cover against the cost, which is less than a pair of trainers, choosing whether or not to get insurance is simple.

KIT REVIEW

If you do decide to start commuting regularly, having a bike that's well suited to the daily journey to work could make all the difference to whether or not you enjoy the experience and stick with it. Unless you're travelling across open countryside, that mountain bike in the shed is probably not well suited to your route, and could make the journey far more difficult than it need be. SPIN dispatched Cycling Scotland's Isla Campbell to local bike emporium Evans Cycles at Braehead in Glasgow, to check out the best commuter bikes for less than a monkey.*

*That's £500 quid to anyone that doesn't speak cockney.

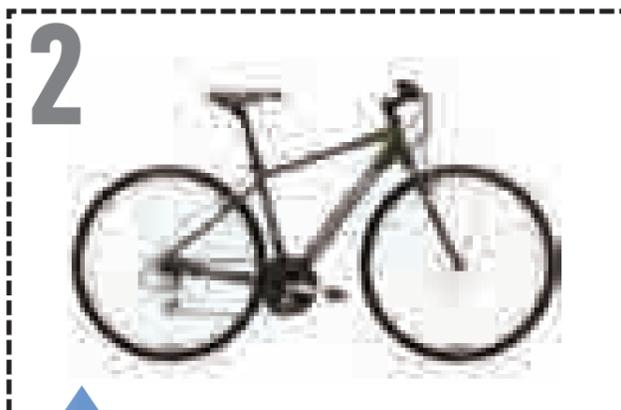


PINNACLE NEON 2

HYBRID £499

This is a fantastic bike for commuting - light, quick and looks great! Added to that, it has eyelets for mudguards and rear pannier racks, so is ideal for a fast commute into work. The bike is fitted with disc breaks, which ensures powerful, consistent braking in all weather conditions - great for those wet days!

ISLA'S COMMENTS: *Without a doubt, this was my favourite of the 5 bikes and the one I would choose as the overall winner. It would be a great commuting bike as it is light, fast and for its price has some good components.*



CANNONDALE CAN QUICK 5

HYBRID £350

This is a great entry bike - relaxed, upright, and not too heavy, making it an extremely comfortable ride. At £350 it is a bargain and great for someone new to cycle commuting. This bike comes fitted with wide 700c tyres, meaning it is suitable for use on well-packed trails, making it an extremely versatile bike.

ISLA'S COMMENTS: *I would consider this bike if I had some trail sections on my commute. It is a nice, comfortable bike and good value for money.*



SPECIALISED LANGSTER

SINGLE SPEED £400

This single speed/fixed gear bike is fast, beautifully simple, and incredibly easy to maintain. Its only downside is it doesn't have any eyelets for mudguards or pannier racks so is not everyone's first choice for commuting. The lack of gears also means this bike is better suited to the fitter cyclist or someone who has a relatively flat commute to work. However, if you don't mind the above you will not be disappointed with the Specialised Langster.

ISLA'S COMMENTS: *I loved this bike - it's really simple and very fast. However, I'm not sure it is the best choice for a commuting bike. Not having gears or the option to put on mudguards or pannier racks is a real disadvantage.*



DAHON VITESSE D7

FOLDING BIKE £474

This is one of the cheapest and most popular folding bikes on the market, and is extremely good value for money. This bike isn't as compact when folded down as some of the more expensive folding bikes but is still a great bike for trips that include a stretch by bus or train.

ISLA'S COMMENTS: *Despite being a popular bike I found it very heavy and awkward to carry when folded, which would put me off choosing it for a regular commute.*



DAWES DIPLOMA

CLASSIC WOMEN'S SPECIFIC BIKE £399

This is a classic, women's specific bike suited for short commutes around town. It comes fully fitted with front and rear mudguards, a chain-guard, pump, wicker basket and 26" wheels. The only downside with this bike is its quite heavy (steel frame) and because of the internal gear hub and chain guard it can be very awkward to change the rear tyre should you get a puncture.

ISLA'S COMMENTS: *This is a really cool looking bike, and I can see it appealing to the more fashion conscious cyclist. Personally I'm more concerned with the practicality, and for me the heavier weight of this would make it a bit of a slow ride for getting to work on time every day.*

OR... GET A BIKE FOR CONSIDERABLY LESS

Of course, times are a bit tough just now and you might really want to get into cycling but not have several hundred quid to splash out. Never fear, as bike recycling organisations seem to be springing up everywhere these days, taking in stray old bikes and finding them loving new homes and all for a very low price.

The main players just now are The Bike Station in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth (bikestation.org.uk), Common Wheel in Glasgow (commonwheel.org.uk) and Recyke-a-Bike in Stirling (recyke-a-bike.co.uk) or check places like ebay and Gumtree to find a bargain.

SCHEMES THAT HELP CYCLE COMMUTERS

Even the staunchest cycle commuter will have days when the daily trundle to the office can make them feel a bit like it's them against the world. Bad bike parking, busy roads, lack of facilities and the like can all conspire to make you want admit defeat and buy a 4x4 instead. It's on these days you want to feel like the organisations set up to promote cycling are doing something to help you out. Well guess what? We are.

Here's 5 ways the cycle promoting organisations of Scotland are helping to make cycling to work easier for you:



WE ASKED OUR FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES OF CYCLING TO WORK – THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE JOYS, THE BUST-UPS, THE SHOCKING WEATHER, THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM....

What are your highs and lows of commuting?

g_j_reid Gordon Reid via Twitter

@CyclingScotland proper cycle paths,? every pavement is dead make half cycle path = easy

PaoloMcLean Paul McLean via Twitter

@CyclingScotland reduce speed limits. Improved lane segregation. Better cycle paths. Less wind and rain!

KirsteenT Kirst_t via Twitter

@CyclingScotland cycling is better than therapy- it keeps me sane, I get to meet hot guys in lycra and I get a great set of cyclists legs!

Graeme M Mair via Facebook

High - Seeing the sun rise as I cycle over the Forth bridge.

Low - The condition of so many roads in Scotland, ruts potholes and porridge-like surfaces.

What would make your commute easier/better?

Anna_Cook Anna Cook via Twitter

@CyclingScotland A bacon roll and coffee maker that finished cooking/brewing exactly as I reached my destination.

coasti coasti via Twitter

@CyclingScotland better commute = washer/dryer at work for fresh clothes going home.

LochaberSports LSA via Twitter

@CyclingScotland No cow pats!

Lindsay944 Lindsay Donaldson via Twitter

@CyclingScotland laundered shirts delivered to and collected from work. More hours in the day. The ability to go to bed earlier. #Cycling

TicTic1888 Tom Martin via Twitter

@CyclingScotland make more cycle lanes - every new road built add a cycle lane.

Follow us on Twitter: @CyclingScotland

1 THE NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK

Cycling and walking charity Sustrans has been building up the National Cycle Network since the 1990s and this fantastic network of traffic-free paths now stretches across 12,600 miles of the UK and passes within 1 mile of 57% of the population.

The NCN is brilliant for commuting. The wide off-road paths have seen a huge increase in bikers heading to and from work in the last few years, with around 14 million commuter journeys being made on the network in 2010. If you can incorporate the NCN as part of your journey, it means cutting out a potentially significant chunk of cycling in traffic, allowing you to relax and coast along without a care.

To check out how you can make the most of the NCN, you can download the NCN app for your phone or head to www.sustrans.org.uk

2 THE CYCLE FRIENDLY EMPLOYER AWARD

If the facilities for cyclists at your office aren't up to scratch, it's time to tell your employer about the Cycle Friendly Employer Award. The scheme basically gives your employer a big pat on the back for providing the right facilities for cycle commuters, like bike parking, lockers and changing facilities and promoting cycling to work to the staff. If your workplace meets the criteria, they receive a certificate that shows everyone how well they look after their employees, and the workers get everything they need to make cycling an easy and practical option. It's win-win.

Over 100 organisations in Scotland are now officially Cycle Friendly Employers, with over 50,000 people working in a cycle-friendly workplace. You can find out more about the scheme at www.cyclingscotland.org

3 DR BIKE

Cycling to work has loads of plus points, but pesky bike maintenance can be a real downer for regular cyclists. For occasional cyclists the maintenance issue can be even worse, with the inability to carry out minor repairs stopping people from cycling altogether. Thank heavens then, for good old Dr Bike.

Dr Bike sessions consist of a qualified bike mechanic coming to your workplace to carry out bike checks and minor fixes to common bike maintenance problems. The good doctor can also diagnose more serious problems and recommend a place to get them fixed.

Dr Bike sessions are great for enticing lapsed cyclists back into the saddle and rewarding your regular bikers too. Setting one up is as simple as making a friendly phone call to your local bike shop, or try the Bike Station, who have offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Perth - www.thebikestation.org.uk

4 SCOTBUG

Starting a Bike User Group (BUG for short) in your workplace is a great way to nurture a cycle-to-work culture amongst colleagues. They're a great way for cyclists to present a common voice to management about facilities, or to organise fun things like social rides. ScotBUG is an online tool that makes setting up a BUG a complete doddle. Check it out at www.scotbug.com

5 LOVE MY BIKE/HATE MY BIKE

Want an off-the-shelf marketing campaign to provoke discussion and debate about cycling in your workplace? Then contact Cycling Scotland for a free Love My Bike/Hate My Bike pack. This provocative poster campaign aims to quash the common myths that prevent people from taking to two wheels. Drop us a line at info@cyclingscotland.org to request a pack.

HELP KIDS



BECOME A VOLUNTEER BIKEABILITY SCOTLAND TRAINING ASSISTANT

Help kids in your local area learn to cycle safely by volunteering to become a Cycle Training Assistant. Cycling Scotland is calling for additional volunteers to help deliver Bikeability Scotland training all over the country. Head to www.cyclingscotland.org to register.

39 LOCAL CYCLING PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH COMMUNITY FUND

39 local cycling projects have been given funding through Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly and Sustainable Communities Fund. Projects such as community bike hire schemes, cycle training and led ride programmes are getting off the ground all over Scotland thanks to over £365,000 of funding.

MAKING CYCLING MAINSTREAM COURSES AVAILABLE

Cycling Scotland's professional development courses are available to book now. Over 80 professionals and 50 students took part in courses in 2011, on topics ranging from Planning and Designing Cycling Infrastructure to Promoting and Marketing Cycling.

NEWS IN BRIEF

CYCLING SCOTLAND SUPPORTS CITIES FIT FOR CYCLING

Cycling Scotland is supporting The Times' current Cities Fit for Cycling campaign, which calls for greater investment in cycling and for more to be done to protect cyclists' safety.

The City of Edinburgh Council recently set a new benchmark for commitment to cycling by announcing it would commit 5% of its transport budget to cycling infrastructure and projects. It is the first time a council in Scotland has ever set a percentage of its budget for cycling, and the allocation of 5% of the transport capital budget will mean substantially more investment than ever before.



COME AND SEE CYCLING SCOTLAND!

Cycling Scotland will be out and about at a wide range of events across the summer. Why not come and see us for cycle info, giveaways or just a general chat? We'll be heading to:

- ▶ The Scottish Bike Show // 13 - 15 April thescottishbikeshow.com
- ▶ Outdoor Pursuits Scotland // 21 - 22 April
scottishoutdoorpursuits.com Quote discount code CYCLING to save money
- ▶ Fort William Mountain Bike World Cup // 9 - 10 June
fortwilliamworldcup.co.uk
- ▶ Royal Highland Show // 21 - 24 June royalhighlandshow.org
- ▶ The Big Tent Festival // 21 - 22 July bigtentfestival.co.uk

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