

What you can do



Why every day should be a Cycle to Work Day



Research by the Local Government Association has found motorists spend nearly five days a year stuck in traffic because of mounting congestion on our roads



In 2018 **Cycle to Work Day** took place on 15 August.

It is the UK's biggest cycle commuting event and is organised by **Cyclescheme**. This year thousands of people pledged to cycle to work and there were plenty of incentives, including a prize draw after the event, to encourage as many people as possible to take part.

But we don't want to stop there, we think every day is a cycle to work day. Our Head of Behaviour Change Chris Bennett shares his top reasons on how to get - and stay - in the saddle for your commute.

1. It saves you money

It's a no brainer. After the initial outlay on a bike or sprucing up an old bike that's been collecting dust in your garage, cycling is free. You won't have to fork out on the wear and tear costs of running a car or the price of a bus or train ticket, there's no need for parking and the only fuel you'll need is food. In 2017 **our research** found that if short journeys (less than five miles) currently taken by car were switched to bike, the average person in Scotland could save nearly £2,000 a year – the equivalent to a nearly 9% pay rise in take-home pay.

2. Cycling to work can be quicker and easier than travelling by car

Research by the **Local Government Association** has found motorists spend nearly five days a year stuck in traffic because of mounting congestion on our roads. With the Department for Transport predicting 55% growth in traffic levels and an 85% rise in congestion by 2040, the problem is only set to get worse. Cycling to work means you can avoid the stress of being stuck in a traffic jam.

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3. It's an easy - and cheap - way to build physical activity into your daily routine

According to government guidelines, adults should get a minimum 150 minutes of physical activity a week, but the **British Heart Foundation Physical Inactivity Report 2017** found that 39% of UK adults - that's around 20 million people - are failing to meet this target. One way to make sure you're getting enough exercise is to do 30 minutes at least five times a week - the perfect length for short, local journeys by bike. A 20 minute bike ride can use the same amount of calories as a cappuccino, a bar of chocolate or a 175ml glass of wine. Adults who cycle regularly can have fitness levels of someone up to 10 years younger.

4. It could make you live longer

University of Glasgow research published in the British Medical Journal in 2017 found people who commuted by bike had a 41% lower risk of premature death, a 45% lower risk of developing cancer and a 46% lower risk of developing heart disease.

5. It's good for your mental health

Physical activity can increase mental alertness, energy, positive mood and self-esteem, as well as reducing stress and anxiety, according to the **Mental Health Foundation**. Many people find cycling to and from work clears the mind and helps them shake off the stresses of the day.

6. Cycling can play a huge part in tackling air pollution

According to the **Royal College of Physicians** up to 40,000 early deaths are attributable to air pollution each year in the UK - only smoking contributes to more early deaths. Road transport is responsible for 80% of the pollution where legal limits are being broken. Research shows those who travel by car can experience five times higher pollution levels than those who cycle and three and a half times more than those walking the same route.

7. And if all that's not enough, just think of the fresh air, the freedom and all of the fun you'll have along the way.

Cycling brings you closer to nature and the changes in the seasons. Whether it's spotting wildlife or noticing the leaves changing colour on the trees, two wheels are better than four when it comes to connecting with nature and getting to know your local area. Who knows, you might like it so much that you'll end up spending your leisure time in the saddle to.

Want to start cycling to work? Follow our tips on how to commute by bike with confidence

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