

# cycle

lifestyle



**Getting Started**  
**Cycle to Happiness**  
**Cycling Fashion**  
**London Cycle Map**  
**Give it a Go**

**and much more inside...**

**Love London, Love Cycling**

**Issue 2**





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**A**re you longing for the smell and space of the countryside and its lack of traffic? **We've just the answer.** Those nice folks at North-East based Saddle Skeddaddle are offering a lucky reader of *Cycle Lifestyle* the chance to win a weekend away on one of their mountain biking or road cycling weekends held throughout the UK. They've even thrown in bike hire from leading manufacturer Giant Bikes, should you want to try out a newer model or just don't fancy cleaning off the muddy bits at the end of the weekend. With train station collections as part of the package, you can also avoid those Friday evening jams and save a bit of the environment.

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### Competition

For a chance to win, simply answer the following question and email it to [info@skeddaddle.co.uk](mailto:info@skeddaddle.co.uk) before June 30th 2010.

**Q. Who designed The Angel of the North?**

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## Credits & Acknowledgements

This issue of *Cycle Lifestyle* was made possible thanks to the generous help of: Adam Copeland, Brian Deegan, Cathy Wallace, Claire Hamilton, David Amos from Barclays Print, Dom Tyerman, Gareth Jenkins, Jon Haste, Matt Dettmar ([www.freelancemagazinedesign.co.uk](http://www.freelancemagazinedesign.co.uk)), Rebecca Watts, Simon Parker and Steve Norris.

Cover illustration by Jon Haste ([www.kolbillustration.com](http://www.kolbillustration.com)).

Published by oldpeak publishing. All prices correct at time of going to press. All content © Ben Irvine.

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# Foreword

*Imagine an amazing machine that can transport you around London faster than a train, a car, a bus or on foot. A machine that is fun and free to use, environmentally friendly, and stylish too. One that literally makes you fitter, healthier and happier the more you use it. Imagine yourself on a bicycle*

Welcome to the Spring issue of *Cycle Lifestyle*. We made it through the winter brighter and better, just like the hundreds of thousands of cyclists who thrived on two wheels during the cold and gloom. It was snowy, yes, but it was warmer to be pedalling on a bike than shivering beneath a bus-shelter, a frosty windscreen or a disrupted train-timetable. It was dark, yes, but the night sky was enlivened more by the flashing lights and exhilarated grins of cyclists than the grey grimaces of the shuffling commuters they whizzed past. It was tough economically, yes, but the capital's cyclists paid hundreds of pounds less on travel costs than its drivers and passengers did. And now the sun is coming out!

This spring, *Cycle Lifestyle* magazine is back and intent on revealing the truth about cycling in London. We'll show you how to get started, plan a route, cycle safely and look stylish on two wheels. We'll introduce you to new cyclists in the capital willing to 'give it a go', and to regular cyclists who know all about the benefits. We'll explain how cycling can make you happier and healthier, then we'll make you laugh with our popular columnists Adam Copeland and Gareth Jenkins. Most exciting of all, we'll unveil an incredible new idea for a 'London Cycle Map' that promises to revolutionise travel in the capital.

There's no better time of year to cast off the creaking shackles of London's overcrowded transport system and embrace the freedom of the city on two wheels. Your cycle lifestyle is there for the taking.

With very best wishes,



Ben Irvine





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# From a Bike

we fly as the crow does  
or the raven, breaking out from his nook in the great tower  
to find a new kingdom open before him.

It is clear with this view that sprawl is not the word  
for will – our centuries' endeavour,  
the making of roads that reach in as well as out of the city

so that everything leads back to something, like a heartstring.  
Like us one weekend, scanning thirty-six miles of pavement, canal-side,  
verge, forgotten land, garden, in search of your lost wallet

weaving eight boroughs into one, from east to west then home,  
the route impressed upon your brain by habit, as patterns  
of tyre tracks, like fossils, might be set down deep in the ground.

You twist round corners instinctively and we are pulled uphill by the promise  
of the north-west suburbs relaxing below us. On towpaths  
we exchange hellos with strangers, people who know the river,

and London is like an old master painting brought to light,  
original: the subtle composition  
hanging together, entire.

Rebecca Watts

# Thames Bridges Bike Ride

**J**oin 2,500 cyclists as they pedal 30 miles across London for The Stroke Association on Sunday 23 May! Experience an exhilarating bike ride following the River Thames over 13 of London's famous bridges before enjoying a relaxing afternoon at our Thames Bridges Party.

Now in its 15th year, the Thames Bridges Bike Ride is an established event in the cycling calendar. **Starting at Southwark Park this amazing journey will take you through the historic city of London**, where you'll pass some of London's most famous tourist attractions, before taking a slower pace along the picturesque tow paths alongside the River Thames. You will also pass through the beautiful Richmond Park, which is home to 650 free-roaming deer.

After the hard work, participants, family and friends are invited to kick back in Hurst Park and enjoy an afternoon of entertainment. This year we have a great day lined up with a stunt show from thinkbikes.com, a massage tent to ease those weary muscles, live music, bouncy castle, giant games and delicious catering! This is a great way for participants to really celebrate their achievement.

**The Thames Bridges Bike Ride exists to help the estimated 150,000 people in the UK who suffer a stroke** – that is an average of one person every five minutes. Of all people who suffer a stroke, about a third are likely to die within the first 10 days, a third are likely to make a recovery within one month and a third are likely to be left disabled and needing rehabilitation. Stroke has a greater disability impact than any other medical condition. The Stroke Association is the only UK-wide charity solely concerned with combating stroke in people of all ages, and the money raised by the event goes towards funding research into prevention and support for sufferers and the people who care for them.

Entry fee for the Thames Bridges Bike Ride is £19 for adults and £12 for children, but *Cycle Lifestyle* readers can save 10% by using the following code BIKE-1. This is an offer exclusively for *Cycle Lifestyle* readers and just needs to be entered when registering at [www.stroke.org.uk/thamesbridges](http://www.stroke.org.uk/thamesbridges).

So what are you waiting for? Sign up today and experience city cycling at its best! ●



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# The Happiness Machine

Get happy... Get cycling!

**P**hilosophers are fond of speculating about an imaginary contraption that would enable people to experience only positive feelings. You'd hook your head up to this 'happiness machine' and then super-neuroscientists would stimulate your brain so you'd only experience pleasure and well-being. Would you do it? It's debatable (of course it is, it's philosophy). Most people worry that the machine would make them miss out on real life – including their real responsibilities and achievements. If you turned on and tuned in you'd drop out forever.



Photo © J Bewley/Sustrans

It's not often that reality is better than fiction, but people are increasingly turning to a real happiness machine that doesn't require round-the-clock commitment. Just spending twenty minutes on it can give its users a buzz, a glow, that lasts all day. Even in our hyper-technological age, it's an amazing invention – more amazing still because it was invented long before iPods, virtual reality, Blackberries and TV. So what is this real-life happiness machine? Imagination's upgrade is... a bicycle.

Consider a familiar scene. You wake up on Monday morning feeling like you've got cold soup in your veins, and you groan at the thought of wrestling your way through the throngs of commuters then grinding out the nine-to-five before slogging back home to the divot you left in your unmade bed. And you've got to do it again, and again, and again, and again. It's worse, of course, to have nothing to get out of bed for, but it still doesn't have to be a chore each day. They say "start as you mean to go on", and that's where the happiness machine comes in. The morning cycle ride wakes you up and lifts your spirits, the breeze on your face seeming to brush your worries away like cobwebs. Then when you arrive at work on a bike you feel alert yet calm, focused yet poised, motivated yet contented; in a word, you feel happier – and it's a mood which stays with you, like momentum, throughout the day. Finally, when the time to leave approaches, you smile as you think of your bike waiting out the back, ready to speed you home through the twinkling lights of London.

There are many explanations for why cycling makes people feel so happy. The most general is that exercise helps to reduce negative emotions. **Studies show that physical activity can alleviate the symptoms of depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.** In a stressful urban environment these problems are all-too-common, but thankfully there's a ready-made remedy: there's an opportunity to exercise twice a day, getting to and from work. It's ironic that commuting is typically such a source of discontent in cities, when it could be the opposite.

Another link between cycling and happiness derives from the health benefits of exercise: "healthy body, healthy mind", as they say. **Studies show that cycling protects against heart disease, stroke, obesity, dementia, diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers, as well as supporting healthy bones, muscles, joints and even sleep patterns.** The bicycle is an especially good choice for regular exercise since its impact on the body (in terms of causing or aggravating injuries) is low. No doubt you'll often hear people (e.g. my mum) exaggerating the risks of cycling, yet experts suggest that it's no more dangerous than being a pedestrian, and it's even been estimated that when you factor in the dangers associated with physical inactivity, the health benefits of cycling outweigh any risks by 20 to 1. The most compelling fact of all is that cyclists,



## 5 great things about cycling

**It's healthy.** Cycling protects against a variety of medical problems and also helps you lose weight.

**It's quick.** The average speed of a car in London is 7mph, much slower than the 12-15mph achieved by an average cyclist. And the bike is usually just as fast (if not faster) than trains and buses, especially when you factor in walking to and from the station and waiting times.

**It's fun.** Cycling gives you a buzz that lasts all day, and it's great to get out in the open air and experience your city in a new and exciting way.

**It's cheap.** Cyclists can save around £150 a month through not buying a travelcard. Plus you can save money on gym expenses by doing your daily exercise getting to and from work.

**It's environmentally-friendly.** Cycling is a zero-emission form of transport, including air and noise pollution. So it not only creates a better world, but a nicer place to live for your fellow Londoners.

## 5 myths about cycling

**It's too dangerous.** It is estimated that the health benefits of cycling outweigh any risks by a factor of 20 to 1. Perhaps that's why cyclists on average live longer than non-cyclists! Not to mention the fact that cycling is so much safer for the community (would you rather have bicycles or 4x4s cruise past while your kids play in the street?). Plan your route properly and take the backstreets, canals and parks, and, if you're unconfident, get some cycle training.

**It makes you too sweaty.** Hardly any more than sweating it out on a hot, crammed tube. Take some deodorant and wipe yourself off quickly in the bathroom when you arrive, and you'll be the most fragrant person around.

**London's too big.** Amateur cyclists regularly cover up to 100 miles in charity events, and London is nowhere near as big as that. Plus it's flat and densely interconnected – which makes it perfect for cycling around. Miles are just minutes on a bike.

**It's too tiring.** Cycling's nothing like jogging, which sometimes makes you feel like you want to stop as soon as you've started. You often feel like you could go forever on a bike. Most of the time you're just cruising along without pedalling, with the breeze blowing gently in your face. Cyclists would generally agree it's a therapeutic, not a tiring, experience. And this is true whatever your level of fitness (a level which, of course, begins to improve rapidly after your first cycle).

**The British weather's too bad.** Ah, that old chestnut. You might be surprised to learn that it only rains 6% of the time in London. And even when it does you can just wear waterproofs or wrap your spare clothes up nice and dry in a pannier. Best of all, it's warmer to travel by bike in bad weather than by any other mode of transport, because you warm up within minutes of starting.

on average, live longer than non-cyclists. In this light, it's peculiar that non-cyclists seem to be more bothered by all the scaremongering about cycling than cyclists are. But this, too, may boil down to a difference in mood. Psychologists have found that happy people are less affected by negativity than unhappy people. So it may be that cyclists' happiness insulates them against the alarmism of their less happy colleagues.

## “The daily cycle ride provides an exhilarating opportunity for reflection and creative thinking”

You might say that cyclists just tend to be free-spirited – and you'd be right – but this is itself no coincidence. Cycling enlivens the mind, lending its practitioners a vitality that's a key feature of happiness. The daily cycle ride provides an exhilarating opportunity for reflection and creative thinking. When you're using public transport or driving in London you tend to shut down your mind so as to defend it against the noise and havoc of its surroundings, but a cyclist in flow has a mind that flows freely too. Countless business gurus have noticed this, recommending a burst of exercise to loosen and sharpen the mind, thus increasing productivity. And it makes biological sense for our brains to become mentally brighter when we exercise – because when human beings evolved, exercise meant being transported to a different environment, which heightened our ancestors' need to be sensitive to new information and ideas.

**Cycling also, of course, makes people physically freer. London's creaky transport infrastructure is there to facilitate movement but often restricts its users** – through congestion, route closures, traffic jams, trains that stop in tunnels and buses that take forever. The great thing about the bicycle is that it lets you choose when, where and which way to go. With an A to Z and a set of wheels you can explore London's glorious back streets, parks and canals, finding a direct route to your destination, unencumbered by timetables and gridlock. Offering such autonomy and expansiveness, no wonder cycling boosts happiness.

Then there's the flipside of the cyclist's autonomy: a sense of security. By this I mean the routine, regularity, reliability and predictability of cycling, compared to the haphazardness of other means of transport in the capital. A bicycle won't cancel on you, trap you in traffic, make you wait around in the midnight gloom, or have you anxiously biting your nails because the government has told you to amplify your alertness levels to 11. Cycling offers familiarity and certainty: crucial components of a happy mind. →

Perhaps the most obvious, but most underappreciated, benefit of cycling is its economy. Unlike the economy, cycling is economical in the sense of being affordable, sustainable and value-for-money. Once you've purchased a bike and factored in the costs of maintenance (approximately £80 a year at my local bike shop, or considerably less if you learn to do it yourself), there are huge savings to be made: hundreds of pounds a month in travelcards, newspapers and takeaway coffees for public transport, and even more if you include the costs of driving, such as petrol, maintenance, parking fees and congestion charges.

And of course there are huge environmental savings to be made from cycling. A fifth of the carbon we produce in Britain through work comes from commuting, so London would be a far greener place if more people did so by bike. **Above all, a cycling city is a cleaner and safer one, with lower levels of noise and air pollution and vastly lower incidences of injury to pedestrians, including children playing in car-filled streets.**

This last point hints at one of the nicest things about cycling. It's hard to sum up what brings the most pleasure to cyclists, but perhaps it can be expressed simply as a heightened sense of belonging. Cyclists feel happier because they feel more connected to their surroundings and their fellow Londoners. It's not just the abstract ethical issue of "doing your bit" for the planet or the greater good; it's more physical than that. It's about being out in the open – truly experiencing the city and its eclectic sounds, sights and smells, first-hand – without a windscreen or a grimy window



so it's no surprise that it brings happiness. Above all, cycling is valuable because it brings a lasting kind of happiness – a mood of contentment that doesn't fade with time or repetition. This kind of satisfaction is an unusual gift in a modern world that offers mostly fleeting pleasures; styles that go out of fashion, trophy possessions that lose their sheen, communication devices that soon encourage self-absorption.

Layard tells us that the 'secret of happiness' is to ration such fuels for addiction and seek out more of those 'good things that never pall'. Any cyclist will tell you that cycling is one of them.

Given the happiness-enhancing qualities of cycling, you can hardly blame cyclists for their keenness to let others in on the deal. Unfortunately, though, enthusiasm and empathising can be all-too-easily mistaken for evangelism and patronising, such is the disillusionment of many a weary traveller in London. Sadder still, the wider effect of such cynicism is a culture in which cyclists often become figures of abuse in the eyes of other road users – this despite the fact that cyclists hardly ever cause harm to pedestrians, never blacken the city's air or fill a bystander's face with fumes, and never rattle windows while speeding noisily through sleepy streets. It's important to recognise the abuse for what it is: intolerance of a minority group. It wouldn't be acceptable in any other context, and it isn't when targeted at cyclists.

Sixty years ago cycling made up a third of all the miles travelled by vehicles in Britain, and the country was happier and friendlier. Today, while the capital's iron lung splutters its miserable, last-gasp disapproval, progressive Londoners are once again getting connected – to real happiness machines. ●

For more information about cycling, safety and health – including references for the studies we've mentioned – check out Cycling England's 'Cycling and Health' report, available at [www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland](http://www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland)

## “The great thing about the bicycle is that it lets you choose when, where and which way to go”

pane between you and the outside world. It's about chatting to a fellow cyclist at the traffic lights, taking the family on a bike-ride rather than sitting in front of the television, asking a pedestrian for directions, or tinkling a bell instead of blasting a horn. And, before you mention it, cycling's got nothing to do with any particular political ideology. The connections between cycling, belonging and happiness unify people across the political spectrum. It's a matter of common sense.

Richard Layard, author of *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science* and one of Britain's leading economists, identifies the seven fundamental ingredients of human happiness: health, financial orderliness, job satisfaction, personal autonomy, family relationships, friendlier communities and moral values. Sound familiar? Cycling contributes to the fulfilment of all of these,

## Pedalite Competition Winner

**Ian Winfield:** I love cycling in London because... I can ride to the shops on the old rust bucket at the side of the house to get a minute of wind in the hair on the way down and a two minute burn on the way back. I ride into London in order to clear the head and think only of the next traffic light or car pulling out before an important meeting.

I ride to Arsenal in order to get away from the stadium in under a minute and watch all the numpties queuing at the tube for hours.

In the morning I'll grab a quick hour training ride as it feels incredibly decadent to be riding whilst commuters' cars flow in the other direction.

I ride out into the Essex countryside on a weekend for a feeling of freedom, exhilaration, achievement and the buzz you carry around for the rest of the day.



# Cycle to Health



*London's Boroughs are at the forefront of promoting and supporting cycling in the capital. We asked Brent Council's Sustainable Transport Officer, Mike Evans, to tell us why he cycles and what initiatives are out there for helping others to get on their bikes.*

**W**hy do I cycle? For me cycling is a great, cheap, convenient and healthy way to get around London. Many of you might think that there are good reasons why you don't travel by bike. Maybe you simply don't have a bike or the confidence to cycle, or you're worried about accidents, bad weather, arriving at work sweaty or a lack of workplace facilities.

I would say give cycling a try before you make up your mind. Buy or borrow a bike, or bring your bike out from the shed, get it looked over to check it is roadworthy, and then bike it. If you don't already have much time for exercise in your daily routine, cycling to work is a great way to improve your health. After a few weeks of active commuting you will immediately notice the benefits.

Those who cycle to work report improvements in alertness, productivity, well-being and fitness. Then there is the lower mortality rate associated with cyclists, as well as a reduced propensity to a host of ailments including obesity, cardiovascular problems, diabetes, and respiratory disorders. In financial terms the cost of health interventions to address inactivity in the population is much more than the cost associated with road traffic collisions.

Cycling, in short, is good for everyone including the public purse. That's why the Chief Medical Officer has stated that physical activity is the best buy in public health, and the Government's 'Active Travel Strategy', published by the Department for Health and the

Department for Transport, emphasises that cycling can improve health, increase productivity, and promote social interaction and well-being. Moreover, by reducing unnecessary car journeys, promoting cycling also helps to create a healthier and greener environment for everyone.

Currently about 2% of all journeys in London are made by bike. That's double the figure it was in 2000, but government targets are to increase the share to 5% by 2015. Of course, we'd like to see it rise even beyond this. The Chief Medical Officer has stated that cycling rates should increase eight-fold.

Brent Council is working alongside Brent PCT, the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust and Transport for London in promoting cycling. Initiatives include:

- ▶ Free cycle training available for groups and organisations
- ▶ Cycle stands available to organisations free of charge
- ▶ Regular events held throughout the year, where trained bike mechanics will give your bike a free service
- ▶ Cycling Sessions organised by Brent Council's Sports Service during the school holidays – for more information see [www.brent.gov.uk/sports](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sports)
- ▶ More cycle parking provided at key town centres and stations
- ▶ Brent Council signing up with Transport for London to become a 'Biking Borough', and reviewing its strategy for supporting those who want to cycle through infrastructure improvements, training programmes and cycle projects.

Organisations can promote cycling by adopting a green travel plan – a programme of support and funding for encouraging employees and visitors to cycle more. Keep an eye out for Workplace Cycle Challenge and Bike Week events in your area during June.

If you would like to know more about the support on offer, please email [transportation@brent.gov.uk](mailto:transportation@brent.gov.uk) or ring 020 8937 5179. ●

# Getting Started

Here's our handy guide to making that positive change...

## Choosing your bike

There are different kinds of bike for different kinds of journey, so you need to choose the right bike for yours.

**Road bikes** ('racing' bikes) are designed to be lightweight, aerodynamic and fast, with handlebars that curl downwards and skinny tyres.

**Touring bikes** are sturdier versions of road bikes, designed for long distances carrying luggage.

**Mountain bikes** are designed for rough terrain, with knobbly tyres, strong frames, a wide selection of gears, and often suspension.

**Hybrid bikes** offer a compromise between the speed of a road bike and the strength and gearing of a mountain bike. With smooth tyres and an upright riding posture that's good for visibility, they're a popular option for commuting.

**Folding bikes** can be folded away and carried like a briefcase. Useful for commuting, they can conveniently be taken on the train or bus. They have small wheels and fewer gears, and can be stored easily at home if you don't have much space.

**Electric bikes** are a more expensive option, with an electric motor offering assistance for getting up hills or on longer commutes.

**Second-hand bikes** come in all shapes and sizes. Their quality is variable, however, so take a knowledgeable friend with you to make sure that the frame and parts in particular are in good order.

**Shed bikes** are bikes that have been gathering cobwebs in your shed for years! Check them over before you get back on.

For people with disabilities there are adapted cycles, tricycles, tandems, side-by-side cycles and recumbent cycles – making cycling accessible to almost anybody.

**“By law you must have a front white light and a rear red light when cycling at night”**

## Checking your bike

Before you set off you'll need to make sure your bike is safe to ride. Start with the following checks:

- ▶ Both brakes work well.
- ▶ Make sure that both tyres are pumped up (this will make your bike easier to ride as well as safer).
- ▶ The saddle height is correct (so that when sitting on the saddle your heel rests on the pedal with your knee very slightly bent). Also make sure that when adjusting the saddle height the seat post limit has not been reached (normally this is a marked band about 3 inches from the bottom of the seat post).
- ▶ The handle bars are tightened. Ensure that they cannot be turned with the front wheel between your legs, and that they do not move when pressure is applied from the top.
- ▶ The gears work smoothly.

If you are unsure then take your bike to the nearest bike shop for a quick service. When you buy your bike from a shop you can expect them to help you with these checks.



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## What to wear?

For most urban cycling trips there's no need to wear special clothing, any more than there is for a walk to the shops. You can even cycle in smart clothes, so long as you're comfortable. Some general advice:

- Make sure that your clothing is neither too baggy (to prevent it catching in the chain) or too tight (restricting your pedalling).
- In wet conditions it's a good idea to wear a waterproof coat (and overtrousers, if it's pouring). Another option is to carry spare clothes separately.
- It's important to be visible, especially at night or in heavy traffic, so consider wearing light-coloured clothes or a reflective jacket/vest.
- A hat and gloves will keep your extremities warm in cold weather. Cycling is usually the warmest option for travelling in cold weather, since your body heat rises to a comfortable level within minutes of pedalling.

## Accessories

Some basic accessories are essential:

- Lights. By law you must have a front white light and a rear red light when cycling at night, and a rear reflector and pedal reflectors at all times.
- A lock. Theft is a problem in London so spend as much as you can afford to get a stronger lock (and if possible multiple locks). Always leave your bike in a well-lit and busy place to deter thieves.

Others accessories are really useful:

- A bell. You'll find pedestrians really appreciate an early, gentle warning of your presence if you're on a shared path – a couple of tinkles when you're still 10 metres or so away works well.
- Mudguards. These will help keep splatters off your clothes.
- A rack and panniers. Panniers are bags that attach onto a rack at the back of your bike. They're useful because they enable you to be unencumbered while riding. The next best option is a rucksack because this keeps your arms free. Never dangle bags from your handlebars.
- A pump and a spare inner tube or puncture repair kit. Punctures are rare, but it's good to be prepared.
- It's not compulsory to wear a helmet to cycle in London, but many people choose to. If you do, ensure that your helmet is of good quality and properly fitted.

'See and be seen' is one of the most important pieces of advice for cyclists. The Bike Eye is a useful aid for the first part – seeing. It's a mirror that helps you to see behind you on a bike, reducing the need to turn round and check. Find out more at [www.bike-eye.com](http://www.bike-eye.com). →



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### Planning your route

Preparing a good route is essential for cycling in London, but luckily it's one of the most fun parts. There are lots of helpful resources, including:

- Transport for London cycle guides. You can order them online at [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).
- LCN+ maps. These can be viewed online at [www.londoncyclenetwork.org.uk](http://www.londoncyclenetwork.org.uk).
- Local borough maps. Contact your local council offices to find out more.
- Google maps. An especially useful resource which uses the Google map interface is [www.bikehike.co.uk](http://www.bikehike.co.uk). You can interactively plot your route onscreen and find out gradient and distance data.
- A good old-fashioned A to Z!

When you plan your route you should aim for:

- Quiet roads or roads with cycle paths
- Low speed limit areas
- Parks and open spaces which allow cycling

And you should avoid:

- Very busy junctions
- Large and fast roundabouts
- Dual carriageways
- Routes heavy with lorries

### Editor's choice: Cosmo Two Way Hi-Vis Commuting Jacket

You don't have to dress up like Lance Armstrong to cycle in London, but you can get some fantastic specialist cycle clothing to enhance your commute. I was riding along the other day, musing, as you do, about



how it'd be useful to have a jacket that was cool enough and smart enough to wear in company, but bright enough to be visible on the road. I suddenly hit upon the great idea of a reversible jacket: a cycling jacket on one side and a more fashionable jacket on the other. Well, sadly I'm not the super-inventor I thought I was, because a fantastic two-way jacket already exists. It's been designed by Gore Bike Wear and is available exclusively in Evans Cycles stores. I got myself one, and I'm chuffed with it. With a trendy cut, it has high-visibility luminous panels on the arms and shoulder areas on one side, while the other side is a stylish, shiny grey jacket with an Oasis-circa-1995 feel to it. Both sides are durably waterproof (and, to be fair, both sides are pretty stylish too), and there's a useful stowaway hood that fits snugly into the collar. Priced at £249.99 it's not peanuts, but then again it is a two-in-one, so there's more for your money, and it saves you the hassle of carrying a spare jacket with you every time you cycle. To find out more, or buy one online, visit [www.evanscycles.com](http://www.evanscycles.com)

## “Make eye contact with other road users and signal clearly at all times”

- Pavements. It's illegal to cycle on the pavement, unless it's signed as a shared-use path for cyclists and pedestrians.

If any of these are unavoidable, you can always get off and push!

### Sustrans cycling safety tips

#### Tips for cyclists on roads

- Ride in a position where you can see and be seen.
- Beware of vehicles turning left.
- Make eye contact with other road users, especially at junctions – then you know they've seen you.
- Signal clearly at all times.
- Follow the Highway Code – don't jump red lights and don't cycle on the pavement unless it's a designated cycle path.
- Consider wearing a helmet and bright clothing, especially in towns, at night and in bad weather.
- In wet weather watch your speed as surfaces may be slippery and it will take you longer to stop.
- Consider getting some cycle training. All London's boroughs provide free or subsidised training.

#### Tips for motorists

- When turning left watch for cyclists coming up on your near side and don't cut them up.
- Give cyclists a wide berth when overtaking.
- Dip your headlights when approaching cyclists.
- In wet weather, allow cyclists extra room as surfaces may be slippery.
- Cyclists and motorists are equally entitled to use and share the same road space.

#### Tips for cyclists on shared-use paths

- Don't go too fast – it can intimidate others.
- Use your bell to let others know you are approaching, but don't assume they can hear or see you.
- Give way to others and always be prepared to slow down and stop if necessary.
- Keep left or on your side of any dividing line.
- Be careful at junctions, bends or entrances.

#### Tips for other path users

- Keep your dog under control.
- Keep to your side of any dividing line. ●

You can find out more about getting started from Sustrans at [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk), the London Cycling Campaign at [www.lcc.org.uk](http://www.lcc.org.uk) – or just phone a friend who cycles.



# New Bike on the Block

## The truth about leggings... for men

by Gareth Jenkins

**C**old winds and flapping tracksuit bottoms meant I recently bought my first pair of black cycling leggings.

Now I am not one to dive in without researching a product first, so I can report that *Men's Fitness* magazine says that black leggings improve aerodynamics and keep the heat in... which is all well and good, but what everyone wants to know is: will they look good?

I am one of those people who for some reason find it extremely embarrassing to try things on in a shop before I buy them, especially things that could potentially leave people in the changing rooms sniggering behind their curtain as you "model" your new purchase. I once thought I could pull off a Trilby Hat and a lady almost passed out from laughing so hard.

So trying on skin-tight Lycra was just not a consideration. Instead I decided I'd have to just ask the guy in the shop about leggings (a personal first for me). He advised that if you have a bit of a belly you should buy the ones that strap over your shoulders like a leotard. His words, not mine... "like a leotard", he said.

I shuddered and asked for the "Not in any way like a leotard ones" and he passed them over. I noted that even they had elastic bits that strap under the feet like the trousers my little sister wore in the '80s. I sighed heavily and shook my head as I handed over the cash.

The first test was a cold, brisk day and I slid my new leggings over my shivering legs. Then, with all the masculinity I could muster, I fed my tippy-toes through the elastic foot straps and wondered whether Robin Hood felt as stupid as I did wearing tights. It also struck me that the cold weather could potentially bring another small issue to the fore. These leggings should come with a glass case with a rolled up sock inside it saying "In case of Shrinkage, Break Glass, then Stuff".



As I hit the trail to work, I sliced through the air like an arrow and felt out in the elements yet snug and warm. I have to admit I enjoyed wearing my leggings and I started to wonder whether me taking up cycling had unexpectedly lead to some personal issues I've never before considered.

By half an hour in, I was feeling like a Tour de France pro as I stood up to pedal and sprint forward when a red light turned to green. But my exhilaration quickly turned to confusion as I felt a draft from the stern. My previously insulated behind had given way to a huge Dagenham Smile.

Imagine the scene if you will. You're on a packed bus in Leyton. Its 7.30am.

You're tired and miserable cos it's Monday. The bus is quiet and hot.

You haven't even been able to pick up a newspaper this morning. Suddenly the silence and monotony is broken by a teenager banging on the window and laughing with his mate. As the bus slowly overtakes it rolls past the wobbly figure of a 31 year-old man wearing thick gloves and trying to wrestle his leggings back up. "His bum's hanging out! Oi mate, Your bum's hanging out! Ha Ha Ha!"

The forlorn figure gestures and waves pathetically to hide his humiliation as the bus passes him. In a nutshell, I hadn't given enough thought to the leotard.

**"I fed my tippy-toes through the elastic footstraps and wondered whether Robin Hood felt as stupid as I did"**

Another thing I hadn't given enough thought to is the fact that a bus travelling at an average speed of 30mph whilst stopping sporadically at bus stops on the Lea Bridge Road can overtake a cyclist travelling at about 12mph around five times, thus ensuring that the cyclist can be reminded that his arse fell out of his trousers by teenagers on a further four occasions.

I doubt anyone has done a parachute up as tight as I tightened the waist chord of my leggings for the trip back. But to wear a leotard? A unitard? Jeggings? A mankini? Leggings are enough of a guilty pleasure for me, and I strongly recommend them.

Well – for the time being at least. Coming soon to a store near you... "Gentleman's Cycling Braces". They come with a pipe, a monocle and a maintained sense of dignity. ●

# Q&A

## The experiences of Cycle Lifestylers

Glyn Hughes is 52 years old and from Liverpool. He lives in Watford and works as a Librarian in Wembley.

### Where do you cycle in London?

I commute 11 miles from Watford to Wembley but also hop on and off the tube with my Brompton when visiting friends and going out.

### Why do you cycle in London?

To keep fit, save time, keep in touch with the real world and do my bit to delay global warming.



### What kind of bike do you ride?

A Brompton M3LX (with titanium frame and lowered gearing), and a Farrhad Manufaktur T100C for longer journeys.

### What do you wear when on your bike?

Trousers, t-shirt, high-vis jacket and Shimano cycling shoes.

### What do you like most about cycling in London?

Getting to know the city better and being able to get everywhere so much quicker than by other means.

### What's the highpoint of your commute?

The stretch between Bushey Heath and Harrow. Sunrise through the autumn mist. Long, quiet summer evenings.

### What's the best thing that's happened to you on a bike?

Arriving at Land's End (from John O'Groats, of course).

### What's the worst thing that's happened to you on a bike?

Not releasing my feet from the pedal clips in time and wobbling sideways onto the ground in front of a group of jeering school-kids.

**"You don't need the latest, most expensive equipment. Focus more on your safety and comfort than the latest gadgets"**

### What's the funniest thing that's happened to you on a bike?

Stopping for a bite to eat and being chased by a group of geese that were intent on grabbing my sandwiches.

### What do you think would most improve life for cyclists in the capital?

More and wider cycle lanes.

### Have you ever been cycling outside of London?

Yes, I've toured throughout the UK and I have cycled in every county.

### Have you got any tips for fellow cyclists or those starting out?

You don't need the latest, most expensive equipment. Focus more on your safety and comfort than the latest gadgets. ●



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# The Future of Cycling in London

A new vision for cycling in the capital

I'm holding in my hand a slightly crumpled A5 piece of white paper, unfolded along two creases to reveal a jagged grid, a mesmerising crisscross of red, blue, green and orange lines. The lines terminate in coded labels around the perimeter of the page: C1, O1, N5, G2, and so on. It looks like circuitry, a switchboard, a seismograph; something that once belonged, with its secret meaning, in the back pocket of a stranger making some plan or other. It's the most exciting document I've ever held.

What I'm holding is a prototype for a plan that promises to revolutionise travel in London. The coloured lines depict a network of cycle routes connecting every significant location in the capital, providing a traceable route between any two points: a London Underground-style network and map for cycling. An ingenious idea! In a stroke it addresses the two main barriers to cycling as perceived by regular Londoners: navigation and safety. **If the plan became a reality, London would never again feel too big or complicated to be negotiated on a bike: wherever you were you'd be within moments of a visible cycle network that would guide you unerringly to your destination.** And it would feel so much safer to ride on a fully co-ordinated network of routes in London: you'd be more likely to be in the company of other cyclists, and signs would tell drivers what to expect.

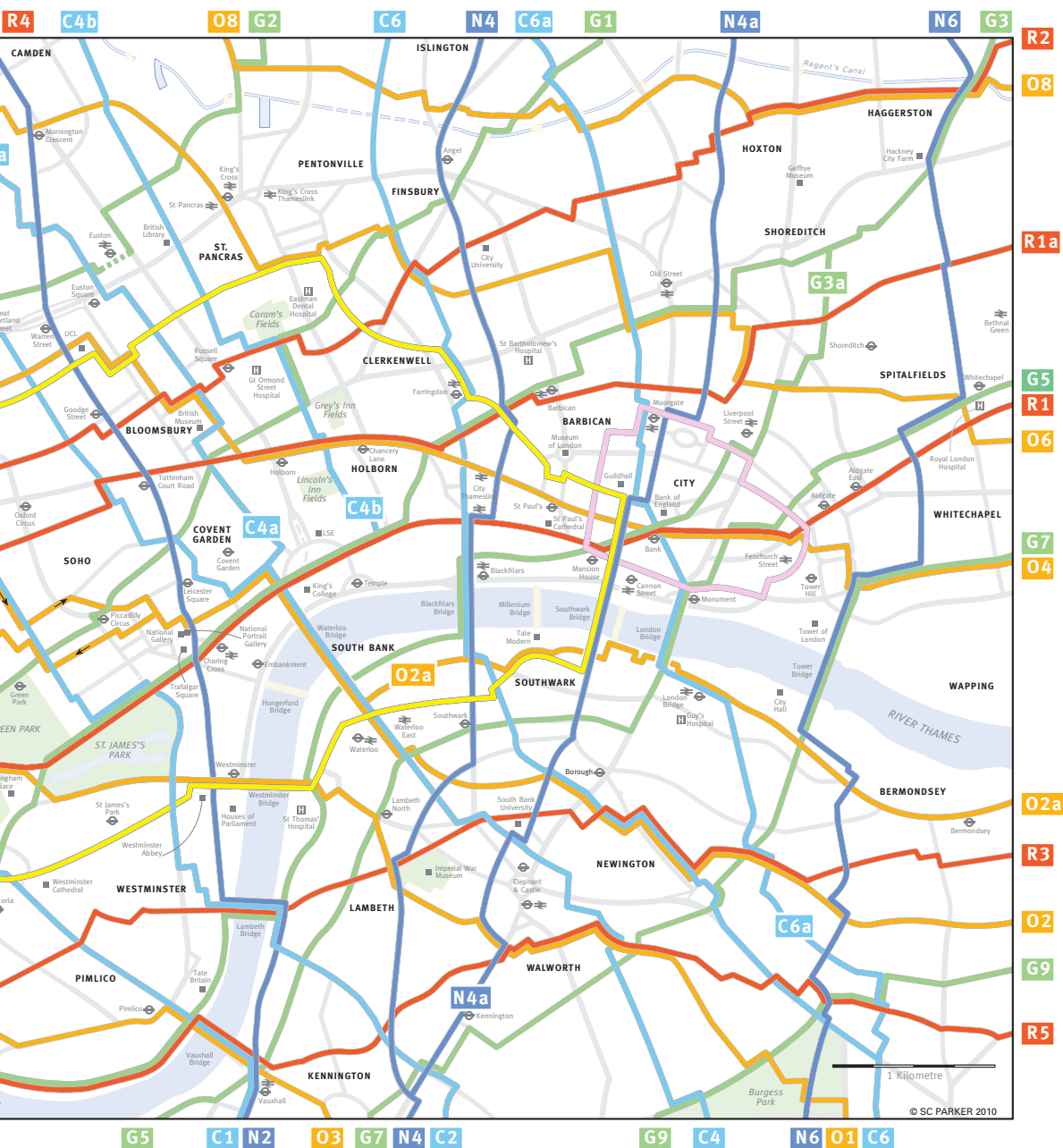
The London Cycle Map is the brainchild of Simon Parker (pictured). He's something of a cult figure in cycling in the capital, his dogged efforts to implement his plan eliciting both admiration and exasperation. I met him one morning in Hammersmith. Forty-three years old, polite and unassumingly dressed, he earns a living working on farms and market stalls on the sleepy south coast. But he has a twinkle in his eye and an animated, incisive expressiveness that reveals a determined, almost obsessive, character. He's been campaigning



for his idea for over a decade, lobbying politicians and civil servants – ‘battering away’, as he puts it – and all the while honing his cycle network plans. It strikes me that I'm in the company of a visionary.

I ask Parker where it all began. In 1999 he was living in South London and working as an attendant on a bicycle-hire scheme in Richmond Park. Impressed by the smiles on the faces of his customers as they returned from completing the park's eight-mile circuit, Parker decided to try to set up a similar scheme in Hyde Park. But he soon found that this park was too small to encompass a decently long route, so he began exploring the surrounding areas – down Constitution Hill and along the Mall,





where he saw a scenic side of London that's usually hidden away behind closed tube doors or gridlocked highstreets. Parker then turned his attentions to Victoria Park and its environs – along the canal to the Isle of Dogs and under the Greenwich footbridge. He was finding out much more than he'd bargained for.

One thing Parker discovered was that following existing cycle routes in London can be frustrating. They're often inadequately signed, so getting lost is always a possibility – unless you're carrying a map. It wasn't long before the penny dropped for him. **Back in 1931, Harry Beck's celebrated tube map had succeeded in taming the capital's London Underground system, so why not create something similar for cycling?** To the dismay of his parents (who wanted

him 'to get a proper career', as Parker tells me) he began avidly researching the idea. He took a job as a taxi driver so he could earn money while exploring the streets of London, chatting to his passengers about the hidden local byways which would form the ins and outs of his plan. London's worsening traffic congestion only emboldened him, and over the years he sketched a network that evolved in tandem with his knowledge of the capital. Then, four years ago, Parker decided to substantiate his ideas further with the advice of a professional cartographer. He borrowed thousands of pounds to do this, but their ongoing collaboration has produced a polished, stylised draft of his London Cycle Map. It fits handily in a pocket, capturing the behemoth of London in an eight-inch visual network. →



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Parker's design is centred on five routes that form a star-shaped intersection through a point lying beside Hyde Park. These routes are coded with the number '1' along with a letter that describes their colour (N for Navy, R for Red, G for Green, O for Orange, and C for Cyan). Each of them is flanked by a series of parallel routes of the same colour that fan out across the capital, keeping the same general direction, like waves. The result is a network of parallel, coloured lines that dissect London at five different angles, each line numbered in relation to its distance from route 1 of its colour; odd numbers are below or to the left, even numbers above or to the right. In addition there are two circular routes; one connecting London's major train stations (Y for Yellow), the other encircling the City (P for Pink).

Here's how it works. You could set out on a cycle journey knowing nothing but the codes for the routes you'd need to follow. For instance, 'C1, O1' would get you all the way from St John's Wood to Elephant and Castle! Parker has analysed 1,000 likely journeys and found that in 90% of cases you'd only need to remember three routes or fewer. Moreover, all the relevant information would be distilled into one small map. **Parker's is a spectacularly economical system, and it's not hard to appreciate what a powerful aid and inspiration it would be for cycling in the capital.** Indeed, many local authorities have been quick to recognise the potential of

his plan and have offered their support – not least because each of them would only need to spend approximately £50,000 to implement it. To put this in perspective, it's equivalent to the cost of employing two traffic wardens for a year.

**“Parker has come to suspect that a people-based approach may be needed if his vision is to become a reality”**

What makes the implementation so affordable is that it's based on the concept of 'Minimum Functioning', as defined in the influential industry paper 'Cycling: the way ahead for towns and cities'. The idea is that in the first instance planners do only the minimum necessary to make a route functional: 'you get it up and running', as Parker puts it. In practical terms this means signing the network of routes as a first priority. Then, once people start using the routes, further amendments can be made, such as dedicated cycle lanes and other special features.

So is the network being developed right now? Sadly not. A large-scale project like this needs the backing of Transport for London, and this is where Parker's plans have been thwarted repeatedly. One senior developer there called the plans 'complex and

confusing'; but I wonder if that's a better verdict on the bureaucratic process that delivered it than the exquisitely simple diagrams I'm looking at. Parker himself remains resolutely conciliatory – even if I sense emotion in his voice when he invokes Thoreau's famous lament: "Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions, and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads".

I'm intrigued by the citation, and I suppose Parker himself must be made of rubber. I begin to wonder where he gets his inspiration from in persevering with such an arduous task. I ask him about his influences, and one of his answers surprises me: "Richard Dawkins". The evolutionist, science-writer, public intellectual and gadfly to religion? At first I can't see the connection, but Parker elaborates. As a scientist, Dawkins espouses an evidence-based, systematic, scientific, dispassionate and simple approach; the very same outlook that's needed to appreciate the virtues of a London Cycle Map – whatever the political or cultural obstacles. I see the link, and I also sense in Parker echoes of Dawkins' own down-to-earth, practical kind of idealism. Later I am struck by another parallel, between the Darwinian explanation for the evolution of the eye and Parker's commitment to Minimum Functioning for the system of routes he has proposed: both are organs that must start out rudimentary before evolving into something more refined and wonderful.

The question is: is London ready to see the potential of a London Cycle Map? Parker has come to suspect that a people-based approach may be needed if his vision is to become a reality. More than anything, he wants feedback. He explains to me that his map has been evolving for years, with clunkier routes giving way to more streamlined descendents. **He wants people to offer their suggestions, to help shape his plan further, to yield the diamond that London's cyclists deserve.**

I've enjoyed our meeting tremendously, but Parker has made one suggestion that's inspired me above all. He insists that each generation should strive to provide a legacy to the next, citing Ruskin's exhortation that 'when we build, let us think we build forever'. With the 2012 Olympics just a couple of years away I can hardly think of a better gift to future generations of Londoners than to revitalize, oxygenate and clean our city using the vast network of cycling capillaries detailed in Parker's amazing blueprints.●

Contact Simon Parker on [cyclemap@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cyclemap@yahoo.co.uk)

## Testimonials

"Most world cycling cities agree that the network approach to promoting cycling through safe, continuous and easy-to-follow routes is the most effective.

There are currently several different cycling networks being developed in London, all with their own branding, scope and design details. Parker's plan is to date the most effective method of uniting these approaches into one easily understandable and usable mapping system.

"There has been a debate raging in London for several years now amongst cycle planners about route signing strategies and 'way-finding'. I hope we can find solutions and consistency soon in order to help the growing number of cyclists plan their routes more effectively. I personally support all efforts made by dedicated cycling enthusiasts to improve the level of service for cyclists. Most of us who have been involved in cycle planning for many years started out as enthusiasts or lobbyists ourselves. My views may not necessarily be supported by the organisations I work for, but no one has shown me a more elegant solution than Parker's, and I would be delighted to be instructed to help make this system happen."

**Brian Deegan**  
LCN Development Manager

"I have been a passionate advocate of cycling for the last eighteen years. It was John Grimshaw of Sustrans who first alerted me to cycling when I was a transport minister. After his excellent presentation on why cycling made sense – cheaper, healthier, non-polluting and quicker over a mile or so than almost any car – I asked my officials why we didn't do more to promote cycling. "Ah, Minister," came a reply worthy of Sir Humphrey, "that's because not many people cycle." Funny only if it were not true. In reality the department dealt in roads and rail and regarded cycling as largely irrelevant. We changed that. I was eventually able to introduce the first National Cycling Strategy, and a couple of years later my Labour successor, John Spellar, asked me to set up the National Cycling Strategy Board (now Cycle England) to ensure the good work continued.

"For a long time Transport for London itself tended to concentrate on buses and tubes to the practical exclusion of cycling and walking. That too has changed. Mayor Johnson is not just a superb advocate of cycling, he is a man who has cycled all his working life as a matter of course. He is hugely committed to encouraging cycling. That means the prospect of the cycle hire scheme, hundreds of new cycle stands and of course cycle super highways.

"Way-finding is a key to encouraging people to cycle, and TfL is also looking at how we can improve what we currently offer. That's where Simon Parker's work is so helpful. There are all sorts of questions still to be answered, but where there's a will for real and lasting change, there's surely a way."

**Steve Norris**  
TfL Board Member and former Conservative MP



# Give it a Go...

## The diary of a first-time commuter cyclist in London

by Claire Hamilton

When we asked young mother Claire Hamilton to try cycling to work for a month she thought we were having a laugh. No way! She had a baby to look after, and felt too tired and unfit. But now she's the one that's laughing; feeling healthier, fitter and above all more independent, she's a regular cyclist and a more energetic mum.

I have been putting off cycling to work for years. I got a job on the opposite side of London, and told myself it was too far for a beginner cyclist to get to. I even went travelling in Australia and New Zealand. And, when I got back, I took a job in Northampton, so commuting by bike from London was definitely out of the question.

Then I got pregnant – so that was the end of the matter. No more discussion, guilt, or what ifs. I would never be one of those people who come into work slightly bedraggled and wet and wearing luminous clothing and trousers tucked into their socks. Not me. I was a car girl. Done deal.

Then, inexplicably, strange things started to happen – a succession of events and thoughts that propelled me towards my inevitable, ground-breaking first cycle to work. I had my baby... I got a job in Walthamstow, ten minutes away from home by car... On my first day I discovered that there was a secure bike shed at the back of the office... My friend asked if she could store her new mountain bike in my garage, and said I was welcome to use it anytime... I needed to get fit and I had no spare time to exercise, especially with a small baby to look after, so getting a burst of fitness in on my way to work suddenly seemed very appealing... And when the January and February snow finally stopped (sort of), the sun came out (sort of). I had run out of excuses.

Gareth Jenkins made it sound easy in his "Give it a Go" article in the first issue of *Cycle Lifestyle*, and I thought if he can do it, I jolly well can. So on a bitterly cold day in early March, I found myself getting my







bike out of the garage and donning a cycle helmet I had discovered in my mum's loft and a mud-spattered luminous vest which definitely looked past its sell-by date. I was ready to cycle to work for the very first time.

When I say 'ready', with hindsight I was anything but ready!

After months of storage in my shed, there was no air in the bike tyres and I didn't know how to get the pump to work. Fortunately a kindly local builder was passing and managed to get the tyres inflated for me just as I was getting ready to wheel the bike back into the garage for another year. I then had to lower the seat, and was soon trying in vain to fix my work bag to the bike with a piece of string that was in the garage. Yep, I'm no expert.

I hadn't factored in any extra time for all this unplanned fixing and preparation, so I was now running severely late for work. This would have been okay if I had not lectured my team the day before on the importance of punctuality. I could already see the raised eyebrows as I walked past their bank of desks.

Then it started to snow... heavily... until a blanket of snow was forming under my inappropriately clad feet.

**“The four mile journey only took twenty minutes and I had managed to cycle up every hill without getting off the bike and pushing it – what a result!”**

By now it was so late that I had to just get on my bike and go for it. Cycling to work had become a battle of wills, with me pitted against the elements (and against the lump of metal I was trying to climb on top of in my skirt and heels). I pushed the bike through the snow-covered drive, lifted myself up and pushed myself off, down the steep hill which led to the park. I was off! **As I was hurtling down the hill, I had a last minute thought that I should test the brakes.** Fortunately they worked and I breezed through the park and onto my first proper road. So far so good.

Five minutes into my ride my hands were numb with cold (should have worn gloves), my bum hurt (should have... er...?) and I discovered my helmet was too big and kept slipping over my eyes every time I turned my head.

But believe it or not, after a few wrong turns and countless adjustments of my helmet and work bag, I arrived at the office. I was soaked through, with wobbly legs and totally bedraggled, but boy was I exhilarated! The four mile journey only took twenty minutes and I had managed to cycle up every hill without getting off the bike and pushing it – what a result! I was so proud of myself. I had managed →

to find back-routes to work, negotiate the rush hour traffic, and remain in one piece. I had conquered the bike and was ready for anything.

Anything, that is, except the sun setting and darkness falling by 5.30 pm when it was time to cycle home. I had forgotten to put the ruddy lights on the bike!

Following a desperate call to my other half, he bundled the baby into the car and came to pick me and the bike up. He then helped me compile a list of the things I needed to do to ensure that the cycle to work would run more smoothly. **I booked the bike into a local bike shop to get it serviced, I bought some casual sensible gear to wear on my bike ride, I bought a pannier and a new helmet** – and, oh, I nearly forgot, I got a padded bike seat fitted!

After a week of proper preparation, I was back on my bike. I only work three days a week so now have a routine where I cycle to work every Tuesday. It's not every day, but it's a start and much better than a few months ago.

I drop my daughter Rosa at nursery and then drive to my parents' house where my bike is stored. I then cycle to and from work and collect Rosa at the end of the day. It's a bit more effort than jumping into the car, but it's far outweighed by the benefits.

The biggest change for me has been how much healthier and livelier I now feel. Before I started

cycling to work, I did no exercise at all. I was desperate to lose some baby weight and I felt unfit and sluggish – a far cry from my pre-baby self.

With a demanding ten-month-old and a challenging part-time job, I just didn't have the time or energy to get fit, even though I knew deep down it would make me feel so much better.

So cycling has been perfect for me. I now know that once a week I am going to get 40 minutes of exercise on my way to and from work. I definitely feel fitter and it's amazing how the weight is falling off again after I had hit a brick wall. I get into work feeling bright and ready for the day, invigorated and alert, and I drink far more water than I used to. I have also found things in common with other people in the office who cycle to work. You just can't tell from looking at someone – they all look pretty normal to me!

And I love the time I spend riding to work. It is a rare moment just for me, when I feel independent and free. Like Gareth, I love cycling through a London morning and being exposed to the fresh air and the weather, and I notice far more than I used to on my journey to work.

So I would wholeheartedly recommend to anyone who lives within a reasonable distance from work to try to cycle there. If things are busy and tough with a

**"I love the time I spend riding to work. It is a rare moment just for me, when I feel independent and free"**

family, don't set yourself up to fail but set an achievable goal. For me, cycling once a week is the right goal as I can do it without too much effort – which is the order of the day with a little one and a part-time job. I am even considering buying a baby carrier for some weekend casual cycling in the park with Rosa.

My main advice would be to get organised before you start. I was so keen to get going, and had been putting off my cycle ride for so long, I just jumped on my bike. With hindsight, if I had been more prepared for my first ride it would have gone much more smoothly. **Make sure your bike is working, the lights are fitted, your seat is the right height and you're appropriately dressed** (in clothes that are neither too baggy nor tight, and flat shoes). You don't need to buy flashy kit, but it's worth buying or borrowing some specialist gear – like a reflective garment and a pannier bag. And when you plan your route, make sure you allow ample extra time for your first run!

There you have it. I am a busy mum with precious little time for me, so if I can do it, so can you! Go on and give it a go... and let me know how you get on. ●

Contact Claire at [claire@cyclelifestyle.co.uk](mailto:claire@cyclelifestyle.co.uk)

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# St. Anton am Arlberg on Tour

From 8th – 22nd August, in the Austrian village of St. Anton am Arlberg, our sporting guests will step determinedly into the pedals and be cared for just like in a professional competition.

“During summer, anyone who would like to experience the mountains on a racing cycle will be in good hands here”, claimed a participant on last’s year’s racing-bike week in St. Anton am Arlberg. Following this successful one-week debut, the holiday region is turning to two weeks on wheels in 2010. During this time, participating sportspersons will be professionally cared for by race-experienced guides, who themselves train in the Arlberg. These professionals will offer tips and tricks and will accompany the guests on each of the stages, which will vary according to each participant’s capability level. With daily routes of between 80 and 150 kilometres that reach up to 2,000 vertical metres, as well as accompanying vehicles, a service team, stage refreshments, tricot and Après Bike, the bike weeks are sport-filled.

## Arlberger Bike Marathon, 21st August

The finale of the St. Antoner bike weeks is the “Arlberger Bike Marathon”, on 21st August. The Tourist Federation is also offering a special four-day warm-up for this

competition, from 18th – 22nd August, with various training circuits involving route inspection and professional tips. Anyone who considers themselves capable of the challenge can participate in the Arlberger Bike Marathon. A 41km-long contest, it is one of the disciplines of the unique, world-wide Mountain Triathlon “The Arlberg Adler” which consists of the mountain-bike race, a half-marathon in July, and the cult ski race “The White Thrill” in April. Following the big finale on two wheels the heroes of the Triathlon will be duly celebrated and the coveted Adler Trophy 2010 will be presented to the overall winner of all three disciplines.

## Four- and seven-day packages

During both racing-bike weeks (8th – 15th and 15th – 22nd August), participants can choose between a four-day and a seven-day package. Both options include accommodation, power-breakfast and evening meal, starter-pack with biking tricot and shorts, and the appropriate daily and weekly plan according to capability. The four-day package starts from €300 and the seven-day package is available from €467. The four-day pre-marathon package from 18th – 22nd August is on offer from €305. ●



**st. Anton**  **ARLBERG**

## St. Anton am Arlberg on tour...

**Racing-bike week 1**  
**08.-15. 08. 2010**  
**Racing-bike week 2**  
**15.-22. 08. 2010**

Daily routes of between 50 and 93 miles, up to 6,500 vertical feet, accompanying vehicles, service team, stage refreshments, tricot and Après Bike – the bike weeks are sport-filled. Not least, due to its location and the varied mountain scenery, St. Anton am Arlberg is the ideal starting point for large racing-bike tours over alpine roads and passes.

Tourist Office St. Anton am Arlberg (Tirol/Austria), phone: 0043-5446-2269-0  
fax: 0043-5446-2532, [info@stantonamarlberg.com](mailto:info@stantonamarlberg.com), [www.stantonamarlberg.com](http://www.stantonamarlberg.com)



# Cycling Vogue

And the new It Bag is... a bike!

by Cathy Wallace

Pick up any women's magazine and in amongst the jumpsuits and jeggings and life-changing lip-gloss, you might notice a new, must-have accessory. No, not the latest £5,000 designer handbag named after some ubiquitous and overexposed celebrity. I'm talking about the bikes.

Super-cool label Diesel has launched a new ad campaign featuring a couple on a bicycle, and Lacoste's latest adverts show preppy types pedalling on vintage shoppers. **If the likes of Diesel and Lacoste are turning to bikes for kudos, we can safely conclude that cycling is officially – and literally – in Vogue.**

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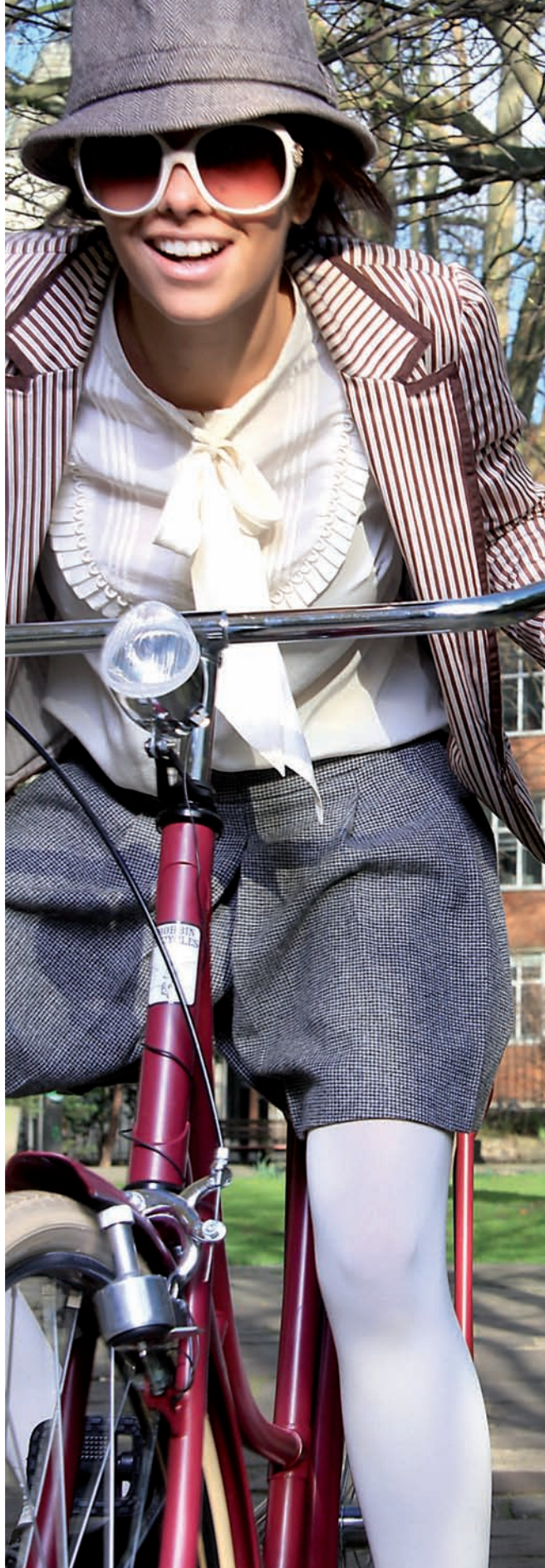
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## Top tips for stylish cycling

When it comes to your outfit, think transferable. Leggings and a tunic, dress or oversized shirt, or skinny jeans and a cute top, are ideal for cycling to your destination and arriving looking like you've stepped out of the pages of *Vogue*.

Converse are a girl's best friend – ever on-trend and the perfect footwear for pedalling.



During the chilly winter months, warm up with layers – a merino wool jumper over a cotton tee and skinny jeans will keep you toasty warm. If you're not a heavy sweater, wear your winter coat on top, or invest in a weather-proof jacket in a decent cut and colour.

Check out online stockists like [Cyclechic.co.uk](http://Cyclechic.co.uk), *Cyclodolic* and *Two n Fro* for the latest hi-tech fabrics that look great, keep you warm in winter and cool in summer, and have reflective details to ensure greater visibility.

Avoid the dreaded helmet hair by freshening up with a spritz of dry shampoo on your arrival. Pack facial wipes too so you can quickly get rid of any excess sweat before touching up your makeup. Waterproof mascara is a must in the great British climate.

'You can't open a glossy magazine these days without seeing a bicycle in there somewhere,' says Caz Nicklin, founder of [Cyclechic.co.uk](http://Cyclechic.co.uk). 'The biggies *Vogue* and *Elle* often use bikes in their shoots, and I recently bought a bridal magazine which had a fantastic spread with a pink Pashley Poppy.' Caz attributes the new, high-fashion status of cycling to its inherent style. 'Cycling has a natural elegance that goes hand-in-hand with fashion. A woman on a bike has status, independence, personality and stands out from the crowd.'

Laura Davies, sub-editor at *Elle* magazine, agrees: 'There is a romanticism in cycling, which echoes current trends of florals, lace and ruffles. But cycling is something that will continue to be cool due to health, money and sustainability benefits, long past fashion trends.'

Cyclists around the UK will be letting out a cheer at the news that their beloved hobby is now, officially, fashionable. Once upon a time, the tanned blonde babe in see-through white hotpants and a bra top aboard a racing bike, her shapely rear end in the air, was the poster girl for

cycling. The only viable alternative was the muscly, Lycra-clad, 'one of the lads' woman.

Now it's super-cool Agyness Deyn in sunglasses on her shopper, or fashion designer Vivienne Westwood arriving at movie premieres on her Pashley Princess. Women no longer have to look like either Brazilian beach volleyball players or men in disguise on their bikes. They can be themselves – fashion-conscious and all – only on two wheels.

Helen Wright, beauty and health editor at *Real People* magazine, says: 'Snaps of Agyness Deyn have helped promote cycling as an enjoyable pastime. She would be seen riding around in normal clothes, looking carefree. Before this there was a lot of Madonna, and other sporty types, kitted out in all the gear. This made cycling look more like exercise, or something to be taken seriously – and a lot more masculine.' Wright thinks the new wave of fashionable female cyclists will encourage more women onto their bikes. **'Watching celebs saddle up will put the idea of cycling into women's heads and provide inspiration.'**

Claire Morris, a PR account executive, is living proof of this. 'I have turned to cycling for the first time in my adult life – it is a cheaper option to get fit, will reduce my carbon emissions and if it's good enough for (Radio One DJ) Edith Bowman and Aggy Deyn then it's good enough for me!' She adds that environmental and financial issues, too, have helped propel cycling up the fashion →

**"The beauty of bikes is they are so versatile, you can pick something that really suits your personality or the look you want to go for"**





agenda. 'More of us want to stand out from the crowd and travel alternatively, to help cut costs and carbon emissions.'

Rachael Wood, author of cycling blog *Roger and Me*, agrees: 'Suddenly spending obscene amounts of money on the gym and transport seems ridiculous when you can get a workout and arrive at work on time on a bike. When I started I was considered a bit weird and eccentric for cycling to work – but now several people have followed my lead.'

The good news continues, as the increase in demand for stylish cycling means the availability of beautiful bikes and gorgeous accessories, such as printed panniers and flattering helmets, has stepped up in recent years. This is best demonstrated by the rise in websites selling stylish accessories and clothing for female cyclists, such as [Cyclodelic](#) or [Cyclechic.co.uk](#), both of which are going from strength to strength. The must-have Mulberry bag has been replaced by the lust-have Basil pannier.

Uber-chic cyclist Janina Conboye, a journalist from Shoreditch, London, says a bike is a genuinely useful fashion accessory. 'The beauty of bikes is they are so versatile, you can pick something that

really suits your personality or the look you want to go for. **You can go for the slick racer and all the pro garb, or you can opt for the more traditional vintage look favoured by the east London arty types.** The fact certain bikes are now being marketed essentially as a fashion accessory is doing no end of favours for the rise of the humble bicycle.'

This is a welcome revolution. Traditionally, cycling was not a suitable pursuit for 'girly girls'. You could guarantee any females on cycling websites or forums would proclaim themselves to be tomboys or 'one of the guys'.

But now increasing numbers of young, fashion-conscious women are loading up their Basil panniers and getting on their vintage bikes. 'The image of cycling has come a long way in the last few years,' says Caz. Cycling is becoming not just accessible, but positively attractive to the female market that was previously alienated by cycling's techie, boyish image. Let's hope it continues! ●

Cathy Wallace is a 29-year-old journalist and writer who lives in South London and commutes to work by bike every day come rain or shine. She owns two bikes, one for everyday and one for 'special occasions'.



Photo courtesy of [Cyclechic.co.uk](#)

The image shows a black background with the MORVELO logo at the top, which consists of the word 'MORVELO' in a stylized white font above a white graphic of wings and a lightning bolt. Below the logo, it says 'BICYCLE APPAREL' in white. Further down, the text 'Clothing for those that love to ride.' is written in a light green font. At the bottom, there is a green horizontal bar with the website 'MORVELO.COM' in white. Below this, a white bracket contains the text 'T-SHIRTS / HEADWEAR / CYCLE CLOTHING' in green.



# Racing to a Cycle Clothing Success

**F**ounded less than a year ago by two avid cyclists, Yorkshire company Shutt Velo Rapide continues to take the cycle clothing industry by storm, offering stylish and affordable merino Sportwool cycling jerseys.

**Shutt has now extended its product line to include a range developed specifically for women**, including new jersey designs, shorts, tights and accessories.

Shutt's cycling jerseys are made from a fabric called 'Sportwool'. A natural response to lycra, it is designed to keep you cool when it's hot, warm when it's cold, and has very high wicking capabilities.

As a result of their jerseys turning heads on the road and winning rave reviews in the press, Shutt was approached at the beginning of the year by Elite British Cycle Team Orbea-For Goodness Shakes! ([www.orbea-forgoodnessshakes.com](http://www.orbea-forgoodnessshakes.com)) to supply the team kit for 2010. Shutt's Managing Director Simon Warren was ecstatic:

"We are all keen cyclists at Shutt VR and to be approached by a professional team is a real vindication of all the hard work we put in last year. We cannot wait to see the team winning races with their arms aloft this year."

Peter Bragg, Shutt's Marketing Director, explained: "Our garments feature classic designs, signature colours and are made in the UK, all of which appealed to the Orbea-For Goodness Shakes! management team."

The end result is that, with the race tested designs, Shutt can improve the quality of the clothing the team uses, while also providing customers with the best in British-made cycling clothing.

**Another unique feature of the Shutt cycle clothing company is their 'bespoke service'**, something which means customers can tailor their jerseys to their exact taste.

Simon explained: "Because we manufacture locally and have a large selection of colours available, we can create many hundreds of combinations for customers. The turn-around for the bespoke service is expected to be around seven working days – pretty quick for something a rider can design themselves."

Shutt VR is selling predominately via their website but they are also enlisting a small number of specialist retailers around the country. ●

*To see the full range of clothing and place an order, visit [www.shuttvr.com](http://www.shuttvr.com), e-mail [sales@shuttvr.com](mailto:sales@shuttvr.com) or call 01943 601 031*



Photo © Dominic James

# The Peddler

## A day in the life of a London cyclist

by Adam Copeland

When you cycle the same route every day, you need a game or two to keep things interesting. I'm not talking about rugby league (impractical) or blind man's bluff (risky). I'm talking about a game I loosely call 'The Race' - or just 'the race', to take away the capital letters you'll soon realise it definitely doesn't deserve.

Here's how it works. At the start of your journey, your score is zero. For every cyclist you overtake, it goes up one, and for everyone who overtakes you, it goes down one. The aim of the race is simple: finish your journey in credit.



More crucially, of course, the aim is actually to make sure nobody realises you're playing it at all. "Why did I just shout 'Yes! Plus 12' at you? Well, that's because I've essentially reduced a friendly form of transport to a competitive war of numbers to help me cope with the terrifying randomness of life." It's not an ideal conversation to have on your way to work.

Once you've got over the inherent shame in playing this unfortunate but addictive game, you'll soon realise there are plenty of other rules you'll need to invent. For example, if you overtake someone just because they're waiting to turn, does that merit a point? Or if you've overhauled somebody and they then sail straight past you at a red light, do they deserve their point back? And if you overtake someone and it dawns on you you've basically been counting strangers every morning for the past 8 years, does that make you a social failure?

Of course that's not the only danger. If another cyclist hears you say "plus four", he or she may well assume you've got a unique condition that compels you to blurt out items of popular Victorian golfing wear. Especially if you're wearing tartan socks and riding a penny farthing. Fortunately I'm over that phase now.

Once recently (on Valentine's Day, appropriately enough), the game was interrupted when another man on a bike overtook me ("damn, minus one") and said something I couldn't hear. Assuming it was something along the lines of "good morning", or perhaps even "hello, have a good day", I replied with what I thought was a fairly safe "you too."

Only later, when I caught him up at some lights, did I realise this might have been a misleading response. "Did you hear what I said?" he asked me. "I said to you, 'you've got a nice arse'."

"Oh," I said, not knowing where to look. For a moment I nearly forgot my score. I muttered "thanks" as the lights changed, and pedaled off ahead of him. Back to zero, I smiled triumphantly. ●



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