

Did you know?

- 🚲 The average cost of travel per mile for a car is 79p. The average cost of travel per mile for a bike is 4p!
- 🚲 On a bicycle you can travel up to 1037 kilometres on the energy equivalent of a single litre of petrol.
- 🚲 Cycling for half an hour every day can halve the risk of heart disease.
- 🚲 There are more bicycles in Aberdeen than cars.
- 🚲 Regular cycling cuts out the need to pay for expensive gyms.
- 🚲 Cycling for 20 minutes uses as much energy as: swimming breast stroke for 13 minutes, playing football for 15 minutes, doing aerobics for 20 minutes or walking for 25 minutes.
- 🚲 Depending on your speed you can burn between 375 - 600 calories per hour.
- 🚲 Medical studies have shown that if you cycle regularly, you're likely to live about 5 years longer and enjoy the health benefits of a person around 10 years younger.
- 🚲 Motor vehicles contribute to around 27% of all Greenhouse Gas emissions.
- 🚲 People commuting in vehicles breathe in 25% more pollution than those cycling.
- 🚲 Cycle commuters are more certain of their journey times compared to those taking the car.

The Aberdeen Cycle Forum

ACF is a voluntary group seeking to encourage and develop cycling within Aberdeen. The Forum aims to:

- 🚲 Improve cycling facilities.
- 🚲 Achieve a higher profile for cycling.
- 🚲 Highlight the benefits of cycling as an everyday and sustainable form of transport.

If you would like to get involved, visit the website:

www.aberdeencycleforum.org.uk

NESTRANS Sustainable Transport Grants

Any business or organisation in the North East may apply for a maximum of 50% funding towards measures to help develop a more sustainable and integrated transport system for the region.

If you would like to apply for a grant to improve cycle facilities in your company or organisation, go to the NESTRANS website and look under 'Sustainable Transport'.

www.nestrans.org.uk

Aberdeen City Council

ACC is currently working towards improving cycling facilities in and around Aberdeen. If you have any comments on cycling and where you would like to see improvements, visit the website:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk



CYCLING TO WORK

A Guide To Cycling To Work In and Around Aberdeen



Introduction

Why not discover the benefits to your health, the environment and your bank balance by cycling for some or all of your commute to work.

With its increasing popularity has come the realisation that cycling is environmentally friendly, cheap, efficient and quicker for local journeys. It is also a great way to maintain and increase your health and fitness.

Aberdeen City Council is trying to encourage more of us to get on our bikes. This in response to local demands for better provision for cyclists and wider recognition of the benefits of cycling.



We hope that by producing this guide we will complement recent infrastructure improvements and provide useful information to anyone wanting to use a bike for commuting to their work.

Buying a Bike

Thousands of bikes are sold in Scotland every year but rarely get ridden. This is usually because they are the wrong bike for the purpose. Almost any bike will do when you are only going on a journey of a couple of kilometres, but if you plan to do some regular commuter cycling, you might want to invest in something more suited to your needs.

It is recommended that you go to a good, well-established cycle dealer for expert advice. The bikes will be lighter, better equipped and more reliable.

There are good second hand bikes to be found, but they need to be chosen with care. You should go for the best that you can reasonably afford, as it is not worth risking the inconvenience and cost of repair bills on second rate machines.

For more information go to the Company of Cyclists website:

www.getcycling.info

What should I wear?

You can cycle in almost anything, although jeans and other garments with bulky seams are not that comfortable on longer rides. Wearing layers lets you control your temperature - it's better to be a bit colder for the first couple of miles than to swelter for the rest of the way.

A wide range of cycle specific clothing is available, but breathable waterproofs will help keep you comfortable and cut out wind chill. A pair of gloves will also add to your comfort. Wear fluorescent yellow in daylight and reflective material at night.

A good helmet will fit you properly, meet standards, won't come off when the straps are done up and should be replaced if at all damaged.

Adult Cycle Training

If you have not been in the saddle for a while and would like to gain some practice or road confidence, the Cyclists' Touring Club and Aberdeen Cycle Forum run free adult training sessions.

Trained cycle leaders lead the rides every Sunday starting the first Sunday in April. They meet at 10am at the Duthie Park, by the pond (off Riverside Drive). To learn more visit:

www.ctcgrampian.org.uk

www.aberdeencycleforum.org.uk

A guide to safe and comfortable cycle use

- 🚲 A saddle should be adjusted so that you are able to cycle comfortably. When seated your feet should be able to touch the ground with approximately half of your foot.
- 🚲 Ensure that the pressure of your tyres is correct. The safe tyre pressure for your bike should be marked on the tyre sidewall. Check the tyres for obvious marks, cuts or excessive wear - never ride a bike with damaged tyres.
- 🚲 Check that all your lights are working, even during the day it may be necessary to use your lights if the weather is bad. Never cycle at night without lights.
- 🚲 Reflectors should be visible and clean, rear reflectors and pedal reflectors are also now required by law on all bikes.
- 🚲 Check your brakes. They should be aligned correctly and stop the bike. You must have separate working brakes on the front and rear of your bike. If not, don't ride the bike until they have been adjusted properly. If in any doubt take your bike to a bike shop.

Planning your route

It is worth planning your route carefully to work, and maybe even going on a test run. The Aberdeen Cycle Forum can help plan the best route and accompany you on your first trip. Pick up a copy of the Aberdeen Cycle Map which shows off-road routes and cycle lanes, as well as recommended quiet routes around the City. The maps are available in libraries and the Point. If you cannot find one get in touch:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

www.aberdeencycleforum.org.uk

If you are not comfortable with cycling all the way to work, then some people take their bikes by car part of the way, then cycle the remainder. This gives them exercise and cheaper (or free) parking. They drive where motor traffic is faster and cycle where bike traffic is faster. This makes the journey time much more reliable than if you just used your car.

If you are just starting to cycle regularly, you will need to make sure you don't push yourself too hard. Cycle at a pace that you feel comfortable with, as it will take a few days for your body to adjust. It is better to start with short distances and gradually cycle further and further each day. The faster you go, the more air resistance you encounter so to race at a high speed you have to be athletic. If you cycle at a moderate pace you will make useful progress without needing to get hot and sweaty.



Advanced Stop Lines

Advanced Stop Lines are red coloured boxes at the front of traffic light junctions. They allow cyclists to take the most suitable position at busy junctions, in clear view of other road users. They help cyclists get to the front of the queue and give them a head start, making it easier and safer to cycle.



If the lights are green on approach cyclists should not under/overtake other vehicles. If necessary, stay back and ensure you are clearly visible to following drivers.

If the traffic lights are red, cyclists can proceed with care past the first stop line and wait behind the advanced stop line in the red 'reservoir' area until the lights change to green.

Cyclists should not pass vehicles, particularly lorries and buses, unless they can be sure the 'reservoir' can be reached safely.

Cycling in Traffic – Tips for new cyclists

Your Rights: Remember you have the same right to be on the road as any other road user. Be considerate to pedestrians and other road users. Follow the Highway Code – don't cycle through red lights or pedestrian crossings; don't cycle on pavements or the wrong way up one-way streets (unless clearly signed to do so).

Road Positioning: Position yourself well on the road. Ride clear of the kerb and parked cars. This makes you visible, avoids glass, etc. which might be at the road side, keeps you out of reach of drivers who open their car doors without looking and gives you space to move into should you need to. When traffic is slow moving, and when approaching junctions, take up a position in the middle of the lane like other vehicles. This ensures that you are clearly visible to the person behind and that you have space to manoeuvre.

Think Ahead: Assume that drivers won't indicate before turning, won't stop immediately the lights change to red, etc. Make eye contact with drivers, especially at junctions. This helps ensure that the person has seen you and takes you into account. Look around - and signal clearly before any manoeuvre. Beware of trucks and other large vehicles, especially where they are turning left. Keep a safe distance behind as the driver has a blind spot down both sides of the vehicle. Be especially cautious at junctions, bends, entrances and near obstructions and avoid the need to brake sharply in wet conditions.



Cycle security

Having got your bike, you will want to keep it! A ‘U’ lock is best, but will typically cost around £25. Always lock your bike to a fixed object - preferably a bike rack, but if not, be considerate to pedestrians and especially think about blind people and wheelchair users when you park.

Cycle Parking at Park & Ride Sites

If you would prefer to cycle and then take the bus, both Kingswells and Bridge of Don Park & Ride sites have cycle lockers. These can be used if you provide your own lock.

Cycle Parking at Stations

There are a number of cycle lockers currently available at both Aberdeen City and Dyce train stations. Dyce Station lockers can be booked through Aberdeen City Council on **01224 523327**, while the lockers in College Street car park can be used if you provide your own lock.

Bikes On Trains

There is currently no charge for carrying bicycles on any train operating throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. However, space is limited especially on busy peak hour trains. An advanced reservation (usually 24 hours) is necessary and can be made free of charge when buying tickets or at staffed stations. Folding cycles are carried free of charge and without restriction.

Reservation numbers:

First ScotRail: 08457 550033

GNER: 08457 225225

Virgin: 08457 222333

Tackling those hills!

Aberdeen does have a few hills that are harder if you are new to cycling or haven’t cycled for some time; it takes time to build up your strength and endurance.

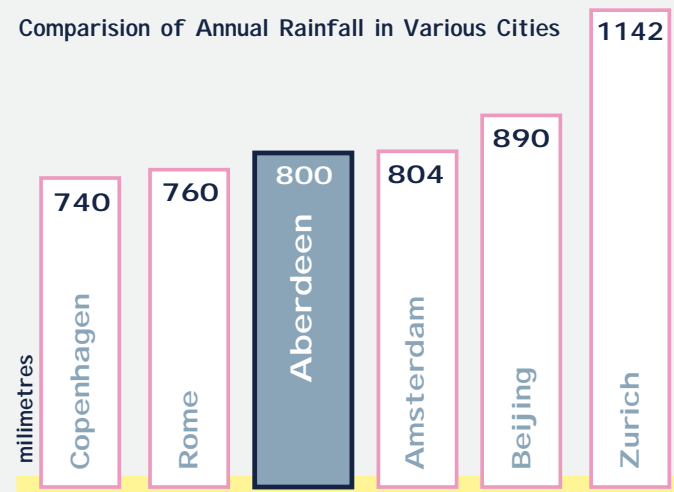
Remember that getting up hill on a bike is as much about technique as it is about strength and endurance. The most common mistake is to work too hard at the beginning of a hill in too high a gear, and get tired out before the top. It is better to go up slowly in a low gear with your legs ‘spinning’ than to stand on the pedals and heave yourself up in a high gear. That way you are more likely to have a bit left in reserve, rather than run out of steam before the top.

... And coping with the Aberdeen weather

To be honest, it doesn’t really rain that much in Aberdeen! It just sometimes feels like it does!

In fact Aberdeen has a pretty low rainfall compared to other cities, it’s actually drier than Amsterdam where everyone seems to cycle.

Comparison of Annual Rainfall in Various Cities



(Source: www.iexplore.com)

Cycling Code of Conduct

Cyclists and pedestrians are natural allies in wanting and needing safe and attractive routes around the City. With more people cycling, and more shared use paths being developed, it is important that cyclists behave responsibly. We all benefit from courteous cycling.

As a cyclist you cannot expect to use shared paths and pedestrianised zones for high-speed travel. Different skills and techniques are needed from road cycling as explained below:

- 🚲 Always give priority to pedestrians.
- 🚲 Even if the path is segregated, do not expect pedestrians to stay on their side, especially young children.
- 🚲 Never speed close by pedestrians, especially from behind.
- 🚲 Always be ready to slow right down and make sure you can stop if anyone unexpectedly moves sideways - children and dogs are particularly unpredictable.
- 🚲 Use your bell or a friendly voice (e.g. “bike passing to your left”) to let pedestrians know you are there, but remember that they may not step the right way and that some may not be able to hear you.
- 🚲 Slow down near blind spots like bends, entrances and trees.
- 🚲 When passing on-coming cyclists it is normal to pass on the left.
- 🚲 Be polite - say thank you if a pedestrian moves for you, especially on a narrow path.
- 🚲 Use lights at night - it helps oncoming cyclists and pedestrians to see you.