

CYCLING

Your questions answered



Keeping our city moving - Factsheet 2

Plymouth is a great city to cycle in, for both leisure and commuting. We are working to encourage more cycling in Plymouth by developing a network of high quality routes across the city.

More and more people are taking up cycling in Plymouth – why not join them and find out how easy and fun it is for yourself?

WHY SHOULD I CYCLE?

- Regular cyclists enjoy fitness levels equal to those of people 10 years younger
- A good bike will last for years and cost very little to maintain. It can be parked for free almost anywhere
- Bikes do not pollute the air and are much quieter than other vehicles on the road.

ISN'T PLYMOUTH TOO HILLY TO CYCLE AROUND?

Plymouth is no more hilly than Exeter, which has seen a 40 per cent increase in cycling since becoming a 'cycling demonstration' city four years ago. Most modern bikes have gears that help make hills much easier to cycle up. In Switzerland around 12 per cent of journeys are by bike, which is three times as many as in Plymouth currently.

ISN'T IT TOO DANGEROUS TO CYCLE IN THE CITY?

The health risks of cycling are far outweighed by the health benefits. We provide both on and off road routes to help cyclists stay safer, as well as free cycle training for all Plymouth residents, including children through an initiative called 'Bikeability' in schools. Evidence shows that the more people cycle the safer it becomes, as motorists get used to sharing the road.

WHY WOULD I CYCLE WHEN IT'S QUICKER FOR ME TO DRIVE?

In a busy city like Plymouth, travelling by bike is often quicker and easier than getting about by car especially during the rush hour. Go to www.plymouth.gov.uk/cyclingjourneytimes for estimated journey times between key locations.

DOESN'T IT RAIN TOO MUCH IN PLYMOUTH TO CYCLE?

In Plymouth we have more hours of sunshine than the UK average. Someone who commutes 20 minutes to and from work every day by bike will, on average, get rained on once every two weeks. This means cycling can be an enjoyable and convenient way to travel all year round.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT BREATHING IN POLLUTION.

When you travel by car you are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from the traffic in front of you than if you walked or cycled. This is because the air intake on a car is low to the ground in the centre of the road where pollution levels are highest.

For information
about cycle training
call 01752 668000
or email bikelinks@plymouth.gov.uk

IT'S JUST TOO FAR FOR ME TO CYCLE.

Most trips made around the city are less than three miles long and will take less than 20 minutes by bike. We know it's not possible to make every trip by bike but there are opportunities to change a significant number of trips from car to bike.

WHY PROVIDE CYCLE LANES?

Most cyclists I've seen don't use them and cycle in the middle of the road!

Cycling is increasing by around three per cent each year so we are improving the network of routes and lanes to encourage more people to use them, particularly continuous cycle routes between key locations. Cyclists are entitled to cycle on the carriageway and it is often safer to take a position away from the kerb to be more visible. Cyclists should, of course, always abide by the Highway Code.

WHY SPEND MONEY ON CYCLISTS? THEY DON'T PAY ROAD TAX.

The commonly named 'road tax' that car owners pay is Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and is based on how polluting the vehicle is. So even if it was levied on cycles it would be set at zero like the lowest polluting cars. The money from VED goes into the Central Government pot and is not specifically allocated to fund road maintenance.

Investing in cycling brings benefits for everyone, as people switching to bikes helps to reduce congestion and improve the health of our city. This means reduced health care costs and less money needed to repair Plymouth's roads.

The council has recently been successful in securing external funding to support the development of cycle routes and infrastructure.

WHY DON'T CYCLISTS HAVE TO INSURE THEMSELVES, LIKE CAR DRIVERS?

Cyclists are not required by law to insure themselves. This reflects the fact that very few road traffic accidents are caused by cyclists. However, an increasing number of regular cyclists are opting to take out insurance.

WHERE CAN I CYCLE AND WHERE CAN I SECURELY PARK MY BIKE?

Our cycle map provides a guide to routes in Plymouth and details about cycle parking and lockers. A copy can be found at www.plymouth.gov.uk/cycling or by calling 01752 668000. Where dedicated cycle parking is not provided we ask that cyclists secure their bikes in a visible location where it will not cause a hazard or obstruction to others.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ENCOURAGE CYCLING?

Over the next 15 years we will be implementing our Strategic Cycle Network, which will link with National Cycle Network routes and provide local routes across the city. To support and encourage people to cycle we will also:

- be looking to reduce traffic speeds on residential roads
- work with developers of non-residential sites to provide changing facilities, showers and cycle parking
- create more cycle routes along quiet roads and through green spaces
- create more continuous cycle routes by joining up existing cycle lanes where possible
- maintain our existing cycling routes and lanes to a high standard to encourage greater use.

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CITY MOVING**

01752 668000

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/
transportandroads](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/transportandroads)