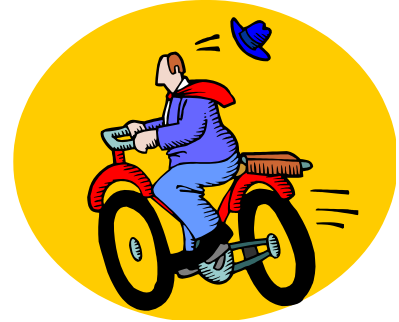




#### **Why Cycle?**

With the lowest rainfall and highest levels of sunshine in Scotland it's no surprise that so many people choose to cycle round Dunbar. The town is compact and mostly flat. Moderate exercise taken every day is far more beneficial than one big workout per week, so if you don't already cycle for all your local errands, why not give it a go? You don't have to wear special clothes or need a special bike though it helps if it's designed for low maintenance and to keep your clothes clean. For short distances, cycling is fast and convenient and with the right equipment you can carry heavy loads of shopping or children.



Dunbar Primary School has one of the highest rates of cycling to school in Scotland. This has given children the opportunity to experience the freedom and independence which their own transport can give them, as well as giving them knowledge of road safety and a healthy start in life. By maintaining this through their lifetime they will help to create a clean, safe and healthier community. Now mums and dads, younger siblings and grandparents have begun to accompany them on bikes and trailers too. You can become part of the cycling culture, even if you haven't cycled in earnest since you were a child. It's easy, think of all the money you'll save, the exercise you'll get, and you'll be doing your bit to help the environment too.

**This factsheet will give you basic help and advice on how to start out cycling again. You're not alone; most bicycles in the Dunbar area are not being used regularly, let's change this!**

#### **Health and Wellbeing**

- People cycling regularly in mid adulthood typically have a level of fitness equivalent to being 10 years younger and a life expectancy 2 years above the average<sup>1</sup>.
- Cycling 20 miles a week reduces the risk of heart disease by half<sup>2</sup>.
- In slow moving traffic there is three times as much pollution inside a car than outside<sup>2</sup>.
- Cycling is an ideal way to fit some exercise into your normal daily routine; just 30 minutes of cycling burns around 300 calories. Cycling firms your thighs and bottom and can tone your tummy muscles<sup>1</sup>.
- A research study in California showed that children who walk or cycle to school arrived more ready to learn and achieved higher exam results than those who were driven to school<sup>3</sup>. In addition to health benefits, children who cycle to school learn a sense of responsibility for their travel and for looking after their bikes. They connect more directly with their surroundings, the changing weather and seasons, developing social skills and becoming independent travellers<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Money and Time Saving**

- £1 in every £6 spent by the average UK household is on travel, the potential to save money by cycling is huge!
- Cycling is often the fastest way to travel for journeys of less than 3 miles, the average cycling speed varies between 6 and 12 miles per hour.
- Cycling is much cheaper than getting the car out for that trip round the corner; short journeys cost an average of £2.40 per mile.

<sup>1</sup> Sustrans

<sup>2</sup> East Lothian Council

<sup>3</sup> Cycling Action Plan for Scotland

- Wear and tear on your car is highest during short journeys.
- You can usually park your bike outside your destination for free.
- You don't need road tax, an MOT or breakdown cover for a bike.

## **Environment**

- It helps the environment by reducing emissions, congestion and noise; cycling is 70 times more efficient than the average car.
- Cycling instead of using a car for a 3 mile journey will save CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent to that of boiling 40 kettles.

## **Maps and routes**

National Cycle Network 76 (Coast and Castles) goes right through Dunbar. Quiet paths through the woods in Dunbar and Belhaven, and routes to Whitesands and Belhaven Bay are also easily reached and suitable for inexperienced cyclists. Information about suitable routes for cycling can be found in

- Cycling in East Lothian (East Lothian Council, free)
- Dunbar and East Linton Maps (Sustaining Dunbar, free)
- East Lothian Cycle Map (SPOKES, £4.95)
- Cycle Tours in and Around Dunbar (Sustaining Dunbar, free)

All these publications are available from Sustaining Dunbar at 16, West Port.

## **Safety and Basic Cycling Rules**

Mutual respect and consideration for other road users and pedestrians will make travel more enjoyable and safer. Using your bike bell and friendly greetings will make a big difference.

- Be considerate to all road users and pedestrians; let walkers know you're behind them with a friendly bell or "excuse me", and say thank you when they move for you. Leave as much space as possible when passing, it is usual to pass on the right, and take care when passing small children and dogs; they don't always do what you expect.
- Ride well clear of the kerb, to avoid potholes and drains. This will also make you more visible at junctions. Ride a straight line past parked cars rather than dodging between them. Be careful near lorries and buses, they may not be able to see you very well.
- Make sure your bike is in good working order before you set off; brakes should be working well and tyres pumped up and make sure lights are working and reflectors are clean.

## **Bike Parking and Keeping your Bike Safe**

Lothian and Borders Police have a bike registry service giving advice about keeping your bike safe and enabling you to make a note of all your bikes details. This may help if it gets stolen. The basic registration service is free, go [www.bikeregistry.com/](http://www.bikeregistry.com/).

- D-locks or thick cable locks are best, lock through the frame and wheel to a secure object.
- Always park in a busy, well-lit location, near CCTV cameras if possible, and remove any expensive accessories.
- Keep bike out of sight at home, over half of all bikes stolen are from homes.
- Record your bike details such as serial number (usually located on crankshaft under pedals) and get bike security marked with postcode; local police can advise.
- Include bike in home contents insurance or separately if used frequently to commute.
- For children at Dunbar Primary School, Mr Roberson the janitor will engrave your bike or scooter with your name or postcode free of charge. This can be especially useful if there are several children with the same make of bike parked at the school.

## **LOCAL PROJECTS/OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Sustaining Dunbar**

Sustaining Dunbar is working to make it easier and more pleasant to walk, cycle and take public transport in and around the town. We have free information about travel to help you, visit our website [sustainingdunbar.org](http://sustainingdunbar.org), or pop along to our travel advice sessions at the Be Green Shop, 16 West Port, Dunbar, or East Linton Library.

Sustaining Dunbar runs the following projects:-

- **Learn to Look After Your Bike Sessions** - These sessions will give you the skills to look after your own bike and keep it on the road - how to set the best seat/handlebar height for comfortable riding, how to deal with annoying squeaks, mend a puncture and adjust brakes and gears. 2 x 3hr lessons are recommended with a couple of weeks in between for you to practice what you have learned.
- **Road Cycle Training** - Sustaining Dunbar can provide cycle training for all ages and abilities, from learning to cycle (children and adults) to advanced training for commuters, as well as cycling for families.
- **Cycling Buddies Scheme** - This scheme gives free training with qualified cycle trainers for groups of either novice or experienced cyclists. There is a three level training plan tailored to your needs, from gentle rides with a friend to larger groups preparing for charity rides.
- **Household Canny Challenge** - This project gives you advice and support to reduce your carbon footprint. As part of this project, we will give you a voucher for £20 to put towards panniers, a basket, or cycle lights. All you have to do is promise to cycle instead of taking the car on a short journey you make regularly.

Contact [dan@sustainingdunbar.org](mailto:dan@sustainingdunbar.org) for further details of all the above projects.

We also have the following cycling factsheets, available at our office or on our website:-

Factsheet 3 - Choosing and Buying a Bike

Factsheet 4 - Learning to Cycle

Factsheet 5 - Cycling with Children

Factsheet 6 - Looking after your Bike

Factsheet 18 - Carrying Things by Bike

Factsheet 19 - Winter Cycling

### **Dunbar Cycling Group**

Dunbar Cycling Group's primary aim is to encourage more people in Dunbar to take up or renew their interest in cycling. The club actively promotes cycling as a healthy, sociable pastime suitable for all age groups and abilities. Membership of Dunbar Cycling Group is free and is open to everyone over 13 years old. Visit their website [dunbarcycling.org.uk](http://dunbarcycling.org.uk) for further information, including details of a programme of local led cycle rides.

### **Bikes on Trains**

You must make a bike reservation in advance for your train journey if you want to be sure of getting your bike on the train; there are very limited spaces (2-4, depending on train operator).

Bike reservations are free and can be made at the station or by phoning the train operators:-

Scotrail: 08457 550033

Cross Country: 08448 110124

East Coast: 08457 225225

## **Bike Trailers**

Sustaining Dunbar has four trailers for hire for up to two weeks; three cargo trailers and a child trailer. Contact [morag@sustainingdunbar.org](mailto:morag@sustainingdunbar.org) for details.



## **Websites**

[www.sustainingdunbar.org](http://www.sustainingdunbar.org) - information about cycling, Dunbar cycling group and “What’s Stopping You” project, as well as lots of information about other forms of sustainable travel.

[www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/free-your-bike](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/free-your-bike)

[www.thecyclingexperts.co.uk](http://www.thecyclingexperts.co.uk) - to find a specialist cycle retailer near you

[www.whycycle.co.uk](http://www.whycycle.co.uk) - gives wonderful advice for new cyclists in the UK

[www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk) - for all aspects of cycling, including advice about cycling with kids

[www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com) - advice about bike safety

[www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk) - produce guides for family cycling and cycling for women.

[www.thebiketstation.org.uk](http://www.thebiketstation.org.uk) - Bike recycling project in Edinburgh, hundreds of cheap reconditioned bikes available.

[www.cyclestreets.net](http://www.cyclestreets.net) - brilliant site, plans the cycle route for you, giving you the option of fastest or quietest route, shows you profile (hills), distance, carbon saving.

## **Books**

*Bicycle, Love Your Bike: The Complete Guide to Everyday Cycling* by Helen Pidd

*Richards' Bicycle Repair Manual* by Richard Ballantine and Richard Grant. Whatever the task, from fixing a roadside puncture to tackling a major refit, this book's reliable methods and simple instructions show you how to keep a bike in perfect running order.