

CYCLE TRAINING IN EALING Bike Buddy Scheme DSC9

Commute from Northolt to Victoria

- WHAT:** Individual 'Buddy' cycle training including accompanying trainee to work
- WHY:** Cycling to relocated workplace, from Northolt to Victoria (13 miles each way)
- BENEFITS:** Freedom, confidence-builder and fitness
- COST:** For people that work, live or study in Ealing a one-off payment of £5* (includes maintenance training)

* Concessions apply

Bernadette hadn't cycled since she was a child. Now in her mid 50s with a new job in Victoria she was considering commuting by bicycle.

"I always said that I would never cycle on London roads. But with my new job I did think, 'Why not cycle?' I wanted to be active, to combine my commute to work with an exercise regime. The problem was that I was a bit wobbly on the bike. I knew that I needed lessons before I could go on road."

Bernadette found a flyer about cycle training in her local library and signed up to subsidised cycle training lessons offered by the London Borough of Ealing. As well as needing cycle training to improve her cycle skills and increase confidence, Bernadette was particularly concerned about falling off the bicycle which related to a long-term medical condition.

"I was very nervous when I first started but I was also very determined. What helped was that from the beginning I really enjoyed cycling. I found the whole cycling lifestyle very rewarding and it enhanced the quality of my life."

The one-to-one training helped to increase Bernadette's cycling skills and made her more road aware. Techniques such as looking behind, signalling and communicating to other road users and being alert to what was going on around her in traffic helped to increase her confidence. A Cycle Training UK instructor helped plan and accompanied Bernadette on her route to work.

'I had a real fear of falling off my bicycle because of my medical condition... plus the idea of falling in traffic was terrifying. The one-to-one training was really instrumental in overcoming my fear. I can't emphasise that enough. I now cycle in a highly confident yet safe, low risk way in heavy traffic'.

It's only been six months since Bernadette had the initial idea of cycling to work. From being a wobbly cyclist she is now commuting to Victoria from Northolt (some 13 miles each way).



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"I feel invigorated and I have the support of 4 or 5 fellow cyclists at work. I would advise anyone thinking of cycling on road to take the training – it will build up your skills and confidence. However what I would say is that you do need to practice in between your cycle lessons!"

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