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## Record breaking year for the cycle to work scheme

Record numbers of employees participating in the cycle to work scheme throughout 2013 could herald a long-term cycling boom in the UK, the Cycle to Work Alliance believes. Reflecting the growing support and momentum behind cycling, 2013 saw the cycle to work scheme reach a new high, eclipsing 2010's previous peak.

Figures released today by the Cycle to Work Alliance (Cyclescheme, Cycle Solutions, Evans Cycles and Halfords), demonstrate a 16.4% increase in scheme uptake compared to 2012, with 164,317 employees, in the last year alone, having been encouraged to commute to work by bike as a result of the scheme. Rounding off an exceptional year, Q4 2013 saw an 11% year-on-year increase in scheme participation compared to figures for the final quarter of 2012.

This growth marks out the past twelve months as the best year for the scheme as employers increasingly recognise the importance of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices among their staff. The unprecedented level of scheme use reflects the high value employers attribute to the scheme in achieving a healthier workforce.

The scheme's success over the past year demonstrates the core role it continues to play in encouraging new cyclists, in ever greater numbers, to commute to work by bike. The increased profile of cycling in recent times, catalysed initially by the 2012 Olympics and given greater exposure by the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's *Get Britain Cycling* report, has generated interest among commuters in getting back on their bikes. With Britain set to host three stages of this year's Tour de France, this trend looks set to continue.

Steve Edgell, Director of Cycle Solutions and Chair of the Cycle to Work Alliance said: "*The Alliance is, naturally, hugely pleased at the success of the scheme in 2013. Registering our best ever year demonstrates that the scheme remains a proven method of encouraging cycling take-up across the country and remains a critical tool for Government to deliver sustainable transport and public health objectives.*

*Of course, no-one should be resting on their laurels. This is merely the start of what we hope will be a longer-term cycling boom. With only 2% of journeys in the UK made by bike, clearly there is scope to encourage more individuals to take-up cycling, not least to bring our rates of cycling in line with other European countries. In order to achieve this, Government and the industry will need to work together to increase safety and investment in cycling to make getting on the saddle a simple choice".*

**-ENDS-**

Notes for editors:

- The Cycle to Work Alliance is a group of the leading providers of the cycle to work scheme, including Cycle Solutions, Cyclescheme, Evans Cycles and Halfords.
- The cycle to work initiative is a tax-efficient, and on the whole, salary-sacrificed employee benefit that provides a way of encouraging more adults to take up cycling. Introduced in the 1999 Finance Act, the scheme encourages employers to loan bicycles and cycling safety equipment to employees as a tax-exempt benefit for the purpose of cycling to work. Under the scheme, employers buy cycling equipment from suppliers approved by their scheme administrator, and hire it to their employees. At the end of the loan period, the employer may choose to give the employee the option to purchase the equipment.
- For more information please see [www.cycletoworkalliance.org.uk](http://www.cycletoworkalliance.org.uk) or contact Will Nathan at [willnathan@westminsteradvisers.co.uk](mailto:willnathan@westminsteradvisers.co.uk) or 020 3102 3622 / 07796 695169.