



First quarter growth sees increase in commuters cycling to work

The Government supported Cycle to Work Scheme has seen a 9 per cent increase in take up during the first quarter of this year compared to 2011. Members of the Cycle to Work Alliance (Cyclescheme, Cycle Solutions, Evans Cycles and Halfords), have seen a growth in the number of employees signing up to the scheme, reversing recent trends.

From January to March 2012, over 23,400 employees have signed up to the scheme through members of the Alliance, indicating that 2012 is set to be a very popular year for cycling.

The resurgence in the numbers of individuals signing up to the scheme comes on the back of HMRC's clarification on the tax implications for participating companies. The scheme's popularity has been cemented by the clarifications, with companies now able to encourage even more adults to commute to work by bicycle.

With individuals feeling the pinch of rising fuel and public transport costs, the cycle to work scheme provides an affordable solution to reducing commuting costs helping some employees save up to 42% of the cost of a new bike and safety equipment.

Keith Scott, Cycle to Work Alliance member and Head of Business Services at Halfords said: *"The C2W scheme has seen a resurgence at the beginning of the year. The Olympics and Summer of Cycling in 2012, will give cycling another significant boost."*

The Alliance is seeing this growing interest in cycling reflected by businesses. Increasingly employers recognise the potential of a healthy and active workforce and they are keen to help their employees cycle to work.

We hope that backed by continued Government support there will be even greater interest in the scheme and more people commuting to work by bike."

-ENDS-

Notes for editors:

- The Cycle to Work Alliance is a group of the leading providers of the cycle to work scheme, including Cyclescheme, Cycle Solutions, 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.
- To date over 400,000 people have taken advantage of the scheme, which involves over 2,220 bike retailers and 23,000 employers.
- For more information please see www.cycletoworkalliance.org.uk or contact Simon Darby at simon@westminsteradvisers.co.uk or 0207 227 1649