

# Independent.co.uk

## James Daley: Cyclotherapy

Thursday, 19 June 2008

I've always been rather cynical about awareness weeks – unable to see most of them as anything more than shameless and rather pathetic marketing ploys. Sure, there might be a good case for increasing people's knowledge about illnesses or worthy causes, but when it comes to Bacon Connoisseurs' Week, National Doughnut Week and Be Nice to Nettles Week, you can understand why one might find it hard to take them seriously.

This week, however, is Bike Week – and that's a cause I really can get behind. Although the number of people cycling is on the rise, Britain's still a long way behind its European neighbours such as the Netherlands and Germany, with only a very small percentage of people commuting to work, or using their bikes to make short journeys instead of the car.

In many ways, this year's Bike Week is perfectly timed. With petrol prices now at record levels, many motorists are being forced to think twice before they get in their vehicles. Bikes, however, are the perfect, free alternative for shorter journeys, and the costs are negligible compared with motoring.

Although the first half of Bike Week is already over, there are plenty of events coming up aimed at cyclists of all ages and competency. For example, if you've been thinking about biking to work, but have never got round to it, why not check to see if there's a co-ordinated event in your area? Dozens of towns all over Britain are holding group commuting sessions on one or every day this week.

For the children, there are hundreds of rides being held on Saturday and Sunday, while in the big cities, such as York and London, there are also huge cycling exhibits being laid on, where you can watch stunt displays, buy new kit or even get your bike looked at by an expert for free. Most events cost nothing, and the ones that do charge are very cheap. For details of all the events in your area, visit [www.bikeweek.org.uk](http://www.bikeweek.org.uk).

Although I'm not sure it was officially endorsed by Bike Week, the one event I'm sad to have missed was the World Naked Bike Ride, which was held around the UK last Saturday. In London this year, the ride attracted more than 1,000 people, all in various states of undress, and most wearing some kind of body paint.

The ride is held in the name of raising the profile of cycling, while also making a gentle protest against the car. The organisers say it symbolises the vulnerability of the cyclist on the road – and it's certainly a great profile-raiser. Most people in London couldn't get their cameras out quickly enough when they saw 1,000 nude cyclists approaching on Saturday.

Alas, there's no more nude cycling this week, but there are still dozens of events between now and Sunday – so make sure you don't miss out. After all, once Bike Week's over, we're back to the silly season – next week is National Insect Week (no joke!).

---

[©independent.co.uk](#) [Legal Terms & Policies](#) | [E-mail sign-up](#) | [RSS](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Syndication](#) | [Work for INM](#) | [Advertising Guide](#) | [Group Sites](#) | [London Careers](#)