

THIS CYCLING LIFE



Above: crossing Swinford Bridge with not a care in the world ... image © Sue Chapman

The bicycle is rapidly becoming the coolest way to get around in Eynsham – as much a lifestyle statement as a means of locomotion. But local cycling goes back a long way ...

- Don Chapman reports its role in the early Women's Liberation movement under the catchy title *Knickers, Eynsham, and Women's Lib* in the Eynsham Record 17 (2000).
- Eynsham Primary School has a willing band of volunteers to train up older students in cycle proficiency before they move on to secondary school; and has installed bike racks in the grounds as part of its school travel plan.
- Eynsham's three churches regularly support Ride & Stride, a sponsored cycle ride arranged by Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust each September. The recommended route takes in Cumnor, Standlake and Bablockhythe (16.4 miles).
- Cycles feature strongly at Eynsham Carnival, among committee members, marshals, and participants alike. GreenTEA members have excelled themselves with creations ranging from a bamboo bike to flying pigs (you had to be there, perhaps).
- Solid, sensible cycle racks are becoming more available – witness the Baptist Church, Sports Centre and Village Hall. In May 2011 the Parish Council offered £250 towards improvements from S137 funds; priority sites included Back Lane car park and Witney Road.
- If you need a lock or puncture kit, Evenlode DIY on High Street is never short of spares or helpful suggestions; and Puncturefix on Acre End Street donates 50% of the fee to Bike Safe.
- The neighbourhood policing team occasionally offer free bike security marking; though a solid, sensible lock may save a lot of heartache.
- Eynsham Road Runners take time out with Social Cycling: a family-friendly round trip of 20-30 miles, including the all-important tea and pub stops and supper back in Eynsham.



Opportunities for digression and diversion abound on a bike. Endless cafés, pubs and restaurants beckon; other cyclists swap routes and anecdotes; and occasionally pedal power generates enough energy to make your own refreshing smoothies ...