



Training Ideas

Congratulations on taking up this cycle challenge.

Whatever your reasons for taking up the challenge, one thing is for certain the more you put into it the more you will get back. This is true as much for the training you do in preparation as it is for the fundraising.

The more effort you put in now the easier it will be on the day. By its very nature this is a challenge and is not meant to be easy, but it is achievable if you do the preparation. That means training!

1. How often should I be training?

To get the most out of the bike ride ideally you should be training on average 3 times per week. It is important however, to gradually build up to this level if you are not used to regular exercise.

Listen to your body and do not do too much too soon, this can lead to injuries and illnesses. If you are in any doubt consult your doctor or a personal trainer.

2. Where can I train?

The event will be on road or cycle paths, and you will be cycling in a group. We try to choose quiet roads where possible, but in some cases we have no option other than to cycle on larger roads. As such the best training for the event is to cycle outside on the road and become used to your bike and cycling with cars and other cyclists, sometimes this is not always possible due to time and weather constraints.

Mountain Biking is another way to get fit for completing the event. Mountain biking will help build strength and enhance your cycling skills; it is also a fun alternative and will take you away from the noise and congestion of the British roads.

Practising on a bike outside will also get you used to using your gears. If you are not familiar with bike gears, practise going up and down them to see how they affect the effort of cycling on the flat as well as up and down the hills. Most bikes have front and rear gears, they are there for a reason so make the most of them.

If you have access to a spinning class at a gym this is a great substitute. Spinning takes place on a stationary bike with an instructor giving instructions to simulate hill climbs, sprints and fast flats.

Any other aerobic* exercise will help you with your fitness for the event. This can include running, swimming, cross-training, roller-blading, skiing, skipping, rowing, aerobics etc.

Strength training in the gym can be used to compliment your other training and build strength in your legs for cycling. If this is something you wish to pursue, ask at your local gym.

3. Distance

Depending on the challenge you have signed up for you will be cycling between 70-100 miles per day, although you don't have to be cycling consistently long distances every day in your training it would be advisable to complete at least one 70 mile ride before the event and complete 2 long rides on consecutive days.

To get an idea of how far you will be cycling, measure how far it is to your local shops. Now try cycling that distance and see how long it takes. Compare the time it took you to cycle when converted to a 100 mile journey, because this is how long our longest day is.

E.g. Your local shop is 2 miles away and it takes you 15 minutes to cycle there.

$$\begin{array}{lll} 100 \text{ miles} / 2 \text{ miles} & = 50 \\ 50 \times 15\text{min} & = 750\text{min} & = \mathbf{12 \text{ hr } 30\text{min}} \text{ of cycling to cover 100miles} \end{array}$$

That is if you can keep cycling at the same speed all day and does not take into account any stopping for food or water along the way. Needless to say that this is a long time and you need to do some training to be able to go quicker for the challenge.

Another way to get an idea of quite how far you are cycling is to make a note of the distance you drive on a long journey and imagine how long it would take cycling 6 times slower.

To help you judge distances while riding, a simple bike computer is a valuable tool. Wireless versions are easier to fit and use as they have no cables to worry about, these can be bought at any bike shop. In order to complete the distance, you should be looking to cycle at an average speed of 12mph / 19Kph.

4. Nutrition

On the event we will stop for a morning and afternoon tea break and a lunch break to enable you to remain well hydrated and keep up your energy supplies. It is a good idea while training to plan your long rides so that they go past shops or tea rooms, it is also worthwhile carrying food and drink with you.

An example of good food to take with you on your bike rides would include: Cereal bars, dried fruit, chocolate (if it is not too hot), energy bars/gels (although these can end up being expensive if you eat them on every ride), jelly babies. In your water bottle, water is fine however an energy drink or even a squash may encourage you to drink more.

On the event we will require you to carry 2 water bottles. We recommend that you use at least 750ml bottles (although we do appreciate that not all bikes are big enough to fit this size bottle). It is a good idea to train with 2 bottles and get used to drinking while you cycle. If you find it hard to drink while cycling, you can use a re-hydration pack (such as a CamelBak).

Hydration is Very Important. While you train you will lose fluids, even when it is cold outside, this will eventually lead to a drop in performance and can lead to heat exhaustion. Water on its own is important, however to aid its absorption, especially when the temperature gets very hot it is advisable to use an isotonic formulae. (These can be found as powder to mix with water, or ready made drinks and are available in specialist bike and running shops as well as some large supermarkets). During high intensity prolonged training your body can require up to 10 litres of water per day.

Remember. Although this is a challenge, it is also meant to be fun so enjoy yourself!

* Exercise that can be performed at a moderate level of intensity for extended periods of time.