

# Cyclescheme – what's it like to take part in a bike to work scheme

Well, I took the plunge.

My bike is not falling apart, I have to say. She's five years old and is still doing really well, but you know how sometimes you just see someone else's new bike and think, I really want a new, shiny bike that doesn't make so many creaky noises? Well, that was me.



To be fair I've been blowing hot and cold on the new bike idea for a bit, but for some reason this week I just decided, "Stuff it!" so I had a wee peek at the cyclescheme we have through work. I've never used one of these schemes before so I don't 100% understand all the details and I don't really know what to expect, which gave me the idea of blogging about it from the perspective of a new user. I figured that way other

folks like me who are not sure but think it might possibly be a good idea can have a read about what to expect before making any decisions.

## **So cyclescheme / biketowork what is it?**

Basically, you can buy a bike (using a certificate), well technically you are hiring the bike, and the cost of the bike comes out of your salary at gross level. Which apparently means that you pay less tax and so over the time period agreed you make a saving.

Now I have to be honest, I have said apparently because I'm not 100% sure how this works or if it does actually do what it says on the tin, I guess we'll find out together.

I have chosen a bike and accessories which comes to £780, I will pay 12 monthly instalments of £65 which will come to the full amount of £780 BUT apparently, the savings based on my tax will be £249.

At the end of the 12 months, I can choose to keep the bike on hire for another 3 years and pay a one off small fee of 7% and then after that 3 years the bike is officially mine.

I have to be honest at first I thought – you have to be kidding, I'm paying the full cost of the bike and then a fee on top and it's not even mine???? But I have been assured that the savings are to do with tax so I am not really paying the full cost of the bike.

Currently, my tax would be: £258.20

NI: £149.64

Let's check it again once I'm paying for the bike.

## **Choosing a bike**

I'm quite lucky that I have access to a fantastic bike shop here in Edinburgh – Edinburgh Bicycle Coop and I was able to chat to the guys there about both the cyclescheme and the type of bike I wanted. I currently ride a flat bar road bike so as much as I love the romance of the old-fashioned sit up and begs, I don't think it would be a great idea to suddenly change to that style of bike. But hey ho, after a wee chat, Craig and I were able to work out the size of bike I needed and pick a suitable one.

Next step, off to my company's website to get the process rolling. I filled in their online form with all my details and the details of the bike and then I got a message back saying they were processing my application. Within an hour I got an email telling me that I had been accepted and that they had sent my stuff to cyclescheme, the company who administers the cycle to work type goodies.

Again the response was really quick, next day I think, I got an email telling me that I have been accepted and that my certificate would be processed and sent to me, however, there is a caveat that it could take up to 30 days. This bit was disappointing as I was quite excited about getting a new bike, but I guess we'll just have to wait and see.

## Read the follow-up blog posts

[Cyclescheme – an update](#)

[Cyclescheme – so how much have I saved?](#)