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‘DO IT BY CYCLE’ DOWN AT THE BARRAGE

THIS Sunday, 22nd March, sees the launch of a new Tees Valley cycling website - www.doitbycycle.com.

The site is designed to help people in the Tees Valley area get back into the saddle and cycling again.

It includes a host of top tips, local cycle routes, cycling events, information on cycle training, what clothing to wear, videos showing tips on cycling on the road, bike choice, maintenance, and security, plus a forum to share your thoughts and maybe find some cycling buddies.

To celebrate the launch of the new site there will be a free bike try out session at the Tees Barrage on Sunday, March 22nd from 9.30am – 3.30pm.

The event will give people the chance to try many different types of bike including a large selection of children’s bikes, hybrids, mountain bikes, recumbents, folders, racing bikes, hub geared bikes, trikes and a conference bike to seat eight.

Local cycling maps, events guides, and expert advice will also be available on the day.

To complement the launch Stockton Borough Council is inviting people to hop in the saddle for the first guided cycle ride of the season with a choice of two routes.

Both guided rides will start at 10am from the anchor at the Tees Barrage. The first is a gentle six mile ride along the banks of the Tees, crossing bridges old

and new with commentary on the history of the area. The ride will return to the Barrage for 12pm.

The second guided ride takes a longer route of 21 miles with a loop through Middlesbrough, Hilton and Ingleby Barwick using traffic-free paths and quiet roads, finishing back at the Barrage for 3pm. Please bring a packed lunch.

Councillor Robert Cook, Stockton Borough Council's Cabinet Member Regeneration and Transport, said: "Guided cycle rides are a great way for people to have fun in our beautiful parks and countryside while getting fit at the same time.

"This new website will help both those who are thinking about taking up cycling for the first time as well as experienced cyclists to discover something new."

The rides are free with no booking necessary, however an adult must accompany anyone under 16.

The 2009 Stockton Guided Cycle Ride booklet is now available detailing the many different rides available this year. Copies are available from Stockton libraries, sports centres, and Council offices. If you require a copy posting please call (01642) 526708 or email cycling@stockton.gov.uk

ENDS.

NOTE TO EDITORS: For further information on this release, please call Andrew Tolputt, Communications Assistant for Stockton Council, on (01642) 526099.

The www.doitbycycle.com website was developed by Stockton Borough Council in partnership with Sustrans, Middlesbrough Council, Darlington Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, and Hartlepool Borough Council.

The Audit Commission has named Stockton as one of the highest performing councils for each of the past six years in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), awarding the maximum 4-star rating.

The Council has also achieved the highest possible ratings for every section of its 'Use of Resources' – which includes value for money – in 2008.