

SHIFT POUNDS IN THE SADDLE AND HELP SAVE LIVES

Submitted by: British Heart Foundation

Friday, 7 April 2006

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) (<http://bhf.org.uk/>) is urging you to get your bike out of the shed and get pedalling for its largest fundraising campaign, Help a Heart Week, in June.

This Help a Heart Week (3-11 June)

(<http://www.bhf.org.uk/helping/index.asp?secID=13&secondlevel=1634&thirdlevel=1637&artID=7929>) the BHF, the nation's heart charity, wants you to take part in a BHF lifecycle bike ride near you. Not only will your sponsorship help the BHF save and improve the lives of the millions of men, women and children affected by heart disease but you'll be setting yourself a healthy challenge.

June Davison, Cardiac Nurse, at the British Heart Foundation (BHF) said, "Cycling is great for your heart health. It increases the body's demand for oxygen, making the heart and circulation more efficient, and helping to develop stamina. In tandem with these benefits, regular cycling helps you to achieve a healthy weight, lower your blood pressure and improve blood cholesterol levels. The good news is that, even if you're a beginner, your physical health and fitness will benefit straight away."

The BHF has joined forces with cycling charities CTC and Sustrans to get the UK cycling and fundraising throughout June - you can support the BHF lifecycle in several ways. You could:

- Take part in one of the BHF organised bike rides (<http://bhf.org.uk/lifecycle>) taking place all over the UK
- Use Sustrans' National Cycle Network to organise your own bike ride on a route near you
- Get in touch with your local CTC group and cycle with one of their 300 groups across the UK
- Get peddling at a static bike ride in your local gym

However you choose to show your support, the BHF will send you all you need to know to get in the saddle, giving you information on the ways to join the BHF lifecycle, tips and suggestions on how to cycle safely as well as a t-shirt when you sign up.

By getting on your bike and supporting Help a Heart Week you will be providing an essential lifeline to people like Gillian Dowden who suffered a heart attack at 45.

Gillian said, "The medication and care I received saved my life. I feel lucky to be here."

Jackie Skeel, Head of Fundraising Promotions at the British Heart Foundation said, "Without British Heart Foundation research, thousands of hearts might not be beating today. You can play your part in ensuring this research continues by supporting Help a Heart Week and getting on your bike during the month of June."

For more information on supporting BHF lifecycle, please call 020 7487 9434, email helpaheart@bhf.org.uk

or visit bhf.org.uk/lifecycle.

-ENDS-

For more information please call:

Annette Richardson in BHF press office on 020 7487 9476 or 07764 290381 (out of office hours) or email richardsona@bhf.org.uk.

Notes to editors:

>>> BHF-organised bike rides (<http://bhf.org.uk/lifecycle>):

- Worcester, 4 June – 30 mile route through beautiful countryside
- Somerset, 4 June – Circular 27 or 50 mile route across the Somerset levels
- Perth, 4 June - Circular routes of 10, 25 and 50 miles in and around Perthshire
- Essex Castle, 10 June – 25, 50 or 75 miles through villages of North Essex
- Norwich, 11 June – 50 or 100 miles through the Norfolk countryside
- South East Wales, 11 June - traffic free ride in Pontypool Park for under 14s
- Dalby, 11 June – 6, 10 or 21 miles on the slopes of the North Yorkshire Moors
- Cheshire, 11 June - 7, 15 and 30 mile routes through Delamere Forest
- Portsmouth, 11 June - 32 mile route around Portsmouth and Longstone Harbours
- Devon, 18 June - two routes through the Devonshire countryside
- South Staffordshire, 18 June – 10 or 35 mile route
- Hampshire, 25 June – 5 mile family cycle ride in the beautiful Westbourne Park
- South Wales Junior Ride, 25 June - within the grounds of Singleton Park Swansea
- Derby, 2 July - Circular 5 or 10km routes within the Rosliston National Forest
- South Wales, 2 July - 16 and 29 miles around the Gower Peninsula

>>>There are a number of other ways to support Help a Heart Week in June:

- Gather a group of friends together and help us raise money by dropping off thousands of cash collection envelopes or give generously if an envelope comes through your door

- Pick up a heart ribbon at your local BHF Shop (<http://www.multimap.com/clients/places.cgi?client=heart>)

- Whilst out shopping, look out for heart tokens on special packs of Shredded Wheat. For every token you post back or drop in at your local BHF shop, the BHF will receive £1 - and you could win a Hyundai Getz car

- Pick up a promotional pack of Danone Danacol and the BHF will receive 5p

- Get your hands on a pair of limited edition red Master Gardener gloves from Town & Country

- Walk your way to health and purchase some outdoor clothing, footwear and accessories from Millets. For every special product purchased, the BHF will receive £1

- Tune into the Ideal World home shopping channel on SKY 634, NTL 855 or Freeview 22 and for every order placed, from the evening of 2 June to 4 June, the BHF will receive £1

- Do your own thing to raise money - call for a fundraising pack for tips and ideas

>>> For more information about Help a Heart Week and the ways you can help, visit bhf.org.uk/helpaheart, email: helpaheart@bhf.org.uk or call 020 7487 9485

>>> The British Heart Foundation (BHF) (<http://bhf.org.uk/>) is leading the battle against heart and circulatory disease - the UK's biggest killer. The Charity is a major funder and authority in cardiovascular research. It plays an important role in funding education, both of the public and of health professionals, and in providing life-saving cardiac equipment and support for rehabilitation and patient care

>>>For more information on the BHF, visit bhf.org.uk