

Karl's Epic Cycle report

Well 1074 miles later and I did it! No saddle sores and all aches and pains dissipated as my body got used to the activity! I was however very tired and slept well for the next few days afterwards.

So what happened? Cornwall and Devon was the hardest, it felt like all uphill where a climb would appear out of nowhere and any downhill ride you knew you were going to pay for! It took us 4 days to get out of there, we got lost, I got a puncture and we even had a flurry of snow near Exeter, which is no fun when you are camping. We were lucky to cover 50 miles in a day which felt slow. But the views and the countryside were exquisite, the bluebells and wild garlic created evocative sights and smells.

Onto the Somerset levels on a dry day and we bombed along covering 92 miles in one day and feeling proud of ourselves. Then the wind turned north westerly, cold and in our face for the rest of the journey – we are meant to have mainly south westerly wind which should have been behind us. These were gusting at 40 miles an hour on one day with rain and sleet bombarding us, no chance of heat stroke there then! Another puncture in the rain, shivering cold and I wondered why I am doing this! This is when the sponsorship and well wishes along the way was so encouraging and carried me along. We are still counting but at this stage I have raised more than £1600. So a big thank you for all who sponsored me on <http://www.charitygiving.co.uk/karlgregory>

As the rain poured in the Lake District and my bike rack snapped with the sheer weight of the soggy luggage we decided to ditch the tents, sleeping bags, and any excess baggage. My wife Catherine was so helpful in booking accommodation as we arrived in each town after a hard day's cycle. In the end averaged 70 miles a day with lighter loads and a feeling that we could do it now!

Some fantastic surprises were how gorgeous Shropshire is, the lovely cycle from Chester to Birkenhead along the canal towpath; Glasgow followed a beautiful route along the Clyde and then the amazing spectacular geography of Scotland. Much easier to cycle due to our fitness and the better quality of roads, along with the roads sensibly following Lochs and rivers and not trying to go over the mountains and the weather got better!

Humour moment when the nut holding my seat on sheared off – ever tried cycling without a seat? My friend Pete, who I cycled with, was in hoots of laughter as I wobbled all over the road and came to rest on an embankment. Luckily Pete is also a practical guy and helped me fix it until we got to a bike shop the next day – also no cars around at that point.

Great to have completed now looking for the next adventure!!