

Will the heartache of bike theft end this Valentine's Day?

As London's love affair with cycling continues, design researchers based within the award winning Design Against Crime Research Centre at **Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (CSM)** are making a stand against bicycle theft.

On **Tuesday 13th February 8am-11am (venue: Cochrane Theatre Bar)**, outside CSM, designers will join together with Camden Council, Transport for London (TfL) and the Metropolitan Police to try and stop the heartache of bike theft for Londoners. Seven new sculpturally attractive yet functional bike parking designs will be unveiled for 'on street' testing at the junction of Southampton Row and Theobald's Road - a hot spot for cycle theft according to Metropolitan Police (Holborn) data.

The **DAC Bikeoff initiative** is aimed at persuading and assisting cyclists to lock their bikes more securely against bike thieves, to reduce bike crime. The designs are urgently needed on our streets, as the growth in cycle journeys in the capital – up 72% since 2000 – has been matched by an increase in cycle thefts. In 2004/5 80,000 bicycles were stolen in London (408,000 in the UK) and last year all of London boroughs reported increases in cycle theft – with 1,245 bicycles were stolen in Camden alone.

It's not just the owners that suffer from bicycle theft. Research from the 2004 London Cycling Action Plan suggests that of the 17% of cyclists that experience bicycle theft, **24% stop cycling altogether and 66% cycle less often**. If the Mayor's objective of increasing cycling by 200% by 2020 is to be met, it is critical that the issue of bicycle theft is dealt with. To address this, **Camden Council and Transport for London's Cycling Centre of Excellence** have spent the last eighteen months working in partnership with the **DAC Bikeoff team** to make life easier for the cyclist and harder for the bike thief.

The new bicycle parking stands, to be launched in time for Valentine's Day, are designed to defend against common bike theft. These perpetrator techniques are also publicised by the designers with the aim of informing cyclists of how best to secure their bike.

Adam Thorpe, **DAC Bikeoff** senior designer comments: "We love cycling because it is a quick, healthy, convenient and inexpensive way of getting around London. We hate bicycle theft because it is a major detractor from bicycle usage. Bike theft is distressing for the individual and damaging to the city as a whole as it hinders achievement of sustainable transport objectives. If we [designers] can make life harder for bicycle thieves then we will."

Rose Ades Head of the Cycling Centre of Excellence, Transport for London adds: "More and more Londoners are discovering the joys of cycling in the capital – an incredible 450,000 cycle journeys are already being made on a daily basis in London. TfL recognise that if cycling is to continue its record growth in the capital, the problem of



bicycle theft needs to be tackled. In addition to this partnership, we have already installed thousands of new cycle parking places in schools, stations and streets across London, including our award winning 24 hour secure parking facilities at Finsbury Park. TfL also work closely with the Metropolitan Police and City Police and cycle user groups to encouraging cyclists to lock their bikes up securely and to register their bikes with the Immobilise Register website."

DAC Bikeoff are working with **Broxap**, Britain's largest manufacturer and distributor of cycle parking and have designed 6 original anti theft cycle parking stands, to be tested alongside one developed by the MD of Broxap. The designs are aimed at encouraging cyclists into locking their bikes more securely, whilst improving not just the look of bike parking furniture on the street but the bike stand's in-built defences. 'On street' testing starts on 13^h February for two weeks to gather user feedback and ensure the designs really do improve locking practice, reduce theft and are 'fit for purpose.' The chain stand one of the seven designs unveiled and will be available for sale from Broxap (01782 564 411) in Spring 2007.

Comments

"This is a very exciting opportunity. For a number of years security of cycles has stayed stationary with limited options for cyclists to adequately secure their cycles against theft. Broxap are delighted to be involved with this initiative because for the first time we have the ability to manufacture a range of cycle stands which have been specifically designed to make the cycles more secure."

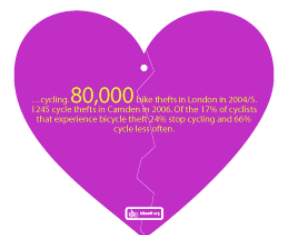
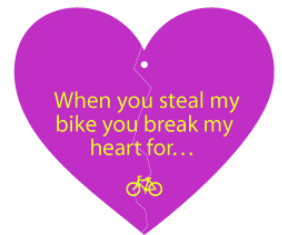
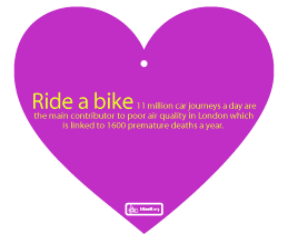
Reg Bradbury, Managing Director, Shelters Division, Broxap

"It's great to see more and more people cycling, but if we are going to continue to encourage more people to take it up and to keep cycling, we need to act now to tackle bike theft. Crime happens when a willing perpetrator finds a vulnerable target and has the opportunity to commit an offence - we need to tackle all three aspects of this, not only through consistent and reliable enforcement but by helping people make themselves and their property less vulnerable as well. These newly designed cycle stands are an excellent way of making yourself less vulnerable, and less likely to be a victim of theft."

Cllr Ben Rawlings, Executive Member for Community Safety, Camden Council

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Facts About Bike Theft

- Based on 8,500 observations of how cyclists lock (usually badly) and 2 year's worth of research on how to defend against bike thieves perpetrator techniques, **the stands offer artistic and creative solutions that stand a real chance of reducing bicycle theft.** The designers say they will tweak the designs based on their observations of robustness against theft, and also on user feedback to the www.bikeoff.org site, by Autumn 2007.
- Camden Council has already installed over 100 cycle stands this year, and want to continue to provide **more and better cycle parking in the future** including the most successful prototypes from this project. So **get on your bike** and come and see what's being done to **avoid the heartache of cycle theft for London's cyclists this Valentines Day.**
- London needs more cycle parking. Cycle stands should be located close to the destination (within **25m for short stay, 50m for longer stay**) and where there is **natural surveillance and good lighting.**



- **DAC Bikeoff** research reveals that a significant number of cyclists appear to be **unaware of how to lock their bikes properly** which leaves them vulnerable to theft. Best practice is to lock the frame and both wheels to the stand.
- The British Crime Survey estimates **only 60% of bike thefts are actually reported to/ recorded by the police**. Post-congestion charging London boroughs have documented a 72% increase in cyclists on London roads.
- **Other TfL partnership initiatives** to tackle cycle theft include:
 - Modern cycle parking facilities in over 300 schools
 - Finsbury Park Cycle Park
 - CCTV at stations
 - Free based property register including bicycles - www.immobilise.com

Theft totals by borough*

	2005-2006	Change in five years
Barking and Dagenham	220	32.8%
Barnet	398	47.7%
Bexley	133	-33.8%
Brent	326	42.3%
Bromley	225	-15.4%
Camden	1,521	43.6%
Croydon	325	7.5%
Ealing	584	17.0%
Enfield	226	-10.9%
Greenwich	451	82.8%
Hackney	1,111	86.4%
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,017	-2.4%
Haringey	405	66.7%
Harrow	140	31.0%
Havering	178	-11.7%
Hillingdon	367	-12.6%
Hounslow	613	-0.3%
Islington	1,821	119.8%
Kensington and Chelsea	919	22.5%
Kingston	859	93.4%
Lambeth	1,196	50.3%
Lewisham	492	90.9%
Merton	530	55.8%
Newham	336	11.3%
Redbridge	203	6.1%
Richmond	765	29.6%
Southwark	1,191	61.8%
Sutton	307	1.9%
Tower Hamlets	1,307	80.0%
Waltham Forest	271	16.4%
Wandsworth	1,346	46.1%
Westminster	1,453	35.9%
TOTAL	21,236	

* Source: Evening Standard, 8th January 2007

