

"No To Bike Parking Tax" Demonstration

Kev Kerry

Westminster City Council in an effort to cash in on the increased use of motorcycles and scooters has brought in parking charges. The cost is £1.50 a day where riders find a designated parking spot and then text in the registration and parking location. Of course if they get away with it then other councils will try and bring it in.

The campaign has the subtitle "If they want to treat us like cars then we act like them ". The campaign organizers unfortunately seem to arrange these rallies on weekdays, so as to cause as much interruption in London as possible. It must be compulsory to start any sort of gathering at the Ace Café. As I was between jobs on the 11th of May I thought why not and went down to join in.

I got to the Ace early to see how many turned up. After about an hour we set off with about 300 bikes. There was not much of an escort but we knew where we were going to form up in Whitehall. When we arrived however our numbers had swollen. I think a lot of people had heard about the protest on local TV and joined in. All the bikers parked up and congregated in Trafalgar Square (see photo). We were then briefed on the route we were to take and the rules. As usual make your point but no wheelies, stoppies or doughnuts etc. Then we proceeded to drive a three-mile circuit around and around Westminster. Every so often the whole convoy would stop just to annoy the traffic. White Van man hates Bikers protesting, but when there are a couple of thousand, there is not a lot he can do about it!

The weather was brilliant and this attracted a good mixture of bikers. There were a lot of scooters, three bears on a sidecar outfit and a tart wearing a helmet, a tiny boob tube and even smaller skirt, on the back of a 1200 BMW. What would have happened if she had fallen off? She was very popular. After about three hours riding round and round I rang Lizzie from Regents Street to say I had had enough and was on my way home. Slow riding in a city is a strain on the wrist! Being London born and inbred I had no problem finding my way out and back on the motorway.

There have been more rallies in London for the campaign since but I have not been able to attend. Videos and Photos are available on the internet at <http://www.notobikeparkingfees.com/> . It was great fun but I doubt if the politicians were listening, too busy working out their expenses claims!



Gathering in Trafalgar Sqaure, London - 11th May 2009