

# news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Mayor of London's Freewheel backed by Hovis

**Signature Sponsorship negotiates title rights on behalf of Hovis.**

The Mayor of London's office has announced that Hovis will be the title sponsor of the inaugural London Freewheel cycling event, which takes place in central London on 23rd September 2007. The sponsorship rights were negotiated on behalf of Hovis by Windsor based agency Signature Sponsorship Ltd.

The Hovis London Freewheel is aimed at cyclists of every age and ability. A 14 km route around the capital will be traffic-free on Sunday 23rd September allowing tens of thousands of riders to take over the streets. The route will allow them to enjoy some of the capital's most iconic sights including the London Eye, Victoria Embankment, Westminster and St Paul's Cathedral and the Mall.

The Mayor and Transport for London want the Hovis London Freewheel to encourage more Londoners to cycle in the capital. The number of cyclists on London's major roads has grown by a massive 83 per cent over the past seven years, but the Mayor wants to increase this even further. It is estimated that 40 per cent of Londoners have access to a bike, but only five per cent use one regularly.

The Hovis London Freewheel is designed to help people ride from their front door into central London and home again. There will be six 'Freewheel Hubs' across London where riders can gather to be led by experienced cyclists onto the vehicle-free route.

Hovis London Freewheelers will also be able to take part in the Freewheel Festival - an event at St James's Park open to all participants and their family and friends. Highlights of the festival will include: a Hovis picnic, BMX, mountain and trial bike stunts, cycling acrobatics, and a cycling circus along with children's activities and information on cycling in London.

Sponsorship of the event will enable Hovis to reach all Londoners via media partnerships with Metro and BBC London and the event's £1.7m marketing campaign. The event will see a live audience of tens of thousands.

This is the first time that Mayor's office has sold title rights to a Mayor of London event.

Harry Barlow, Mayor's Communications Advisor, said: *'We are pleased that we will be working with Hovis on the first ever London Freewheel. Hovis' sponsorship will enable us to significantly enhance this event for Londoners. We want the Hovis London Freewheel to the further fuel London's adoption of cycling as a realistic alternative to other forms of transport. Having taken part in the Hovis London Freewheel, we hope that people will find that cycling regularly in London is easier than they thought.'*

Tim Dewey, Hovis Divisional Director of Marketing, said: *"We are delighted to be working with the Mayor of London to help bring this exciting cycling event to London. At Hovis we believe in the power of good food and good activity. Hovis has for many years had associations with cycling and is proud to continue this tradition."*

Signature Sponsorship continues their involvement in the project by providing the key liaison between the Mayor of London and Hovis to maximise their contractual rights.

Kate Lovelace, Senior Account Manager at Signature Sponsorship, said: *"Signature is delighted to be working with Hovis on this exciting event and we are proud to have secured the title rights on behalf of Hovis for this inaugural Mayor of London event"*.

- Ends -

**Notes to editors:**

- \* Hovis is the official sponsor of the Hovis London Freewheel
- \* The six borough 'Freewheel Hubs' will be located at: Gladstone Park - Brent, Finsbury Park - Haringey, Victoria Park - Tower Hamlets, Peckham Rye - Southwark, Clapham Common - Wandsworth, Ravenscourt Park - Hammersmith and Fulham.
- \* The traffic-free London route will be open from 11am-4pm. It will be signposted and marshalled.
- \* More information on the event, to register and for maps of the route visit: [www.londonfreewheel.com](http://www.londonfreewheel.com)
- \* The Freewheel Festival takes place from 11am - 4pm and includes activities such as Picnic Areas, Cycling Circus, Street Entertainers, Exhibitions, BMX Stunt Bikes, Trial Bikes, Cycling Acrobatics, Cycling Circus and Bike Doctors.
- \* The Hovis London Freewheel is supported by media partners BBC London and the Metro.
- \* The Mayor of London and Transport for London has increased investment in cycling by 50 per cent this year from £24 million in 2006/07 to £36 million in 2007/08. In 2000 investment in cycling stood at just £5.5 million. This money is being spent on improved cycle parking facilities, education and training, events and cycle promotion. 500kms of the London Cycle Network Plus - a network of signed routes for cyclists across the capital - has already been completed and the full 900km

network will be completed by the end of 2010. Transport for London has installed 10,000 cycling parking spaces across the capital in the past two years.

\* Transport for London is continuing its campaign to increase safety awareness for all road users, including cyclists, and while cycling numbers have risen by 83 per cent, the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on London's roads has fallen by 28 per cent. Transport for London is investing £2.8 million in cycle training through the boroughs this year. Before 2000, when Transport for London was created, there was no support for cycle training in London.

\* The London Cycle Campaign is a supporter of the event and will be working in with local cycling clubs encouraging lapsed and non cyclists take part in the day. They will also be recruiting experienced cyclists to volunteer at the Hovis London Freewheel.

\* There are several cycling events taking place as part of the London Summer of Sport - a season of sporting activities taking place across the capital. This is a Mayor of London initiative being organised in partnership with Sport England running from July to September 2006 enabling Londoners to try a diverse range of sports in taster sessions hosted by local sports clubs - visit: [www.london.gov.uk/summer-of-sport/your-sport/cycling/events/index.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/summer-of-sport/your-sport/cycling/events/index.jsp)

\* Signature Sponsorship Ltd, is an independent sponsorship and event management consultancy, with a specialist division for managing global events. Signature Sponsorship Ltd was formed in 1998 and have offices in Windsor UK, Italy and the Isle of Man.

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