



BIKE CLUB EVALUATION

FINAL REPORT

March 2013





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I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluating Bike Club

1. **Bike Club** is an innovative programme designed and led by three national charities – CTC, UK Youth and ContinYou. The programme is funded by Department for Transport and Asda's Pedal Power Campaign and supports the establishment of Bike Clubs across the UK with the overarching aim of **encouraging groups of young people, who are not traditionally into cycling or physical activity, to participate in cycling activity.**
2. Bike Club became operational in September 2009, and during that time, it has supported the development of **308 individual Bike Clubs across the UK, benefiting over 18,000 people.** Bike Club activity is varied and innovative, ranging from mountain biking and cycle maintenance to campaigning and arts and media projects.
3. There are many examples of diverse Bike Club activity around the UK and illustrations of how the activity is **targeting groups of young people who are less likely to engage in cycling** – including girls and young women, BME communities, young disabled people, young people living in deprived communities and children in care.
4. **Shared Intelligence** was **commissioned to evaluate Bike Club** and, since the programme started, has collected and analysed monitoring data, carried out two waves of a survey to Bike Club leaders and undertaken nine 'place studies' through working with the young people involved as 'peer evaluators'. The 'place studies' will be published alongside this final report.

What's been achieved?

5. The evaluation findings reveal that **Bike Club leads to a wide range of outcomes for young people.** These include increases in:
 - enthusiasm for cycling;
 - confidence in riding a bike;
 - access to bikes – particularly for young people in deprived areas;
 - coordination and mobility in and around the local area and to new places;
 - use of a bike as a mode of transport and young people cycling to school;
 - social and personal development, physical and emotional health; and
 - better future education and employment opportunities.
6. These outcomes are reinforcing so **young people involved in Bike Club would typically experience at least three different benefits.** The chart below shows the logic model for Bike Club which illustrates how the shorter-term outcomes lead on to the medium and longer term outcomes for people participating in Bike Club activity.



7. The evidence shows how **early benefits can lead to long term impacts**. For example, improved confidence in cycling can lead to an increase in self-confidence more generally as well as new skills (e.g. road cycling, cycle maintenance), which translate into other areas and can have an effect on opening up education and work opportunities as well as increasing the likelihood of young people feeling they can take advantage of these.
8. The evaluation has started to evidence the wider **impact that Bike Club has had upon families, communities and localities**. Although this took time for many Bike Clubs there are now good examples of established clubs engaging families as volunteers and/or new clubs setting up within specific communities, such as the Somali community in Glasgow.
9. Examples of the impact of Bike Club on communities include encouraging the participation of marginalised or minority communities in the wider locality, and enabling cross-community activity in areas where there are historical divisions such as Glasgow and Belfast.
10. There is evidence that Bike Club is having an effect, albeit on a small level at present, on **crime and community safety** within communities. This has been particularly notable where Bike Clubs set out to specifically target young people at risk of offending or at risk of exclusion or are based in deprived communities where there are problems of anti-social behaviour.
11. Bike Club has strengthened **partnership working** in some localities, helped to develop **local cycling networks** and, in some areas, has influenced local cycling strategy and ways of working. For example, Cardiff Bike Club has provided opportunities for the local authority to consult young people on key issues that interest them, such as designing routes and cycle infrastructure that meet young people's needs, as well as on broader health and wellbeing issues to inform and influence council policy and practice.
12. In Sheffield, Brighton and Glasgow, the Development Officers helped to strengthen the local cycling network by encouraging Bike Clubs and other organisations to come together through city-wide cycling events. Members of the Brighton Bike Clubs consortium encourage each other to make the best use of the bikes and work together to pool resources and skills.

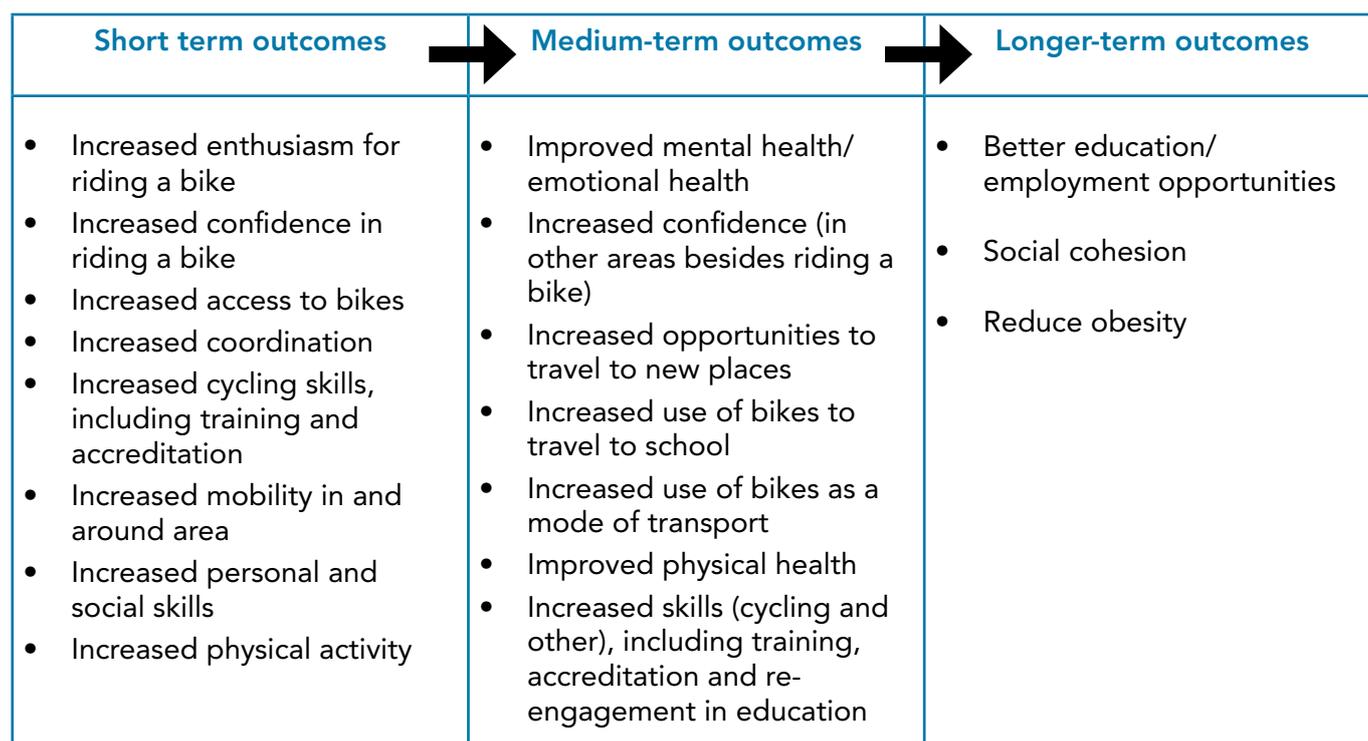


Figure 1: Logic model for the Bike Club programme showing the relationship between outcomes

Value for money

13. Bike Club **represents good value for money** on an individual club level. The multiple benefits for regular attendees are generally seen to outweigh the resources needed for set up and maintaining activity. The overwhelming majority – 84% – of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey felt Bike Club offered value for money, based on the impact it has had on young people weighed up against the cost and resources of running Bike Club activity.
14. On average, Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey secured £2,000 or less funding for their Bike Club supplemented by volunteer time. And for this amount of financial resource, on average Bike Clubs who responded to the survey were able to identify a range of outcomes for their young people (at least three)– the most common outcomes identified being increased enthusiasm for cycling, increased confidence in riding a bike and increased cycling skills.
15. Bike Club Leaders spoke of how Bike Club had helped to lay the foundations of a Bike Club, which has since grown and has plans to grow through accessing other funds and therefore reach more people. The Bike Club Leader's survey 2012 revealed that the majority of clubs were able to use their Bike Club grant to **leverage in match funding** or additional resources – 37% were able to secure between £2,000 and £5,500 and a further 25% leveraged in volunteer time. Further, a third of Bike Clubs who responded to the survey have been able to access further grants/funding since the set up of their Bike Club activity.

Learning about what works

16. The evaluation has identified some key aspects of the way that Bike Club has been designed and run that have been important to its success. These **programme level 'success factors'** include:
 - **Development Officers** – in leading, coordinating and championing Bike Club at the local level
 - **Bike Club grants** – essential to procure the equipment necessary to start activity, whether it be bikes, maintenance tools, locks and storage etc.
 - **Training** – for Bike Club Leaders and volunteers, including for young people moving on to become volunteer leaders
 - **Place based approach** – for Bike Club to contribute towards local cycling strategies and community engagement – helped by a supportive local environment and having the flexibility to add-value locally
 - **Partnership working** – Bike Club working with and through local networks to maximise impact and sustainability. This has worked well right across the UK, taking into account different national contexts
 - **Local champions** – Bike Club Leaders who are enthusiastic about cycling, and actively promote the benefits for young people and communities
 - **Targeting Bike Club activity** – towards specific groups of young people who are less likely to engage in cycling.
17. Over and above these, the programme has generated good practice and learning about **'what works' at the local level in engaging target groups of young people.**



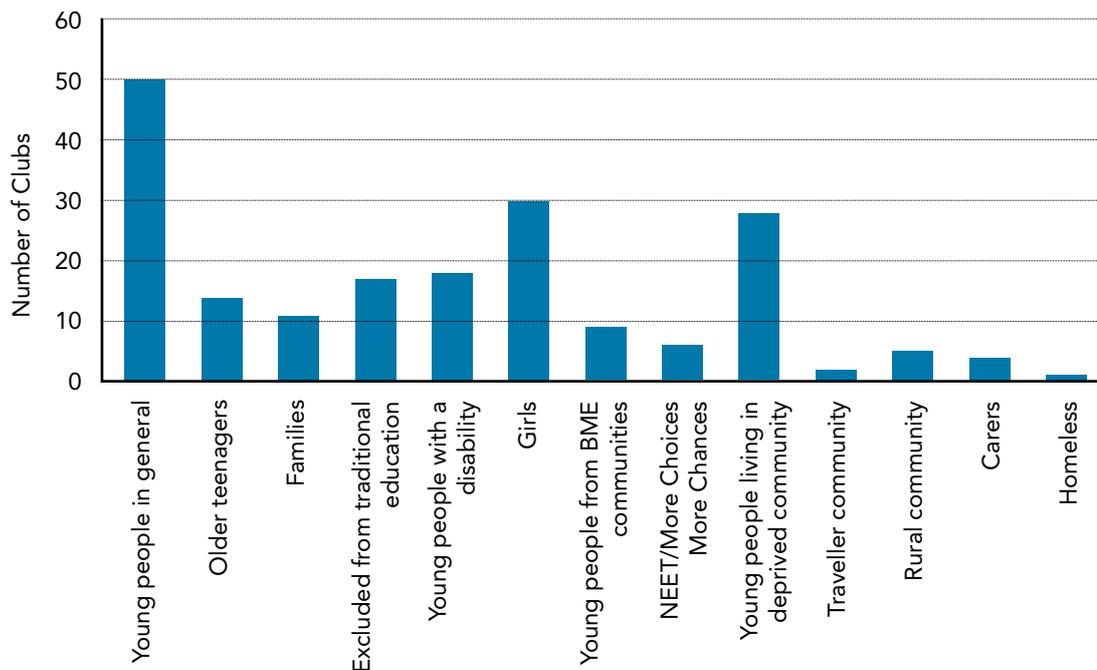


Figure 2: The number of Bike Clubs targeting specific groups (Source: Bike Club Leader's survey, March 2012, base: 68 respondents to the question).

18. The chart above shows the different groups that Bike Clubs set out to target through their activity.
19. Success factors for engaging young people in deprived areas and excluded from mainstream education include:
 - **Involving young people** in the design of Bike Club activities to attract participants and maintain their interest
 - **Maintaining young people's interest** and involvement through continuous stimulating and challenging activity – particularly important for young people excluded from traditional education
 - **Using Bike Club as an incentive** – and to motivate young people who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from school
20. Bike Clubs are effectively engaging with **young disabled people** due to:
 - **Working with specialist disability community and voluntary organisations** – either to host a Bike Club or help set one up
 - **Addressing specific needs of young people with particular disabilities** – e.g. deaf young people, young people on a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) through the right support and equipment
21. The number of Bike Clubs engaging young people from **Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities** is also increasing. Learning about this includes:
 - **Making contact with BME community organisations** – to offer cycling as part of existing healthy living and social activities
 - Considering the needs and preferences of specific target groups in terms of group activity. E.g. preferences for **family orientated activity and/or gender specific** (young women and girls) activity
 - Ensuring timings for Bike Club activity fit around **religious activity**.



22. Bike Club is also seeing increasing success in **engaging young women and girls** in a range of cycling activities, including recruiting participants as volunteer leaders. The evaluation has identified several success factors for this:
- **Female instructors and leaders** can actively encourage other women to take part in Bike Clubs by acting as **strong female role models**
 - **All-female Bike Clubs and/or group activity** can increase girls' confidence and reduce fears of 'feeling silly' among young men
 - **Activities where young women can bring their children** along helps participation, particularly among single mothers
 - **Promoting Bike Club as 'for women'** and for fitness and socialising to get away from the male sports cycling stereotype
 - **Encourage bike maintenance activity** – as girls feel learning these skills is empowering and increases confidence to go out cycling more.
23. Using all the learning about 'what works' that is summarised above should enable Bike Clubs to rise to the **challenges** that they invariably face.
24. At a community and club level, engagement of some target groups has proved difficult but Bike Clubs have now made real progress in this. It has been challenging to promote the Youth Achievement Awards (YAAs) across all Bike Clubs but where this opportunity has been taken up there has been positive feedback. The evaluation evidence suggests that it is important to introduce YAAs at the right stage in the development of a Bike Club and to the individual young people involved.
25. At a locality level, the main challenge has been maintaining local authority interest in and commitment to Bike Club at a time of financial pressures in public spending. The partnership working and development of networks has been an important part of overcoming this challenge as this can help integrate Bike Club as part of wider strategies in relation to young people, community engagement, healthy living and physical activity as well as cycling specifically.



Going forward

26. Bike Club funding from Department of Transport (DfT) came to an end in March 2012 and funding from Asda's Pedal Power Campaign continues until December 2012. All areas have been looking **for ways to sustain Bike Club activity**, although progress with this has been mixed, 80% of Leaders who responded to the survey thought that their Bike Club will continue for 'the next 12 months at least' as shown in the chart below.
27. Nationally, Bike Club has established a new model of support based on Bike Clubs (initially in DfT funded areas in England) paying a nominal fee for 12 months membership, insurance and some staff support. A toolkit to generate income and support Bike Club Leaders is also being produced.

27. In Scotland (where Bike Club is funded through Asda until 2012), there is strong support from Youth Scotland and Cycling Scotland to continue activity and also from local authorities such as Glasgow where Bike Club contributes to the City Cycling Strategy through its ability to reach young people in deprived communities. Similar approaches may be used to sustain Bike Club in Wales and Northern Ireland.
27. In parts of England (e.g. Sefton, Woking) there are examples of where productive partnership working with the local authority has resulted in Bike Club being supported as part of a wider sustainable transport, community engagement and/or young people's strategy, including through use of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).
27. The **challenge for CTC and its partners** is to build on this progress and develop a brand and model for Bike Club that can **sustain the activity**. The political and economic environment has changed radically over the last two years so any plans for Bike Club in the future has to take this into account.

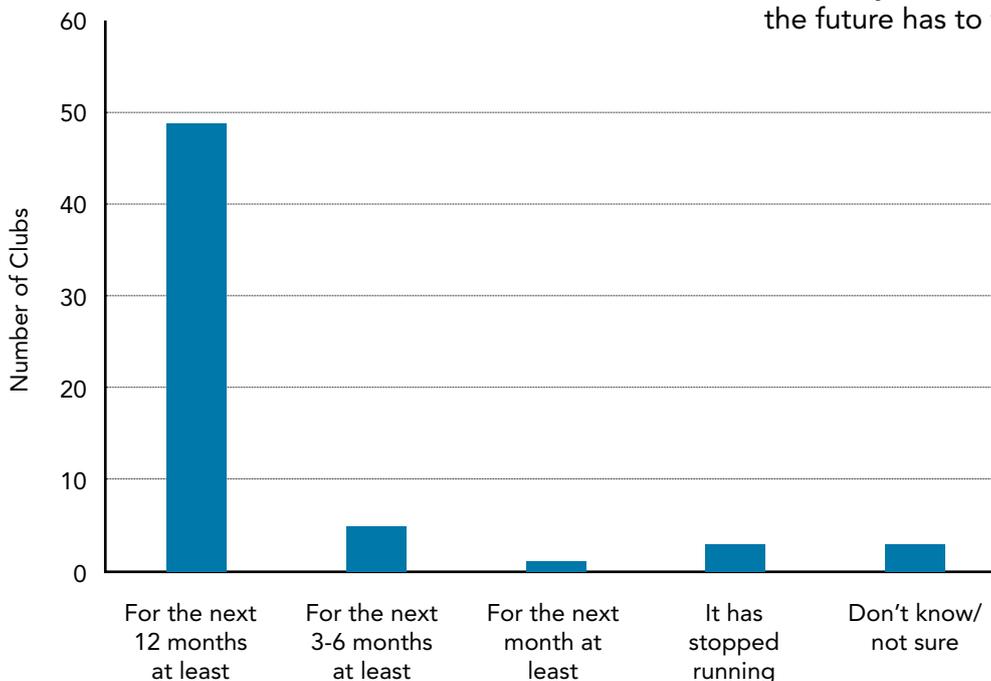


Figure 3: The extent to which Bike Club Leaders feel their Bike Club is sustainable/likely to continue (Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012; base: 61 respondents to the question)



28. The learning from this evaluation suggests that rising to this challenge should include:

- Retaining a **UK wide brand and umbrella organisation** to raise the profile of Bike Club to realise its potential
- Encouraging **devolved governance** arrangement for Bike Club in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- CTC working with the relevant Youth organisations to develop a **Vision and Strategic Plan** to take Bike Club forward in the new environment
- Investing in a marketing and communications strategy to build Bike Club's profile as the **brand for all cycling activity with young people**
- Agreeing a **financial model** for sustainability in the current economic climate
- Developing and maintaining **partnership working** with other voluntary and statutory organisations to align outcomes and explore public sector **commissioning opportunities** through local authorities and the NHS.

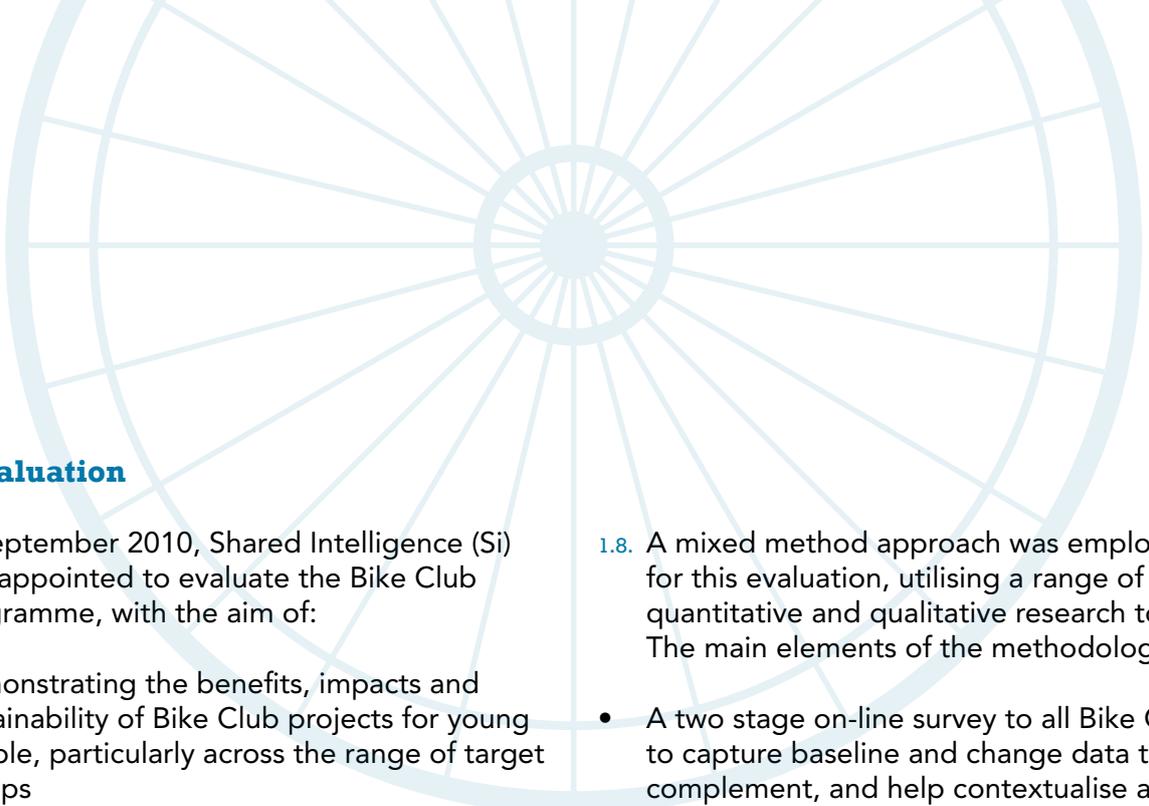
1. INTRODUCTION

Bike Club is an innovative programme designed and led by three national charities – CTC, UK Youth and ContinYou. The programme is funded by Department for Transport (DfT) and Asda's Pedal Power Campaign. It supports the establishment of Bike Clubs across the UK with the overarching aim of encouraging groups of young people, who do not traditionally participate in cycling or physical activity, to take up the activity.

Bike Club

- 1.1. Bike Club is a UK-wide initiative led by three national charities – CTC, UK Youth and ContinYou – in partnership with Youth Scotland, Youth Cymru, ContinYou Cymru and Belfast City Council Parks & Leisure Department. Bike Club was funded through the Department for Transport (DfT) between September 2009 and March 2012, and Asda Foundation's Pedal Power campaign between April 2010 and December 2012.
- 1.2. The three charities leading this initiative strongly believe in the multiple benefits of cycling, in particular, how cycling can be used as a conduit to the health, happiness, wellbeing and development of children and young people. As such, the aim of the programme is to encourage more people to engage in cycling for a range of positive outcomes, particularly young people less likely to engage in cycling.
- 1.3. Fourteen Bike Club Development Officer working in city/regional cluster areas across the UK were put in place to administer, support and coordinate Bike Club activity in their areas. Eight Development Officers were funded through DfT and worked within cluster areas within the English regions. A further six Development Officers were funded through Asda's Pedal Power Campaign which enabled the programme to expand across the UK into major cities and surrounding areas of Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland and other parts of the UK (London and the North East).
- 1.4. Bike Club became operational in September 2009, and during that time, it has supported the development of 308 individual Bike Clubs across the UK, benefiting over 18,000 people. Bike Club activity is varied and innovative, ranging from mountain biking and cycle maintenance to campaigning and arts and media projects.
- 1.5. There are many examples of diverse Bike Club activity around the UK and illustrations of how the activity is benefiting different target groups of young people – including those groups who are less likely to engage in cycling. For example activity targeted at young girls, BME communities, young disabled people, young people living in deprived communities and children in care.





The evaluation

- 1.6. In September 2010, Shared Intelligence (Si) was appointed to evaluate the Bike Club programme, with the aim of:
- Demonstrating the benefits, impacts and sustainability of Bike Club projects for young people, particularly across the range of target groups
 - Establishing baseline and progression indicators for both health and educational measures, as a result of participation in Bike Club programmes
 - Providing a body of evidence and case studies to be used in the development of the Bike Club Tool Kit to support the roll out of Bike Club across other areas
 - Developing a self evaluation framework for local sites to measure their own success against the project assumptions and indicators of success
 - Assisting the correlation of the monitoring data of Bike Clubs and identify if successful at meeting funders targets.
- 1.7. The following principles underpinned the approach to this evaluation.
- Identifying “what works” – for whom, why and in what circumstances. Exploring the kinds of Bike Club activities which work for different participants, particularly those from more disadvantaged and excluded groups.
 - Learning for decision making and action. Information on “what works” and other learning from the evaluation needs to inform practical decisions within Bike Club and support staff and volunteers to continue to deliver and develop tailored and flexible activities that meet local needs.
 - Building evaluation skills and capacity. Through guidance on self evaluation and training and support for young people to carry out peer research, the evaluation will leave a positive legacy to help capture soft and hard outcomes and make a business case.
- 1.8. A mixed method approach was employed for this evaluation, utilising a range of quantitative and qualitative research tools. The main elements of the methodology were:
- A two stage on-line survey to all Bike Clubs to capture baseline and change data to complement, and help contextualise and interpret, the monitoring and performance management data collected by Bike Club
 - Stakeholder interviews with consortium partners and the Bike Club Management Team to understand the expected outcomes, different perspectives on the priorities, drivers and challenges for Bike Club support and delivery
 - 9 Place Studies across a range of areas and activities to gather additional data (including wider family/community impact), carry out activity observation, provide in depth support on self evaluation, train and support young peer researchers to collect data and analyse their findings, and provide published studies for learning and to support the Bike Club business case
 - A young person’s competition – with entries via a questionnaire and dedicated webpage, providing all young people involved in Bike Club activity with the opportunity to feed back their views into the evaluation
 - Developing a self-evaluation framework for the wider group of Bike Clubs across the UK, drawing on what has been learned through this evaluation methodology.

About this report

1.9. This report brings together analysis from all primary and secondary data over the two years of evaluation activity. This includes:

- Stakeholder interviews
- Bike Club Leaders' survey 2011 (92 respondents)
- Bike Club Leaders' survey 2012 (87 respondents)
- Young people's questionnaire 2012 (50 respondents)
- Bike Club annual reports 2012
- Bike Club monitoring data (April 2012)
- 9 Place Studies (Blackpool, Southport and Chester, Glasgow, Aylesbury and Leighton Linlade, Brighton and Hove, Sheffield, Belfast, London and Cardiff).

1.10. This report explores the extent to which outcomes have been achieved for young people, communities and wider localities as a result of Bike Club activity. It also presents lessons learnt for the programme as a whole, in terms of the way it was delivered and the contributing factors to achieving its outcomes, and also lessons for individual Bike Clubs in terms of what works for engaging which groups of young people. The report also provides an overview of some of the key challenges the programme has faced, as well as implications for the future of Bike Club.



2. OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

In this chapter, we present an overview of the extent to which outcomes have been achieved and the linkages between outcomes for young people, for families and wider communities and outcomes for localities. The evidence from the evaluation shows how outcomes for young people are driving outcomes for families, wider communities and outcomes for localities.



- **Environmental outcomes** – decrease in car usage/CO2 emissions;
- **Learning outcomes** – engaging young people in formal and informal learning;
- **Mobility/sustainable transport outcomes** – increase young people’s mobility in, around and beyond their community;
- **Social cohesion** – strengthening communities.

2.3. In this section we present the evidence for both expected and unexpected outcomes for young people, for families, for communities and for localities, and the extent to which progress has been made towards these.

Expected outcomes

2.1. There was general agreement among national stakeholders of the wide range of outcomes that Bike Club has the potential to achieve.

2.2. Although partners had different expectations of the programme in terms of outcomes and outputs and what they see as measures of success, there was much overlap and as such, expected outcomes can be broadly categorised under seven main outcome areas:

- **Cycling outcomes** – increased numbers of young people cycling now and in the future;
- **Health and wellbeing outcomes** – improved physical and emotional health of young people;
- **Engagement and participation outcomes** – engagement through cycling leading to more life opportunities;

Outcomes for young people

2.4. This section of the report draws on all available data to evidence the extent to which Bike Club has led to a range of outcomes for young people to date.

2.5. The findings reveal that Bike Club leads to a wide range of outcomes for young people. There is evidence that Bike Club leads to increased enthusiasm for cycling, increased confidence in riding a bike, increased coordination and mobility in and around the local area and to new places, increased use of a bike as a mode of transport and increased number of young people cycling to school, increased social and personal development, physical and emotional health and better future education and employment opportunities.

2.6. The benefits are multiple and far reaching. The evaluation has found that Bike Clubs – no matter what form they take (bike maintenance or mountain biking) have multiple benefits or outcomes for those young people who regularly participate. All of the Bike Club Leader’s who responded to the online survey, who completed an annual review or who was interviewed through the place studies, spoke of at least three different outcomes for young people that had come about as a result of participation in Bike Club activity.

2.7. The evidence tells us that to date (after 2 years of delivery), Bike Club has had the biggest impact on young people through:

- Increasing young people’s enthusiasm for cycling;
- Increasing young people’s confidence in riding a bike;
- Giving more young people access to bikes;
- Improving young people’s cycling skills; and
- Improving the physical health of young people.

2.8. Figure 2 illustrates the extent to which outcomes have been achieved to date and clearly shows those outcome areas where Bike Clubs have seen the biggest impacts to date, which is further evidenced through annual reports and place study research.

2.9. There is further evidence that other outcomes have been achieved, but at the moment, to a lesser extent. The evidence points to a relationship between the different outcomes areas – where some earlier benefits can lead on to others, for example, improved confidence in one thing (cycling) can lead to an increase in confidence more widely (e.g. increased confidence in the classroom) and an increase in skills (cycling, maintenance skills) translates into other areas (e.g. uptake of training or volunteering opportunities) and can have an effect on education and work opportunities.

2.10. The relationship between outcomes is presented in a basic logic model for the programme (see figure 1) which presents the hypothesis that initial outcomes for the programme has a knock on effect and lead on to others. In this way, we can expect that if Bike Clubs continue to deliver regular activity and young people continue to engage, we could expect to see further evidence of progress towards/achieving some of the medium and longer-term impact further down the line.

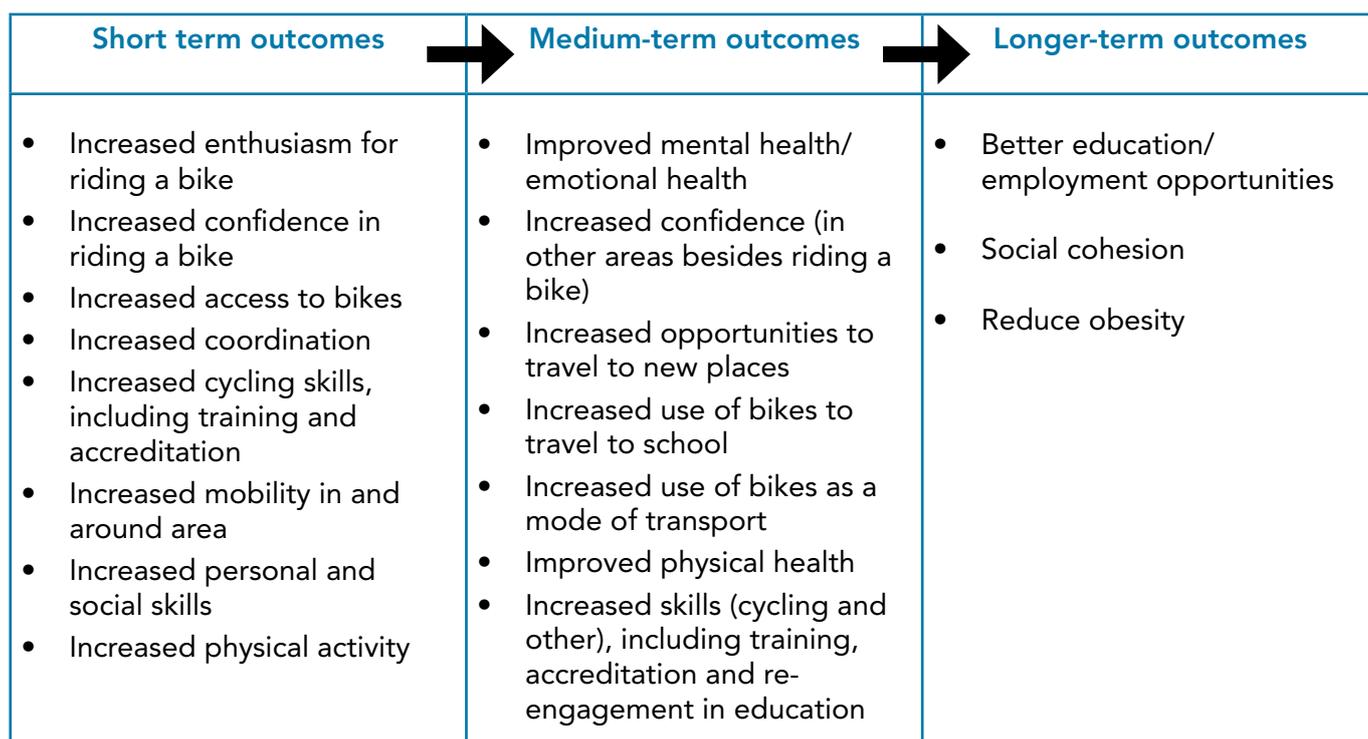


Figure 1: Logic model for the Bike Club programme showing the relationship between outcome areas

| Outcomes | Evidence of progress towards outcomes | Level of achievement to date (high/medium/low) |
|---|--|--|
| Increased enthusiasm for riding a bike | All but two Clubs (97%/57) who responded to this question said Bike Club had led to increased enthusiasm for cycling and 93% (40) of young people who responded to questionnaire said they enjoy cycling more since joining Bike Club | High |
| Increased confidence in riding a bike | 93% of Bike Club Leader respondents to this question reported that young people have increased confidence as a direct result of Bike Club and 84% of young people who responded to the questionnaire said they feel more confident about cycling since attending Bike Club | High |
| Increased access to bikes | 88% of Bike Club Leader respondents to this question said their Bike Club had increased access to bikes for young people with 41% estimating this was the case for over 20 young people | High |
| Increased coordination | 93% of Bike Club Leader respondents to this question reported that young people have increased coordination as a direct result of Bike Club with just over a third saying this was the case for over 20 young people | High |
| Increased cycling skills | 90% of Bike Club Leader respondents to the question said that Bike Club had increased cycling skills of young people and 52% of young people who responded to the questionnaire said they had learned maintenance skills and 42% said they have learned how to ride a bike as a direct result of Bike Club | High |
| Increased mobility/ increased use of bikes as a mode of transport | 70% of Bike Club Leader respondents said that Bike Club had increased young people's mobility and 78% of young people responding to the questionnaire said that since joining Bike Club they use bikes to get to places more | Medium |
| Increased personal and social skills (including confidence in other things) | 84% of Bike Club Leader respondents said that Bike Club had increased young people's personal and social skills with one fifth saying that Bike Club had made an impact on over 20 young people in this way | Medium |
| Increased physical activity/physical health | 85% of Bike Club Leader respondents to the question reported that their Bike Club had improved the physical health of young people and 86% of young people responding to questionnaire said they felt fitter since joining Bike Club | Medium |
| Improved mental health/emotional health | 77% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to this question reported that their Bike Club had improved the mental and emotional health of participants | Medium |
| Increased use of bikes to travel to school | 67% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to this question reported that more young people were travelling to school as a result of Bike Club and the young people's questionnaire revealed that Bike Club had increased the number of young people cycling to school from 23% to 45%. | Low-medium |
| Better education/ employment opportunities | 50% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to this question reported that Bike Club was leading to better future employment opportunities for those involved | Low-medium |
| Social cohesion | Qualitative evidence suggests that Bike Club is leading to cross-community outcomes and reduced crime and anti-social behaviour in some areas | Low |
| Reduce obesity | Qualitative evidence suggests that Bike Club is leading to reduction in obesity on a small scale at this stage | Low |

Figure 2: Summary of the evidence to suggest achievement/progress towards each of the key outcomes identified in the logic model

2.11. Below, we explore in more depth the extent to which each outcomes has been achieved to date.

Increased access to bikes for young people

2.12. Bike Club has increased access to bikes for young people, particularly for young people who haven't had access to bikes in the past, including young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The vast majority of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey – 88% – said that their Bike Club had increased access to bikes for young people with 41% saying their Bike Club had increased access to bikes for over 20 young people. This is particularly notable for disadvantaged young people.

2.13. Evidence shows that more young people own a bike as a result of Bike Club, either through encouraging their parents to buy them one for the first time, through supporting young people to mend broken bikes, or to help young people procure a bike or have access to a bike through Bike Club activity. Many Bike Clubs purchased bikes with a Bike Club grant, making bikes accessible to many young people who do not own a bike themselves.

Increased enthusiasm for cycling

2.14. There is evidence that Bike Club activity has led to increased enjoyment and enthusiasm in cycling for young people involved. This is an important outcome, particularly in terms of the hypothesis laid out in the logic model (figure 2), as it can lead to sustained participation in cycling/physical activity for multiple longer-term benefits.

2.15. The results of the Bike Club Leaders' survey shows increased enthusiasm for cycling to be the most significant impact Bike Club has had for young people involved to date. The survey results revealed that all but two Bike Clubs who responded believed that their Bike Club had increase enthusiasm for cycling with almost 50% estimating that their Bike Club had achieved this for over 20 young people.

Since joining Bike Club, do you enjoy cycling...

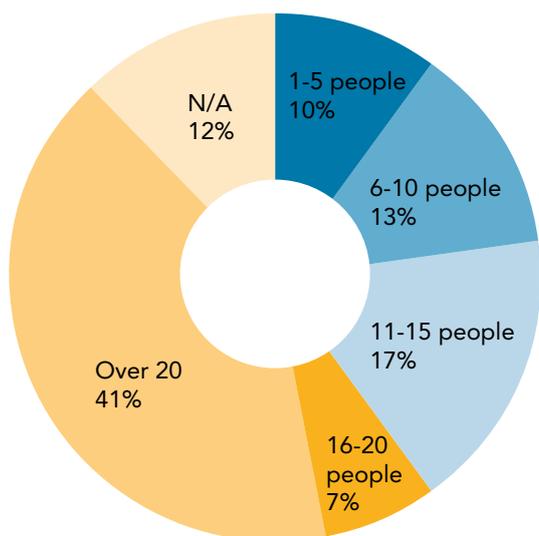


Figure 3: Percentage of Bike Club Leaders estimating the number of young people who have been able to access a bike through Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012, base: 59 respondents to the question]

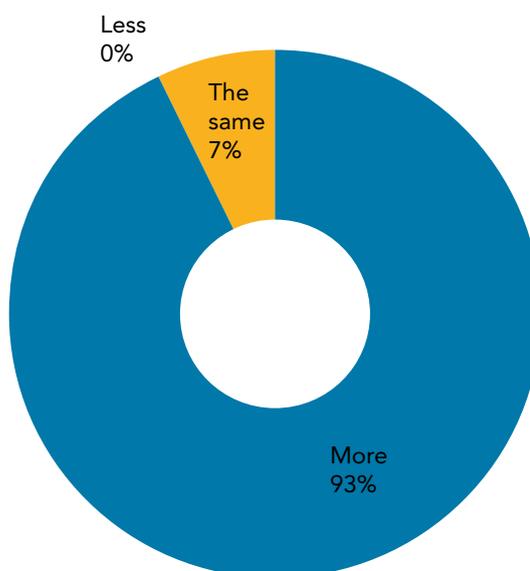


Figure 4: Percentage of young people who enjoy cycling more since joining Bike Club. [Source: young people's questionnaire 2012, base: 43 respondents to the question]

Increased confidence in riding a bike

2.16. An overwhelming majority – 93% – of young people who responded to the questionnaire said that they enjoy cycling more since joining Bike Club (see figure 4). More than half of all young people who responded said they attend Bike Club because they find it ‘fun’ and enjoyable, and a third said that was the reason they regularly attended, which shows how important maintaining enjoyment and enthusiasm is for sustained engagement. Results from annual reports and place studies told a similar story, with the vast majority of Bike Clubs explaining how much pleasure young people got from their Bike Club activity, whether it was mountain biking, trail/ on road rides or maintenance. Comments included:

“It’s fun and it encourages you to cycle more”
(young person, Stenhouse Bike Club, Edinburgh)

“I love learning about bikes” (young person,
South Camden Community School Bike Club,
London)

“Certain young people we work with sometimes struggle during the rides both physically and socially. Throughout the year they have taken up the challenge with enthusiasm asking to go back on the same ride to see how they have improved.” (Bike Club Leader, Brighton and Hove)

“Has helped promote a general interest in cycling. Newport Velodrome trips (12 students) used to take weeks to fill up. Now takes 2 days.”
(Exmouth Community College Bike Club)

2.17. Increasing young people’s enthusiasm was something that transcends all boundaries – there was evidence to suggest that all types of young people were as enthusiastic about cycling, although evidence suggested that some types of activity was more successful for engaging certain groups of young people, which we discuss further in the next section.

2.18. The second most prominent impact that Bike Club Leaders have seen for young people was increased confidence in riding a bike – with all but four responding that young people had benefited in this way. Almost half of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey said that they had seen increased confidence for over 20 young people involved in their Bike Club.

2.19. The majority of young people who responded to the questionnaire (84%) said they feel more confident about cycling since attending Bike Club (see figure 5), and a similar percentage said they now feel more confident cycling on roads.

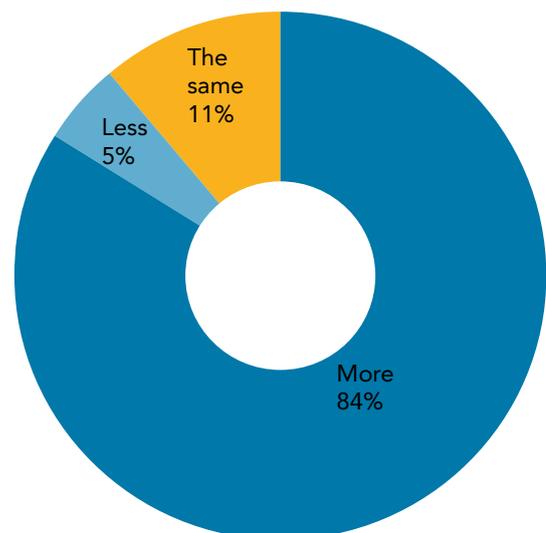


Figure 5: Number of young people who feel more confident about cycling since joining Bike Club. [Source: young people’s questionnaire 2012, Base: 43 respondents to the question]

2.20. Findings from place studies and annual reports strengthened this finding further, with young people and Bike Club Leaders right across the UK revealing that Bike Club was helping to increase young people’s confidence in cycling.

2.21. Increased confidence had been seen in young people who had never cycled before learning how to ride, disabled young people learning how to ride specially adapted bikes and trikes, relatively proficient young people learning new skills and pushing themselves in new challenges and young people growing in confidence around bikes mechanics and maintenance.

2.22. Again, this was something that all different types of clubs were able to achieve for different types of young people. Comments included:

“Confidence [of young people] has increased significantly, both socially and on a bike. The training they have completed as Bike Club members has certainly helped this.” (Morrison Bike Club Leader)

“10 non-cyclists have learned to ride a bike, many have become more confident on bikes” (Kaimes School Bike Club Leader, Edinburgh)

Increased coordination

2.23. Bike Club has made a significant impact in terms of increasing coordination of young people involved. Most Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey (93%) said that their Bike Club has increased the coordination of a number of young people involved – with just over a third saying that their Bike Club had increased the coordination of over 20 young people (see figure 6).

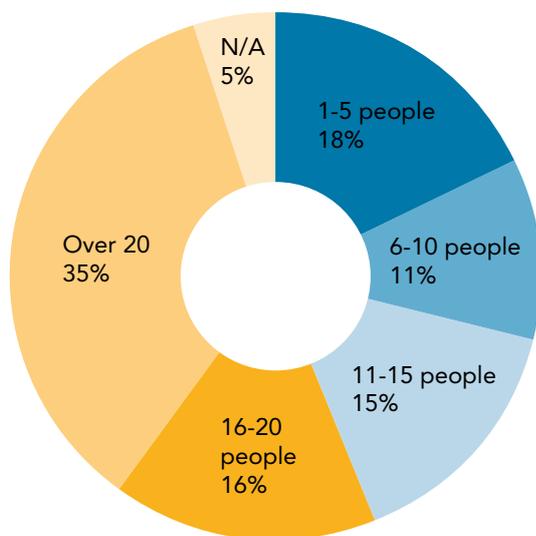


Figure 6: Percentage of Bike Club Leaders estimating the number of young people who have increased their coordination through Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 55 respondents to the question]

2.24. Results from place study research and annual reports support this finding further, particularly for young disabled people. Evidence suggests that increased coordination reinforces confidence levels, enthusiasm and enjoyment for cycling, and leads to increased mobility and use of bikes as a mode of transport.

2.25. Increased coordination has been most notable for Bike Clubs who have engaged disabled young people (including young people with social, emotional needs). For example, at Park School Bike Club in Blackpool, a school for young people with Special Educational Needs, the Bike Club Leader reported three young people with complex needs having progressed quickly from cycling on three wheels to two wheels. And at Kaimes School Bike Club in Edinburgh – a school with young people on the autistic spectrum, the Bike Club Leader noted vast improvements in their balance and coordination.

“All pupils have had improvements in gross motor skills. These ranged from learning to pedal to improvements in their balance. ...The cycle path has been of benefit to our autistic pupils... Their judgement and coordination has improved, they are now able to follow the path without going out of the lines” (Kaimes School Bike Club Leader)

Increased mobility in and around local area and to new places

2.26. There is evidence that Bike Club has led to an increase in young people’s mobility in, around and beyond their local area, reducing segregation and dependency and providing opportunities for young people to travel to new places. Bike Club has led to increased journeys made by bike through encouraging more young people to use bikes as a mode of transport.

2.27. 70% who responded to the Bike Club Leader’s survey said that Bike Club had increased mobility in and around the local area for young people, 74% said it had increased the use of bikes as a mode of transport generally, and 75% said it had increased opportunities for young people to travel outside of the local area to new places.

2.28. 78% of young people who responded to the questionnaire said that since joining Bike Club they use bikes to get to places more (see figure 7). Bike Club encourages young people to use cycling as an independent mode of transport, particularly important for young people living in more rural and isolated areas. This can open up more opportunities – important or social, educational and employment outcomes later down the line.

"[I cycle to] Sheffield when my mum and dad can't take me. That's 32 miles!" (Young person, Park Academy Bike Club, Sheffield)

Since joining the Bike Club do you use your bike to get to places...

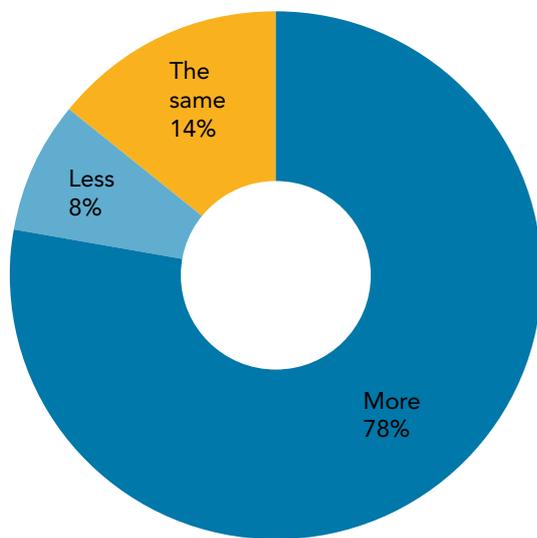


Figure 7: Proportion of young people who use their bike more to get to places since joining Bike Club [Source: young people's questionnaire 2012; base: 37 respondents to the question]

2.29. Bike Club is enabling **disabled young people** to increase their coordination, to learn how to cycle and ultimately is increasing disabled young people's mobility. For example, at Furze Down school in Buckinghamshire, a school for students on a Statement of Special Educational Needs, students were less mobile than most because of their learning disabilities and Bike Club turned that around for those who participated:

"I can now cycle to the town centre from where I live"

"I can now ride to Aylesbury town safely" (Young people, Furze Down School Bike Club, Buckinghamshire)

2.30. In some areas, particularly where there was more segregation between neighbourhoods and communities, there is evidence that Bike Club is **starting to help the breakdown of such boundaries** with young people journeying to other parts of their town or city. For example, in Glasgow, young people involved in Bike Club activity are cycling to parts of the city they hadn't been to before, such as parks on the fringes of Glasgow. The Development Officer also organises a full programme of city-wide cycling activities that bring different Bike Clubs together.

"We do a different run every week – as a community" (Young person, Freewheel North Bike Club, Glasgow)

2.31. There is evidence of more people using cycling as a means of transportation and travel through Bike Club activity, allowing people to get to places (quicker). Young people at Boathouse Youth in Blackpool talked about using their bikes to get around from place to place. This had the potential to increase their mobility within and across communities. There is evidence that Bike Club is leading to an increase in young people cycling to school, increase in young people using cycling as a means of travel outside of school and some evidence to suggest an increase in cycling as sustainable travel e.g. to work:

"Our young people have said that taking part in this scheme has enabled them to go to town – given me freedom to travel from my village" (Bike Club Leader)

"It's fun and practical – gets you from A to B" (Teenage mum's group, Blackpool)

"I cycle everywhere, ride to places like Sheffield when my parent can't take me, that's 32 miles" (Young person, Hope Valley College, Sheffield)

"Yes go on bike rides"; "Going out with mates"; "Go to grandma's"; "Get around, go to different places" (young people involved in Bike Club activity, Sheffield)

2.32. In some areas, this increased mobility is leading to **increased opportunities**. For example, in Blackpool the teenage mums group talked about the benefits for getting employment and Bike Club Leaders in Belfast spoke of better education and employment opportunities for the young people involved through increased mobility.



Increased use of bikes to travel to school

2.33. Bike Club has led to increased number of young people cycling to school. The increased enthusiasm and cycling skills of young people obtained through Bike Clubs, has led to young people using bikes more as a mode of transport, including cycling to school. This has also been helped by those Bike Clubs that take place after school, as young people ride to school to then use their own bikes during Bike Club activity.

2.34. Increased use of bikes to travel to school was evidenced through the Bike Club Leader's survey, where 67% who responded said that more young people were cycling to school as a result of Bike Club. Estimated numbers of young people who were now cycling to school were lower than that of other outcome areas (see figure 1), but this is to be expected at this stage in the programme, as this is a medium to longer term outcome (see figure 2).

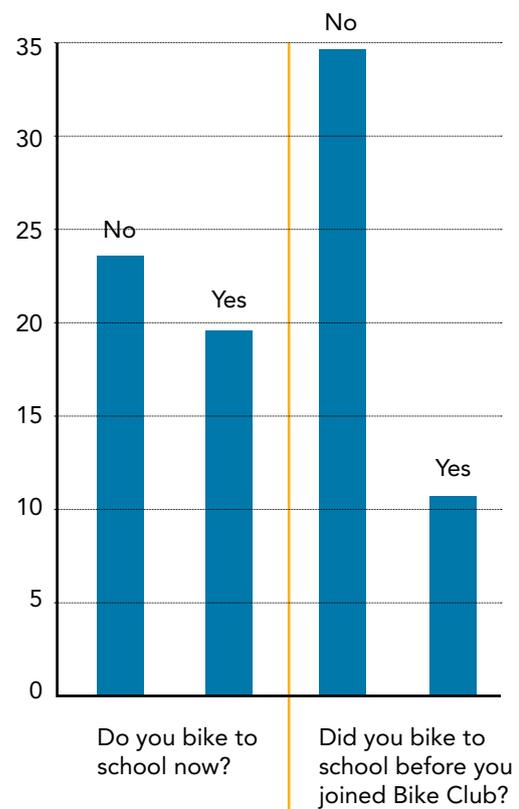


Figure 8: Number of young people who bike to school before and after participation in Bike Club [Source: young people's questionnaire 2012; base: 42/44 respondents]

2.35. The young people's survey revealed that Bike Club had increased the number of young people (who responded to the survey) who cycle to school from 23% to 45% (see figure 8). The biggest barriers to young people cycling to school prior to Bike Club were found to be preference of walking, not owning a bike and lack of confidence in cycling. Bike Club has given the young people access to a bike and increased their confidence, therefore enabling more young people to cycle to school.

2.36. Place study research and annual reports from Bike Clubs provided further evidence of Bike Clubs giving young people the skills, confidence and tools to cycle to school, including young people from deprived neighbourhoods and those at risk of exclusion:

"Helping students from deprived backgrounds have access to spares and tools to keep cycling to school." (Bike Club Leader)

"I ride my bike more. I ride to school." "[I] bike to school." (Young people, 67 Centre Bike Club, Brighton)

"Children who were unable to ride can now go through each level of training offered... We are currently meeting the 2012 challenge to have 10% of pupils cycling to school" (Swinton Primary School Bike Club)

"There are more children cycling to school so they can ride their bikes at the after school club (Kool Kids Club)

"[Bike Club has led to] independent travel to school. As all students have SEN Statements they usually come by taxi so this is a big deal" (Clifford Holroyde Bike Club)

Increased personal and social skills – leadership, team work, independence and confidence

2.37. There is much evidence to suggest that Bike Club activity leads to **personal and social development**, including increased independence, confidence, leadership and team working skills, patience, tolerance, endurance and improved behaviour among young people from all different backgrounds.

2.38. 84% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey said that their Bike Club had increased young people's personal and social skills including leadership, team work, independence and confidence, with one fifth of respondents saying that Bike Club had made an impact on over 20 young people in this way (see figure 9).

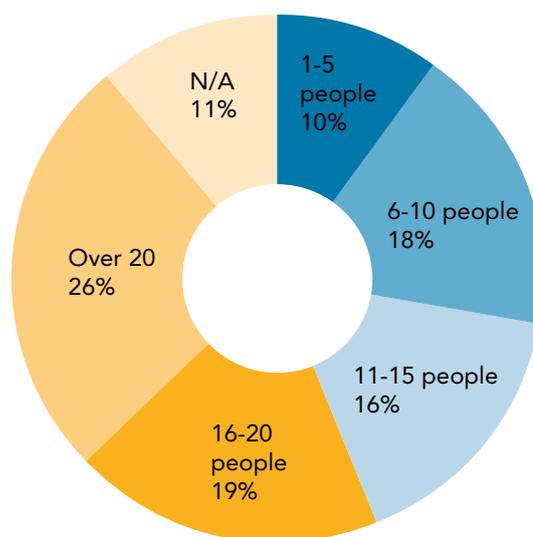


Figure 9: Estimated number of young people who have increased their personal/social skills through Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012; base: 57 respondents to the question]



2.39. Bike Club also offers young people the opportunity to gain qualifications through activity in the form of Youth Achievement Awards (YAA). To date, eight young people have gained a YAA, and a total of 221 Bike Clubs have registered to take part in the Youth Achievement Awards to date. Those young people who have achieved awards really saw the benefits in it for their personal achievement and their future educational and employment opportunities.

2.40. Bike Club Leaders in Glasgow reported on the increased confidence in young people participating in their Bike Clubs, which was enabling young people to go on longer rides and for some, was encouraging them to become volunteers and undertake leadership training. Young people at Boathouse Youth, Blackpool spoke of how working as a group helped them to be more patient and tolerant of others, particularly the younger children:

"You are only as good as your weakest link, so you've gotta like put up with, I don't mean put up, I mean like do as a pace of the younger children...we just like go at the back, because if we get too far ahead.....so we just, like, casually ride at the back"

"Taking more of a leadership role, because you've got to like, encourage the smaller children to go along with it"

2.41. There are many examples of how Bike Club has improved the behaviour and social skills of young people at risk of exclusion, with behavioural problems or with particular conditions or special needs. There are examples that illustrate how powerful engaging some young people in cycling activity can be, to the extent where it has the ability to turn the lives around of young people with complex needs:

"Young boy from broken home hardly looked me in the eye and mumbled and acted daft two years ago and through bike club has blossomed into a gregarious and much more confident teenager" (Bike Club Leader)

"We have had 1 child who suffers from Dyspraxia and our Cycle Club has helped with co-ordination issues and though there are still some stressful moments behaviour is vastly improved from a point where exclusion was a distinct possibility to being a well liked group member" (Bike Club Leader)

"Behaviour during sessions has progressed to being of a very high standard – again a huge achievement for young people with severe behavioural, social and emotional difficulties" (Clifford Holroyde Bike Club)

Increased cycling skills

2.42. A significant amount of young people involved in Bike Club activity around the UK have developed cycling skills. These range from learning how to ride a bike, developing their cycling technique, cycle and road safety, cycle maintenance and endurance skills. The evaluation has found that the development of these skills through Bike Clubs are important in encouraging young people to cycle more and encouraging new cyclists – particularly amongst those groups who are generally less engaged in cycling or physical activity.

2.43. The Bike Club Leader’s survey reveals that as a whole, one of the biggest outcomes to date for the Bike Club programme has been increasing cycling skills of young people, with 90% of respondents reporting that their Bike Club activity had benefited young people in this way. Further, 45% of Bike Club Leaders said that their Bike Club had improved the cycling skills of over 20 young people (see figure 10).

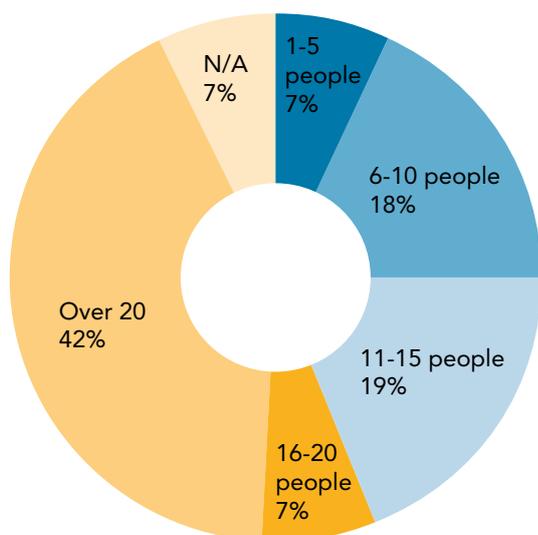


Figure 10 Percentage of Bike Club Leaders estimating the number of young people who have increased their cycling skills through Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 59 respondents to the question]

2.44. The young people’s questionnaire revealed that 52% of young people who responded had learned bike maintenance skills, 42% had learned how to ride a bike and 32% had learned cycle safety. A significant proportion of annual reports from Bike Clubs and the place studies also evidenced the impact that Bike Clubs had on young people’s cycling skills.

2.45. For example, at Furze Down School in Buckinghamshire, all 27 of their KS4 pupils have passed Bikeability Stage 1. This had given young people coordination skills, safety skills and the confidence and freedom to ride on their own.

“I’m getting rid of bad biking habits. You must use two hands and no wheelies. You can’t ride a bike without a helmet and you must use the gears and brakes to stop” (Young person, Furze Down School Bike Club, Buckinghamshire)

“I no longer ride on the pavements as I know you can get fined for doing it. I am more safety conscious, although I will ride on the pavement if the road is busy” (Young person, YBike Bike Club, Cardiff)

“I learnt to fix a puncture and then my back brake was broken and I learnt how to fix it. Then my chain kept coming off and now I know how to put it back on, it’s easy.” (Young person, 67 Centre Bike Club, Brighton)

2.46. A group of young people at Park Academy Bike Club, Sheffield spoke of how Bike Club had helped them to develop cycling skills:

“When I started, I fell off and cut my leg open – helps you with sharp corners”

“Helps you do U-turns”

“You can train [at school], and makes you more confident when you go on bike rides [outside school]”

2.47. There is evidence of **improved cycle safety** through Bike Club activity with young people explaining that the safety training has helped them to become more aware of the dangers and cycle more safely.

"(We have learnt) to be sensible...because we just like ride bikes carelessly basically, but now since we've learnt...we're scared of a car crash"

"Cos we used to just tag across the road not even looking, just dodging the cars, but now we actually just look and then go"

Improved physical health (more active, healthier weight, fitter)

2.48. The evaluation has evidenced increased levels of physical activity amongst those regularly taking part in Bike Club activity, with many young people involved in Bike Club activity across the UK stating that they feel fitter and healthier as a result of participating in Bike Club.

2.49. The Bike Club Leader's survey revealed that improving physical health of young people was one of the biggest impacts that Bike Club has had to date, with many notable examples provided. 85% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey said that their Bike Club had led to improved physical health of young people involved, with almost half (44%) saying that this had been notable for over 20 young people.

2.50. There are many examples provided through the Bike Club Leader's survey, through annual reports and place studies of how Bike Club has impacted on young people involved this way, including more active young people, young people becoming notably fitter and becoming a healthier weight.

2.51. The results of the young people's questionnaire show that 86% of those who responded said they feel fitter since joining Bike Club (see figure 11). Young people were conscious that Bike Club helps them keep fit and healthy, with some giving this as the reason why they want to keep going to Bike Club and cycling more widely.

"I feel fitter and stronger" (Young person, Furze Down School Bike Club, Buckinghamshire)

"I feel healthier – and it's fun" (Young person, Cycling Belles Bike Club, Glasgow)

"Helps build up leg muscles; it's a better exercise than running" (Young person, Speedwell Centre, Sheffield)

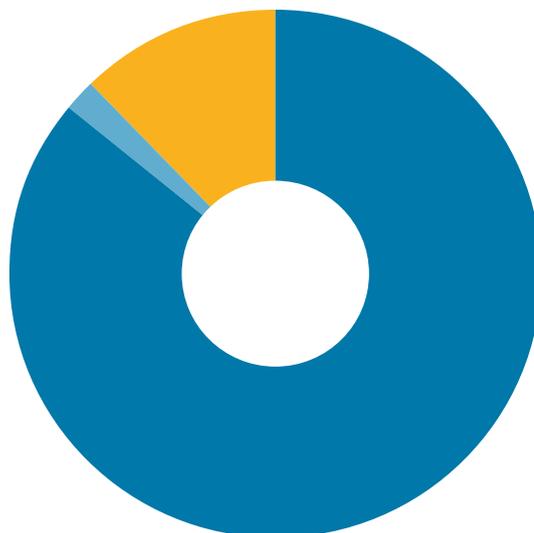


Figure 11: Proportion of young people who feel fitter since joining Bike Club [Source: young people's questionnaire 2012; base: 43 respondents]

2.52. There is further evidence to suggest that Bike Club activity is leading to **reduced obesity** levels of those taking part, and a **wider impact on healthy living**. A number of Bike Club Leaders spoke of the difference that Bike Club was making to young participants who were overweight. One Bike Club Leader in Brighton had been inspired to stop smoking since his involvement in Bike Club, and he was encouraging young people to do the same.

2.53. Research in Sheffield revealed similar evidence for increased physical activity and **improved fitness and stamina**. Young people and teachers at Bike Clubs in two different schools in Sheffield where cycling was introduced on the school curriculum spoke of how this had engaged more young people who perhaps didn't enjoy mainstream sports/ PE activity, others spoke of their increased fitness levels:

"Good way to keep fit"

"Getting fitter"

"Getting faster"

"It's easier than running to keep fit, gets you around quicker and it's fun"

2.54. There is evidence to suggest that Bike Club has led to **increased involvement** in those not currently engaged in physical activity for example; Bike Club had helped to make the case for a school in Sheffield to include cycling on their physical education curriculum. This has led to young people who usually don't engage in P.E. to actively engage, and has led to more people opting to take P.E. as a GCSE:

"Some people don't like football, so they can ride instead"

"It gives the option for those people who'd rather do cycling than something else"

"More people will take up PE GCSE because cycling is an element. And more people like PE more [now] and less likely to skive"

2.55. Bike Club provides learning for young disabled people at Furze Down School, near Aylesbury, with opportunities for physical activity that would otherwise be difficult to provide because of the varied abilities of the pupils (e.g. for team sports) combined with the limited facilities at the school.

Improved mental and emotional health

2.56. Research to date indicates that Bike Club activity is leading to **improved mental and emotional health** for participants. 77% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey said that their Bike Club was leading to the improved mental and emotional health of young people involved (see figure 12).

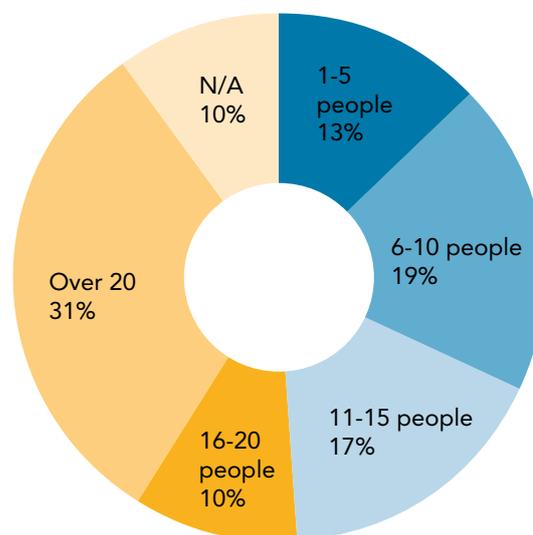


Figure 12: Estimated number of young people who have improved their mental or emotional health through Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012; base: 52 respondents to the question]

2.57. For example, there were reports from the Speedwell Centre Pupil Referral Unit in Blackpool of improved mental health of those young people who regularly used the spinning bikes, the Bike Club Leader of the Deans Youth Project – a youth project working with young people from deprived communities and at risk of exclusion in Brighton reported the effect Bike Club activity had on young people's behaviour and state of mind.

"Getting on a bike can make you feel happy and more confident" (Young person, Furze Down School Bike Club Buckinghamshire)

"The bikes have also been used as a behavioural tool – one of our more challenging pupils has used the bikes as a reward system. It's helped him to calm down and gave him a sense of achievement" (Kaimes school Bike Club, Edinburgh)

"A lot of young people do not engage in activities and often show aggression bike club has helped focus them and give them an outlet for their energy" (Bike Club Leader)

Better future education and employment opportunities

- 2.58. There is some evidence to suggest that Bike Club is leading to wider participation and new opportunities, and has the potential to impact in this way further.
- 2.59. Over half of Bike Club Leader's who responded to the survey felt that Bike Club was leading to better future employment opportunities for the young people involved (see figure 13). And some young people recognised the benefits themselves for the future, in terms of future opportunities that acquiring skills could bring.

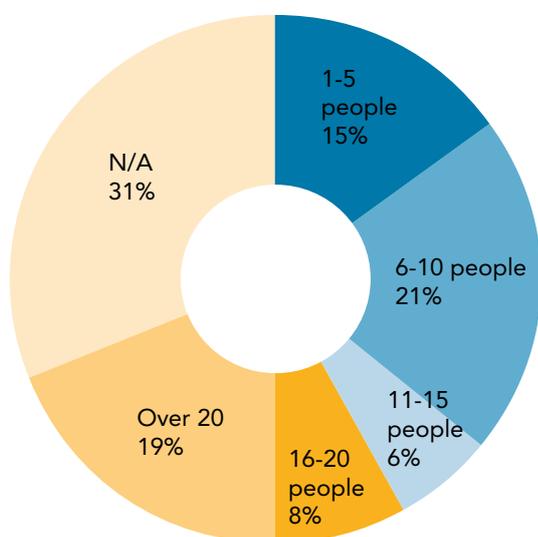


Figure 13: Percentage of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey estimating the numbers of young people who have better education/employment opportunities through participating in their Bike Club [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012, base: 48 respondents to the question]

- 2.60. There was a number in ways in which Bike Club was able to bring about better education and employment opportunities for those young people involved. Firstly, some Bike Clubs were used as incentives to improve young people's behaviour in the classroom or as a reward for doing well/catching up with their school work. This was seen as beneficial to those young people involved in terms of future opportunities.

"Reengagement in school after a period of sporadic attendance, catalysed by increased confidence due to development of skills in bike maintenance." (Bike Club Leader)

- 2.61. Some young people, such as those interviewed at Camden Bike Club, recognised how the skills they were acquiring through Bike Club, such as maintenance skills, could be beneficial to them in the future when looking for a job. And where the Youth Achievement Awards (YAAs) were being undertaken by young people, these were also considered beneficial for young people's future opportunities.

"It would mean I can get a job in a repair shop ...and fix their bikes because I am learning everything about bikes for free" (Camden Bike Club, London)

"[YAA] looks good for college"

"If you mention [YAA] in your job application you've got more of a chance"

"I think it is useful for getting a decent job" (Young people, Boathouse Youth, Blackpool)

- 2.62. For other young people, it was the mobility and independent mode of transport that cycling gave to people, which they felt could help to improve their employment opportunities. For example, the teenage mums group in Blackpool spoke of the wider benefits of Bike Club in increasing their mobility for employment opportunities.

- 2.63. There is much evidence to suggest that short-medium term outcomes such as increased mobility, increased confidence and social skills are essential building blocks for longer-term outcomes such as employment. There is evidence that Bike Club is leading to these short-medium term outcomes, so we can expect to see this having a longer-term impact later down the line.

"if you mention that on your job application you've got more of a chance, but I don't think anyone will be thinking about it yet, apart from me and (name), for college" (young person)

"Re-engagement in school after a period of sporadic attendance, catalysed by increased confidence due to development of skills in bike maintenance." (Bike Club Leader)

2.64. In Belfast, Bike Club was recognised by young people who participated in the place study research and some stakeholders as a way of increasing the independence of young people. It gave them a degree of freedom to move around the city and an alternative to public transport for greater employment and training opportunities.

Outcomes for families and wider communities

2.65. The evaluation has started to evidence the wider impact that Bike Club has had upon families and wider communities. Families have proved relatively difficult for Bike Clubs to engage, but certainly between 2011 and 2012, the Bike Club Leader's survey has evidenced how this has started to change with more Bike Clubs successfully engaging families in Bike Club activity.

2.66. There is evidence that many Bike Clubs that are becoming more established have started to expand their activity to reach out to different groups of young people and families. There are examples of Bike Clubs that have put on cycling activity for wider communities and examples of where Bike Clubs have encouraged families to get involved in Bike Club as volunteers. Where this is happening, there is some evidence to suggest that family members are developing skills in cycling and volunteering and helping to sustain Bike Club activity for the future.

2.67. There are also examples of where Bike Club has engaged particular sections of the community through targeting families. For example, in Glasgow, a Bike Club engaged Somali community through working with local families.



2.68. There is evidence that in some instances, Bike Club is developing the skills of families through encouraging parents and siblings of young people involved in Bike Club to get involved as volunteers. In some cases, this has led to increased skills and qualifications of families and the wider community which gives people better employment opportunities.

“We are hoping that as a result of our involvement with CTC some of our adult volunteers who are currently unemployed / or part time work will gain nationally recognised qualifications as cycle training instructors and be able to move on in their careers” (Bike Club Leader)

2.69. The evaluation has evidenced some indications of progress towards improved community cohesion, improved family activity time through cycling and cross-community outcomes.

2.70. For example, young people engaged in the research from Bike Clubs in Blackpool, Aylesbury/Leighton Linlade and Sheffield spoke of how Bike Club had encouraged them to go on bike rides with family and friends, with some saying they used their bike as a way of meeting up with family members/friends outside of school.

2.71. Bike Clubs in the East End of Glasgow are working towards **cross-community outcomes**. Two existing Bike Clubs are now looking to expand activities for families and adults. The clubs are hoping to make a real difference to community activities and reducing the insular attitude on the estates – by getting out of the East End through cycle rides. It is hoped that Bike Club activity in the East End will break down some of the ‘territorialism’ that exists in particular areas/estates by having members from across east and north Glasgow join. The Development Officer also organises cycle rides with picnics for all Bike Clubs in the city, which again encourages contact between young people from different communities.

2.72. And in Belfast, one of the key outcomes for local stakeholders is cross-community outcomes – bringing different groups together through Bike Club activity. Stakeholders interviewed through the Belfast Place Study commented that Bike Club had the potential to build peace and reconciliation between communities, and this could be key to attracting further funding.

“(Bike Club) has given me another tool to reach into the community” (youth worker, Belfast)

2.73. There are many examples of how existing Bike Clubs are looking to bring in wider groups of people, including families and other target communities together through engaging in cycling activity in the future.



“The project so far has been a great success. The young people have been engaging in the activities of recycling and making new bikes out of old bikes. We at the club are well impressed with the skills of the young people and the new skills that they are picking up from the project. It has been nice to see the young people working with the community to seek out new parts and old bikes for them to work on.”

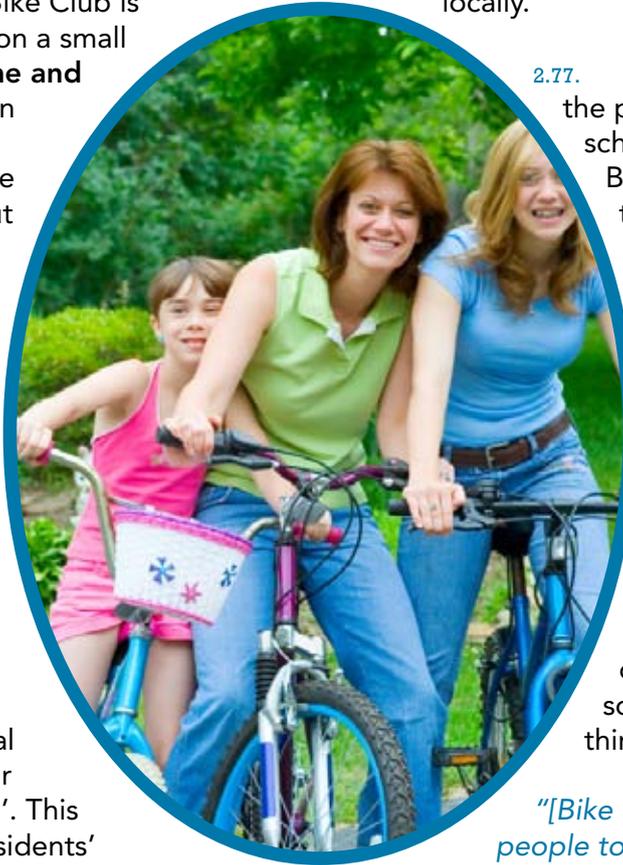
2.74. There is evidence that Bike Club is having an effect, albeit on a small level at present, on **crime and community safety** within communities. This has been particularly notable where Bike Clubs set out to specifically target young people at risk of offending or at risk of exclusion or reside in deprived communities where there is problems such as anti-social behaviour.

2.75. Overtoun Park Bike Club managed to engage young people who ‘hung around’ at the local BMX park and were local residents described their behaviour as ‘anti-social’. This made a difference to residents’ perceptions with local residents noting the difference and is helping to protect the BMX park as a local facility that may be under threat from redevelopment in the future.

“We have increased the number of young people BMXing in Overtoun Park and reduced the number of young people ‘hanging around’. There is less vandalism and disturbances. Young people are actively looking after the track... Residents agree that the number of disturbances have been reduced.” (Bike Club Leader, Overtoun Park)

2.76. A number of Bike Clubs have spoke about improving young people’s behaviour inside and outside of the classroom through engagement in Bike Club activity, which has started to have an impact on communities.

For example, Camden Community School Bike Club has engaged young people who have been excluded from education in Bike Club activity. The young people interviewed said that they themselves that Bike Club keeps them ‘off the streets’ and ‘out of trouble’, and the attached police officer at the school explained how he had noticed a difference amongst the young people involved and amongst levels of bike crime locally.



2.77. The Bike Club Leader and the police officer attached to the school spoke of the difference Bike Club is making in terms of the behaviour of the pupils involved both in and out of school. The attached police officer was very positive about the scheme – particularly its value as a diversionary activity and a way of engaging young people in cycling and in education. One young person spoke of how he was able to pass the skill on to his friends and family so it ‘gets them out of stupid things’.

“[Bike Club] has helped young people to really engage in bikes, keeping them out of anti-social behaviour and [away from] theft and robberies. A lot have built their own bikes – it gives them a goal and a sense of achievement they may not have got through academic work. One young person actually said to me ‘it keeps me away from crime’” (school safety officer)

“I’ve attended [Bike Club] for 3 weeks now. I’ve just come back from exclusion so missed some of the sessions. It takes you out of trouble; I’d be messing about with my mates [if I didn’t come to Bike Club]” (male, 14 years old)

“The Bike Club is good for the school and other pupils –have something constructive to do rather than hanging about on the streets” (male, 15 years old)



Outcomes for localities

2.78. There is evidence that Bike Club has led to outcomes for specific localities. Bike Club has strengthened partnership working in some localities helped to strengthen local networks and in some areas, has influenced local cycling strategy and ways of working.

2.79. In Glasgow, Bike Club contributed to the city's Strategic Plan for Cycling – particularly through work on cycling with diverse and deprived communities, over and above cycling sport and strengthened partnership working with Glasgow Life and Cycling Scotland on widening participation in cycling. This ground work has influenced strategy and partners working together to widen participation in cycling in the city.

“Bike Club are an integral part of the Strategic Plan” (Glasgow City Council)

“Previous to Bike Club, cycling in communities was a shot in the arm, a one off. But that doesn't work, it's not sustainable. That's why Bike Club is important – you have to work long term with young people” (Glasgow Life)

2.80. In Belfast, Bike Club was contributing to the City's Physical Activity and Sport's Development Strategy in terms of wider engagement and targeting unrepresentative groups. Bike Club has helped to strengthen partnerships between CTC and the City Council and is also seen to have potential to strengthen the City Council's partnership with local health and social care agencies by demonstrating impact on health in deprived communities, and wider partnerships with Cycling Ulster and Cycling Ireland.

2.81. Bike Club activity in Cardiff is thriving partly due to successful partnership working between the local authority and wider partners: Youth Cymru, ContinYou, and CTC. Cardiff Bike Club has provided opportunities for the local authority to consult young people on key issues that interest them, such as designing routes and cycle infrastructure that meet young people's needs, as well as broader health and wellbeing issues, which will influence policy and practice.

2.82. The local authority has viewed the Bike Club Development Officer's role as key to engaging with young people on cycling-related issues. For example, as part of the development of a strategic cycling network for Cardiff the local authority wanted to consult with young cyclists on it and the Bike Club Development Officer helped to set the meeting up:

“Last year, [the Development Officer] organised a specific meeting for me to informally go through the plan with the young people and get their feedback, which proved very useful” (Local Authority Officer)

Moreover, engagement with young people is seen as a difficult task but one that adds considerable value to the development of strategies and plans on cycling across the city.

2.83. The Bike Club approach was seen to support the Council's key priorities on cycling and as such, the Development Officer was invited to sit on the Cycle Liaison Working Group – one of the main formal cycling structures within the Cardiff area. The Working Group makes decisions on cycling-related funding allocations – as well as on the national Welsh Cycling Steering Group that, like British Cycling, aims to raise the profile of cycling across Wales.

2.84. In other areas, Bike Club has helped to strengthen local cycling networks and link organisations together which helps to strengthen the 'cycling community' and provide more opportunities for organisations to work together. For example, in Sheffield, Brighton and Glasgow, the Development Officers helped to strengthen the local cycling network by encouraging organisations and Bike Clubs to work together through local cycling activity through city-wide events.

2.85. The development of **local networks** is important for sustainability of Bike Club at a local level, particularly as there is a risk around the future funding of Development Officer posts. Local networks can provide support, sharing of knowledge, good practice, skills and resources between local Bike Clubs and clubs can feel stronger and more sustainable in this way. For example, the consortium of Bike Clubs in Brighton spoke of how they would encourage each other to make the best use of the bikes, pool resources and skills, and work together to maintain and sustain the resource.

“Bike Club has also been useful in connecting cycling groups and improving cycling across Brighton and Hove. For example we have contributed to consultations on bike lanes to improve the safety of students cycling into this school and our neighbouring comprehensive.”
(Bike Club Leader)

Value for money

2.86. Although it is difficult to determine value for money for the programme in terms of monetising outcomes, there is evidence to suggest that the programme represents **good value for money**, weighing up the benefits against the level of resource required to establish and maintain Bike Club activity at the individual club level.

2.87. The Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012 revealed that the majority of clubs were able to use their Bike Club grant to leverage in match funding or additional resources – 37% were able to secure between £2,000 and £5,500 and a further 25% leveraged in volunteer time (see figure 14). Further, a third of Bike Clubs who responded to the survey have been able to access further grants/funding since the set up of their Bike Club activity.

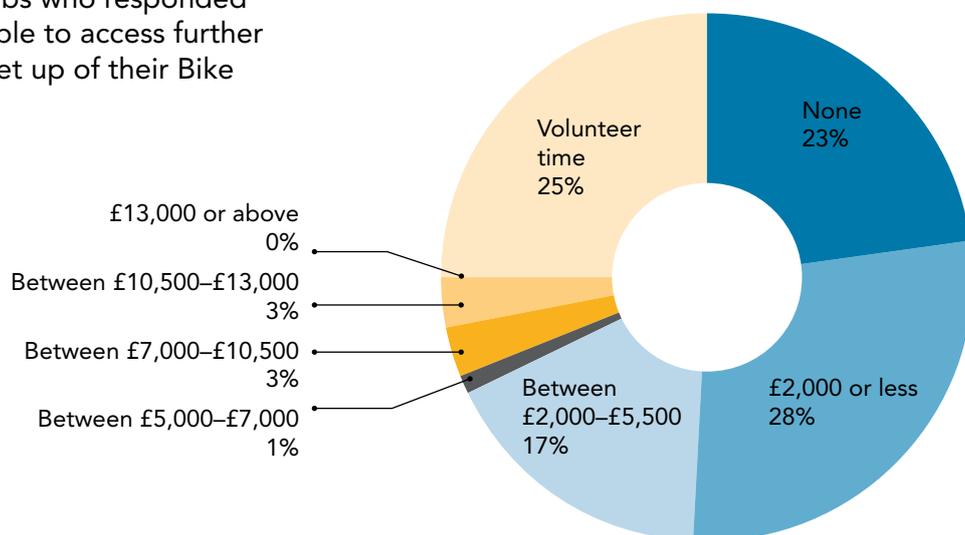


Figure 14: the extent to which Bike Clubs have secured match funding for Bike Club activity [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 81 respondents to the question]

2.88. Bike Club Leaders spoke of how Bike Club had helped to lay the foundations of a Bike Club, which has since grown and has plans to grow through accessing other funds and therefore reach more people. Comments included:

“The amount of funding is a good start up. It covers basic costs and enables us to deliver a project”

“The low set up cost allows it fulfil a whole scheme of work across the school curriculum and fits neatly against current government policy”

“Good seed funding that has acted as a catalyst to other funders getting on board.”

2.89. The evaluation has evidenced the extent to which Bike Club had led to a range of outcomes for young people, and how it is leading to wider outcomes for families, communities and localities. In light of this, Bike Club Leaders in general who have witnessed the benefits of Bike Club activity first hand, perceive the programme to represent good value for money.

2.90. In fact, the overwhelming majority – 84% – of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey felt Bike Club offered value for money, based on the impact it has had on young people weighed up against the cost and resources of running Bike Club activity (see figure 15). Bike Club Leaders spoke of relatively small set up costs and staff/volunteer time in comparison to the range and types of benefits they saw for young people. Comments included:

“Just to see the confidence that a young person gets from being able to ride a bike for the first time makes all our efforts worthwhile.”

“It develops so many skills such as bike skills, thinking skills, team skills to safety skills. So much more.”

“Little outlay, maximum benefit” (Bike Club Leaders)

Extent to which expected outcomes have been achieved

2.91. Overall, the evaluation has evidenced that the majority of expected outcomes that were expected of partners are being achieved to varying extents. There is evidence that Bike Club has increased numbers of young people cycling now and in the future, is leading to improved physical and emotional health of young people; is leading to more life opportunities, is contributing on some level to decrease in car usage, is helping to engage young people in formal and informal learning; is increasing young people’s mobility in, around and beyond their community and is helping to strengthen communities.

2.92. The evaluation has provided evidence of Bike Club leading to outcome areas that extend beyond those that were expected (unexpected outcomes), which are shown in the table below (figure 16). This shows the range of outcomes that Bike Club can achieve if designed and delivered well and if participation is maintained.

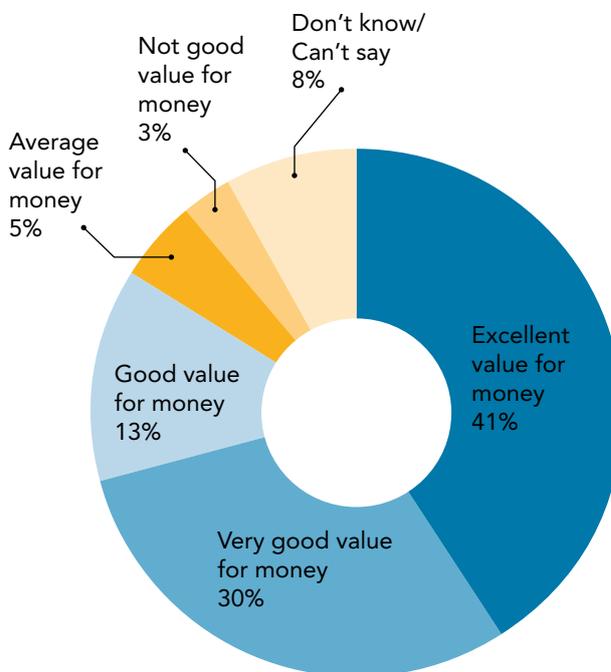


Figure 15: The extent to which Bike Club Leader’s feel that Bike Club offers value for money [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 61 respondents to the question]

| Expected outcomes | Unexpected outcomes |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased enthusiasm for riding a bike • Increased confidence in riding a bike • Increased access to bikes • Increased coordination • Increased use of bikes as a mode of transport • Increased cycling skills, including training and accreditation • Increased mobility in and around area • Increased physical activity • Improved physical health • Increased numbers cycling • Improved mental health/emotional health • Engaging young people in formal and informal learning • Better education/ employment opportunities • Social cohesion • Strengthening local cycling networks/ partnerships • Influencing cycling strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal and social skills • Increased confidence (in other areas besides riding a bike, e.g. in classroom, social situations) • Increased opportunities to travel to new places • Reduce obesity • Crime and community safety |

Figure 16: Outcomes mapping: expected and unexpected outcomes of the Bike Club programme

2.93. In the next chapter, we explore the key ingredients of the programme at the national, regional/sub-regional, local and individual club level that have enabled the programme to lead to the wide range of outcome areas as evidenced through the evaluation.



3. LEARNING FROM THE PROGRAMME



What works and why?

3.1. In this section, we present the lessons from the evaluation in terms of the programme as a whole and what works for engaging which target groups in what sets of circumstances.

Programme level lessons

3.2. The **Development Officers** were important to the success of Bike Club, particularly in leading, coordinating and championing Bike Club at the local level. This function was important in building and maintaining relationships with statutory and voluntary partners, tapping into relevant partnerships and networks, and playing the support role to individual clubs. Those Development Officers who managed to balance strategic partnership working and influence and individual club-level support have been more effective in embedding a Bike Club ethos and adding real value to the local agenda.

3.3. **Bike Club grants** provided through the programme for individual clubs has been important to get clubs up and running, providing clubs with the skills, tools and resources to get their Bike Club underway. For many clubs, this funding has been essential to procure the equipment and resources necessary to start activity, whether it is bikes, spinning bikes, training, maintenance tools, bikes trails, locks and storage to enable Bike Clubs to establish themselves. The Bike Club Development Officers were instrumental in helping clubs to access grants as well as other pots of funding, and the support they provided in establishing clubs was thought to be extremely valuable by individual clubs.

- 3.4. **Training** for Bike Club Leaders has been a particularly important aspect of the programme, including training for Bike Club Leaders and volunteers. It also provides an opportunity for young people who are members of Bike Club to go on to become trail leaders and develop their skills, including as a follow on from the Youth Achievement Awards. Maintenance courses and skills development is crucial to the sustainability of Bike Clubs locally. One of the biggest concerns amongst Bike Club Leaders is the maintenance and upkeep of their bikes. As such, running maintenance courses in localities, giving people the skills to maintain their bikes and linking up local maintenance resources (for example, Bike Clubs that have focused on maintenance activity) with other Bike Clubs in localities will be important for long term sustainability.
- 3.5. Where the **Youth Achievement Awards** have been taken up, they have worked very well – with positive outcomes for individual young people and Bike Clubs as a whole. Almost a third of the Bike Club Leader’s who responded to the survey offered YAA as an opportunity for their young people, and almost 40% of those who offered it, currently had young people doing a YAA. Those Bike Club Leaders had seen the benefits, particularly in adding to the skills of young people and recognising young people’s achievements.
- 3.6. Bike Club programme’s **place based approach** has worked well where the right conditions were in place Bike Club has been able to contribute to the overall cycling strategy for a locality, demonstrating a missing part of ‘cycling jigsaw’ in terms of community engagement which is often overlooked.
- 3.7. The local environment contributed to the success of Bike Club in localities, in terms of having the conditions in place for Bike Club to thrive. For example, in Glasgow, there was a supportive local context for Bike Club with some of the best cycling facilities in the country, a myriad of cycling activity underway, a city cycling strategy, a well developed community and voluntary sector and existing partnerships. Bike Club was able to integrate into the existing infrastructure, strengthen this and identify how it could add value within the local policy environment.
- 3.8. **Developing/strengthening partnerships** has been important in localities, particularly in enabling Bike Club locally to identify where it ‘fits’ within the local agenda and to influence policy and practice. Bike Club is stronger where strategic relationships have been developed and maintained, is able to have a bigger impact in the local area, is better able to influence local partners and has more likelihood of sustainability.
- 3.9. Partnership working has been important in the success of Bike Clubs, particularly across the UK nations where governance and leadership structures differ. For example, in Cardiff, the Development Officer put a significant amount of effort into networking, and as such, has found much support from partners in the city (local authority, local businesses, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations) which fosters a positive working environment for Bike Club to flourish. And strong strategic relationships in Glasgow contributed to the success of Bike Club in the city.
- 3.10. Bike Club at the local level has been effective because of its **flexibility**. A number of local authorities found benefits in this, as the Bike Club programme was able to adapt to the local context, and add value to existing work programmes. For example, in Brighton and Hove, the Cycle Town team identified that the Bike Club Development Officer could add value to its approach by engaging older young people deemed harder to engage.
- 3.11. On an individual club level, again the flexibility has been important for Bike Club to be incorporated into a range of different organisations’ activity either as a small part of what is provided or a larger part of what is provided, and in a way that suits the particular organisations and needs of their young people.
- 3.12. Identifying the right people who can act as **local champions** for Bike Club activity locally is an important element of the programme. Bike Club Leaders who are enthusiastic about cycling and really understand the benefits for their organisation, young people and the wider community are essential for sustained Bike Club activity in the longer term. Encouraging the right people into the role of Bike Club Leaders is important in terms of engaging target groups, particularly when those Leaders are trusted by local people from within those target groups and can act as role models.

3.13. The emphasis on **targeting Bike Club activity towards specific groups** of young people who are less likely to engage in cycling has successfully translated into good engagement of 'target groups' and has helped in some areas, to influence cycle strategies and practice in this way. It has raised the profile of the importance of community engagement in cycling and physical activity, has demonstrated the importance of engaging young people less likely to cycle and in this way, influenced local strategy, most markedly in Glasgow.

Lessons for the Consortium

3.14. The **multi-skilled and supportive** Bike Club consortium was very important to the overall design, management and delivery of the programme, most notably, the complementary skills and experience that the three charity partners brought to the table. This wide ranging skills-set underpinned the initial bid and came across clearly through our research as a strong driver for the initiative. Although each partner has different key aims they wish to address through the initiative, there is an understanding of each organisation's core offering.

"The consortium has joined up to offer their individual expertise which forms the best available pool of partners to deliver this grant." Bike Club Consortium, initial bid document

"CTC could not have done initial bids to DfT or Asda for funding without partners...UK Youth have brought superb processes to Bike Club how to engage with young people/youth groups. ContinYou understand education policy, particularly around informal learning beyond schools". Bike Club national stakeholder

3.15. It is fair to say that throughout the programme there has been a need for **flexibility and partnership working** mostly due to reorganisations within the lead partners. For example, staff turnover and time pressures of some senior staff have affected their ability to attend governance meetings and regional support networks were not as strong as originally anticipated. Nevertheless, the research has found a strong commitment to Bike Club at the strategic level amongst the governance group.

3.16. The overall **direction and leadership** of Bike Club is overseen by a governance group of senior officers from the three leading charities, as set out in the initial bid document. The governance group involving the three main partners have met regularly and participated in positive discussions around the progress of Bike Club, offering **sound advice and support** on the direction of the programme.

3.17. All partners spoke positively about the governance systems that was established, and of good working relationships and levels of communication with the central management team. For example, some stakeholders had expressed concerns about their Development Officers spending a lot of time travelling to national line management/knowledge sharing sessions. On the back of feedback, these sessions now take place at less regular intervals (quarterly as opposed to monthly).



3.18. Although good working relationships are in place at this level where progress is openly discussed and support and advice is shared during governance meetings, the research suggests a **missed opportunity** with the way that members of the governance group operate outside meetings. For example, it isn't clear how expertise and experience at the governance level translates to the local level (e.g. through local CTC/Continyou/UK Youth branches' support for Bike Club) and what role the governance team takes in driving local support as well as UK wide, strategic aspects of programme development.

3.19. The research highlighted a missed opportunity in 'invited partners' as laid out in the initial bid, where it was envisaged that a number of partners such as Cycling England, Local Authority Directors, Regional Health Authority, Obesity Specialists and County Sport Partnerships would be brought in to strategic discussions to help with raising the profile and aligning Bike Club to national agendas such as Health. This however, has not yet happened.

3.20. It could be argued that having strategic input at this level from partners such as Health and local government could have helped to raise the profile of Bike Club further which could have in turn assisted with its sustainability, could have helped to bring in advice from other areas and could have helped with broadening partnerships at the local level. This is something that has already been factored into sustainability and future plans for the initiative.

3.21. National partners are happy with the **level of communication** and governance structures that have and are developing in devolved administrations and links/working relationships with the central management team. The levels of communication and input from the devolved countries has developed of late, with key stakeholders from all countries now being invited to governance meetings to feed into discussions e.g. around sustainability.

3.22. The **flexible line management support** worked well and due to the number of staff and the distance between them, UK Youth and Continyou managers have helped the Bike Club manager with providing one-to-one support for Development Officers. This arrangement worked well although some evidence suggests a degree of 'mixed messages' particularly around application forms and the focus on specific outcome areas. However, the flexibility of the structures and the management team has enabled issues to be worked through. For example, the application system was changed to a joint assessment process involving all key partners instead of the previous system of allocating the applications to a member of the management team before jointly agreeing feedback.

3.23. More recently, a new middle management structure was established in the form of four Senior Officers who provide additional regional support to Development Officers. This has enabled the central management team to shift their resources to more strategic tasks such as sustainability of the programme.



3.24. The dedicated role of a Bike Club Manager was crucial in **setting up systems** such as the monitoring system which was generally seen as a robust process, the website and the application system and line management. However, the Manager faced a difficult task in establishing these processes as there was no lead in time, which meant that these systems were being developed at the same time as Development Officers were 'active' in areas. This has led to some frustrations, for example, the changing nature of the application form, however, the flexibility of the programme has enabled arising issues to be addressed and for Bike Clubs to develop.

3.25. The research reveals that the **monitoring system** overall was fit for purpose and robust, with an ambitious set of targets. The targets, in particular, the number of young people involved in each Bike Club, are thought to be very ambitious by most operational staff interviewed, mostly due to the fact that the targets were agreed prior to the Bike Club Project Manager being in post and were based on another cycling initiative which operates in a different way. This was thought by some to be at times somewhat discouraging, however, the ambitiousness of the targets has been well communicated to all involved which has meant that expectations have been positively managed.

3.26. The majority of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey thought the **application process** was fairly straight-forward, although a number cited the support of the Development Officer as important to the process. A few Bike Club Leaders spoke of the difficulties they faced, particularly around the level of detail required for the amount of funding, the length of time it took for a decision to be made and/or receive a decision/funding, and the 'changing goalposts' of the requirements. However, as cited earlier, these issues were worked through by developments at management level, ensuring a simplified and clearer process was put in place.

Lessons for individual Bike Clubs

3.27. Key lessons on 'what works' in engaging target groups have been identified through the evaluation and are presented in this section.

3.28. Bike Clubs have been successful in **engaging young people from deprived communities** and young people who have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from education. As we can see in figure 17, the specific target group that Bike Club Leaders have engaged mostly with overall is young people living in a deprived community – over 70% are engaging this group of young people well.

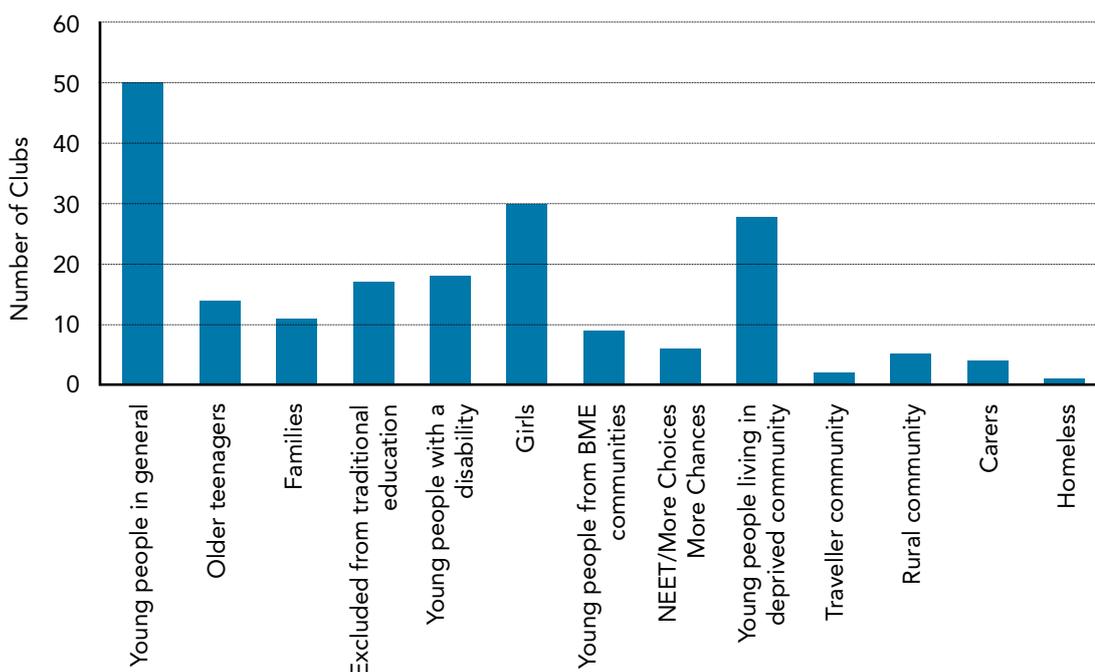


Figure 17: the number of Bike Clubs targeting specific groups [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012; base: 68 respondents to the question]



3.29. Bike Clubs that are situated within deprived communities themselves led by Bike Club Leaders who are trusted and respected by young people who live within those communities have been successful in engaging young people from deprived communities in a positive way. Boathouse in Blackpool and 67 Centre in Brighton are two examples of Bike Clubs that have successfully engaged young people from deprived communities that are hosted by well established youth groups located in deprived neighbourhoods.

“We are engaging particularly well with young people in deprived communities because this is where we are based, we have attracted the necessary funding to be able to deliver these services free of charge and we have an excellent team of staff who are able to engage positively with these young people” (Bike Club Leader)

3.30. Involving young people in the design of Bike Club activities is important for any group of young people, but particularly for young people from deprived communities and those who are excluded from traditional education. For example, the 67 Centre in Brighton worked with young people to design activity which included Graffiti art and spray painting bikes as part of their Bike Club, which appealed to local young people and helped maintain their interest.

3.31. Maintaining young people’s interest and involvement through continuous stimulating and challenging activity may be important to maintain engagement, (e.g. longer and more challenging rides and/or involvement in YAA. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this gives young people something to work towards, helps them feel a sense of achievement and maintains their interest – particularly important for young people excluded from traditional education.

3.32. Using Bike Club as an incentive for young people who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion has been successful for a number of Bike Clubs. Camden Community School Bike Club uses their Bike Club (maintenance skills, doing up and selling lost or stolen bikes and reinvesting the money) to re-engage young people in education. Young people who have been excluded from school can attend Bike Club after catching up on their core subjects/homework for 1.5 hours after school hours. This had led to young people showing significant signs of behavioural change inside and outside the classroom.

3.33. Bike Club has been successful in **engaging young women and girls** in cycling and physical activity. 65% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey said that they have been able to engage women and girls well in their Bike Clubs (see figure 18) and monitoring data shows that 31% of all participants in Bike Clubs across the UK are female – which equates to more than 5,500 young female participants in cycling activity.

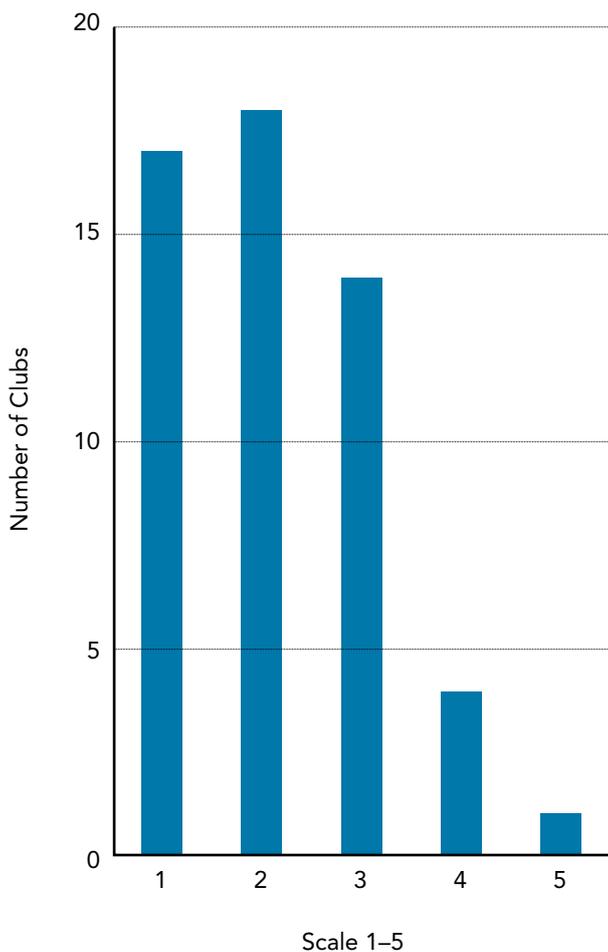


Figure 18: the extent to which Bike Club Leaders have engaged young women and girls in Bike Club activity (where 1 is engaging well and 5 is not engaging) [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 54 respondents to the question]

3.34. The evaluation has captured a number of important lessons on engaging female participants to Bike Club activity.

3.35. Female instructors have been found to be important in encouraging young women and females to participate in Bike Clubs. For example, female instructors made a difference in Bike Clubs in Glasgow in terms of encouraging more women into cycling. This has led to an increase in all-women groups including older female participants as volunteers.

“We have engaged particularly well with girls because we have female leaders who have an interest in cycling and have attracted girls to get involved with the sport also by being a positive role model.” (Bike Club Leader)

3.36. All-female group activity encourages young women and girls to participate in Bike Club activity. This made a difference to the teenage mums group in Blackpool, which helped to overcome their fears of ‘feeling silly’ cycling on their own and wearing a helmet. Having activity where young women can bring their children along is also an important consideration.

“A lot of the time girls either want to do something on their own or just be involved in what boys their own age are doing... We have tried both and had positive outcomes with both. However, when it comes to the cycling expeditions we have found that taking single-sex groups is most effective because there is less pressure to “perform”. (Bike Club Leader)

3.37. Having strong female role models that encourage cycling helps to encourage female participants and highlights the importance of the way Bike Club activity is promoted to get away from the male sports cycling stereotype. One young female participant in Blackpool explained: “if it was called cycling club, my sister wouldn’t have come”.

3.38. There is evidence that a significant number of females enjoy bike maintenance activity. It is a less traditionally ‘male’ activity compared to mechanics and girls feel it to be empowering. Not having the skills to maintain or fix your bike if it were to puncture, for example, can put people off cycling.

3.39. Bike Club has been successful in engaging **young disabled people** in cycling activity. 12% of all Bike Club participants are disabled (latest monitoring data), and more than 50% of Bike Club Leaders who responded to the survey were engaging young disabled people well in their activity (see figure 19).

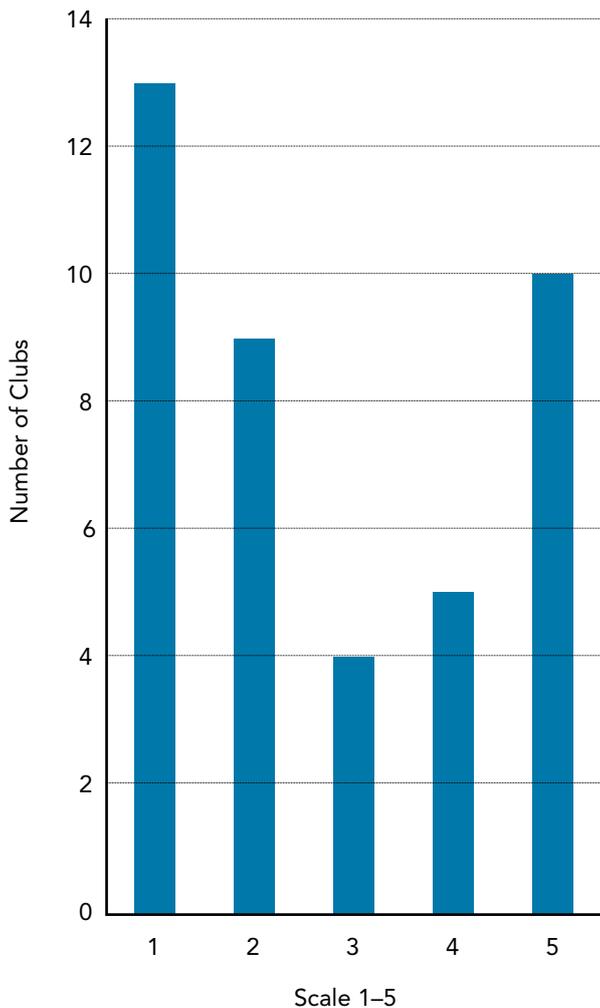


Figure 19: the extent to which Bike Club Leaders have engaged disabled young people in Bike Club activity (where 1 is engaging well and 5 is not engaging) [Source: Bike Club Leader’s survey 2012; base: 41 respondents to the question]

3.40. In terms of what we have found to work well in engaging these target groups, a number of key factors have arisen from our research which we outline below.

3.41. Firstly, working with specialist community and voluntary organisations and schools, who already work with young disabled people, specialist schools or schools with a high proportion of young disabled people – either to host a Bike Club or heavily involved in a Bike Club is the best way to engage with this target group.

3.42. The evaluation has highlighted the importance of identifying and working to address specific needs, something which is particularly pertinent for young disabled people or young people on a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) – to ensure the club is able to provide the right support and equipment to groups through planned activity.

3.43. For example, in Glasgow a Bike Club has been established for deaf young people through Deaf Connections. There had been a significant decrease in organised community activity in Glasgow which left very little for deaf young people and subsequent feelings of isolation amongst the deaf community. The Bike Club had given the young people new skills that had led on to healthy eating, and had been used as catalyst for participation more generally.

3.44. In Buckinghamshire, Furze Down School (featured in the Aylesbury/Leighton Linlade place study) is a school for students on a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). The school was very specific about wanting to improve young people’s coordination and there were very few other physical activity opportunities for students who found competitive sport and sporting rules difficult. Bike Club offered the opportunity to meet their needs.

3.45. The number of Bike Clubs engaging young people from **Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities** has increased over the last 12 months. Latest monitoring figures show that 8% of all Bike Club participants were young people from black and minority ethnic communities, however, this number could be much higher as a further 22% of participant’s ethnic background was unknown.

3.46. The evaluation has begun to identify some lessons on engaging this target group including how important it is to think about the needs and preferences of specific target groups in terms of group activity. This is particularly important for BME groups, who may have preferences around certain types of group activity.

3.47. For example, some BME groups prefer to undertake family orientated activity and/or gender specific (young women and girls) activity. Another important consideration in engaging BME groups is to ensure timings for Bike Club activity are considered to fit around religious activity. These factors show the need to involve the relevant community organisations at an early stage to ensure that their needs and requirements are designed into activity planning to maximise and maintain engagement.

3.48. In Glasgow the Development Officer responded to the Somali Community Regeneration Organisation's interest in adding cycling to their health promotion programme. Consultation with young people in the community found that mountain biking in-particular was something which interested the group but seemed out of reach largely due to economic reasons as well of lack of experience and knowledge of where to go. Bike Club awarded the group funding and support for a programme of two consecutive Go Mountain Bike courses with local providers.

Challenges and how to overcome them

3.49. The programme has faced a number of key challenges along the way on a programme level and individual Bike Club level, which are discussed below. We discuss where and how challenges have been overcome where this has happened.

3.50. First of all, it has become more difficult for Bike Club Development Officers and individual Bike Clubs to secure support from local authorities in the current environment. Particularly in the second phase of the evaluation, Place Study research identified more challenges with local authority partnership working for example, in London, where contacts built up had moved on as part of extensive reorganisations. And on an individual Bike Club level, the Bike Club

Leader's survey revealed significantly less support from local authorities between 2011 and 2012.

3.51. The partnership working and development of networks has been an important part of overcoming this challenge as this can help integrate Bike Club as part of wider strategies in relation to young people, community engagement, healthy living and physical activity as well as cycling specifically. We have seen examples however of where Development Officers and individual Bike Clubs have been resourceful and looked further afield for support. For example, in 2012 compared to 2011, more individual Bike Clubs have secured match funding from alternative sources, such as national and local charities and local businesses.

3.52. Although there are very positive examples of where Youth Achievement Awards have been taken up by Bike Club Leaders and where young people have benefited from the experience, there has been low uptake overall in terms of the number of Bike Clubs implementing the awards. Where the YAAs have been taken up – both the Bike Club Leaders and young people have really seen benefits. This has raised the question as to whether YAAs are best suited for this type of programme or whether more work needs to be done to promote YAAs and support Bike Club Leaders through getting started.



3.53. Maintaining engagement has been a challenge for many Bike Clubs, however, this has been less of a challenge in 2012 compared to 2011 based on the results from the Bike Club Leaders survey. The evaluation has identified some lessons to overcome maintaining engagement, which include:

- Bike Clubs have been effective where they are promoted through local schools, local voluntary and community organisations, youth clubs, and other networks to engage wider audiences.
- Bike Clubs should ensure they have the right equipment and facilities in place to engage young people from target communities and diverse circumstances, for example, girls might need lockers, young children will need different bikes and equipment to older teenagers. This is particularly important in terms of the sustainability, ensuring that clubs have the right skills, resources and tools in place to sustain activity.
- Bike Clubs that have a good mix of activity to appeal to young people of different ages and with a range of proficiencies and skills have been successful in maintaining engagement of young people – something that is vital to Bike Clubs achieving the biggest impact for young people.
- Bike Club Leaders should enthuse young people about cycling and create a ‘buzz’ around Bike Club and champion cycling activity themselves.
- Bike Club Leaders should develop good relationships with young people/target community (and/or work closely with local people who has the potential to build that relationship and is someone the target community can relate to).
- Bike Club Leaders should work to create the right atmosphere for their Bike Club through non-threatening, non-competitive environment in order to engage certain target communities. Focus on group work and supporting and learning from each other rather than competitiveness for example.



4. GOING FORWARD

This chapter provides an overview of the current state of play of the Bike Club programme, at a national, regional and individual Club level particularly in terms of sustainability of programme level support and how individual Bike Clubs are planning for the future. We also provide some considerations for the programme going forward, based on the results of the evaluation.

Sustainability

- 4.1. In terms of financial resources, the funding from Department of Transport (DfT) came to an end in March 2012, whereas funding from Asda's Pedal Power Campaign is ongoing until December 2012. As such, most DfT funded areas are currently in a transitional phase, whereby Development Officers currently assigned to DfT cluster areas are either no longer in post or have had a shift in their duties. In practical terms, this means that the extent of regional/cluster-level support for Bike Clubs has vastly reduced in those DfT-funded areas.
- 4.2. This has prompted the national programme team to establish a new model of support. Bike Clubs have the option of renewing their Bike Club membership for the next 12 months (March 2012 to April 2013 for DfT areas) for a nominal fee (£50), which provides the Bike Club with insurance for the year and support from an assigned Bike Club officer/manager.
- 4.3. The support system includes a comprehensive list of local resources (such as training, tools, useful contacts), an assigned officer/manager from CTC (there are four assigned points of contact on a regional basis). The programme team are currently drawing up broader sustainability plans which include negotiations with a number of potential funding bodies.
- 4.4. In some areas Bike Club is taking a different form going forward. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are likely to be country-specific arrangements to continue supporting Bike Club going forward. For example, in Glasgow, Bike Club has developed have strong partnerships with national organisations and local authorities (e.g. Youth Scotland, Cycling Scotland, Glasgow City Council/Glasgow Life, ContinYou Cymru, Belfast City Council), which sets Bike Club in these areas in good stead to discuss continuation funding.

4.5. On an individual Bike Club level, there is evidence that Bike Club Leader's have firm plans in place to sustain activity into the future. The Bike Club Leader's survey revealed a good degree of optimism in relation to the future of their Bike Clubs, with 80% of Leaders who responded to the survey suggesting that their Bike Club will continue for 'the next 12 months at least' (see figure 20).

4.6. For many Bike Clubs, it's about meeting the demand for Bike Club. The Bike Club grant has enabled them to run cycle – related activities and they've been able to see the benefits it has for those young people involved. In such cases, it has either become a core part of schools activities (both mainstream and extra curricula) and a core part of youth group's offer.

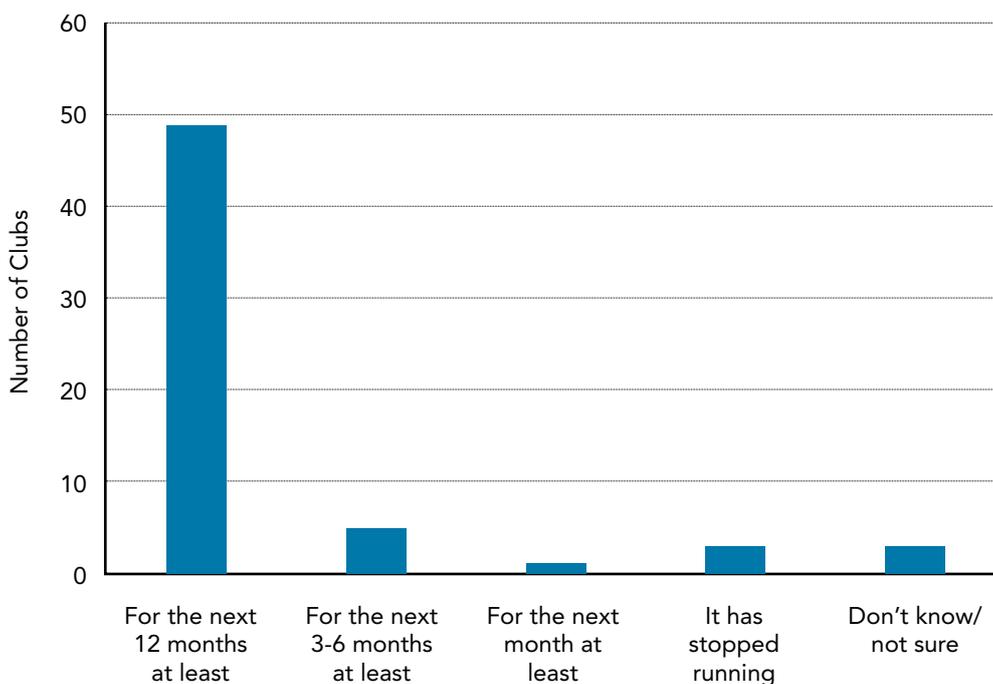
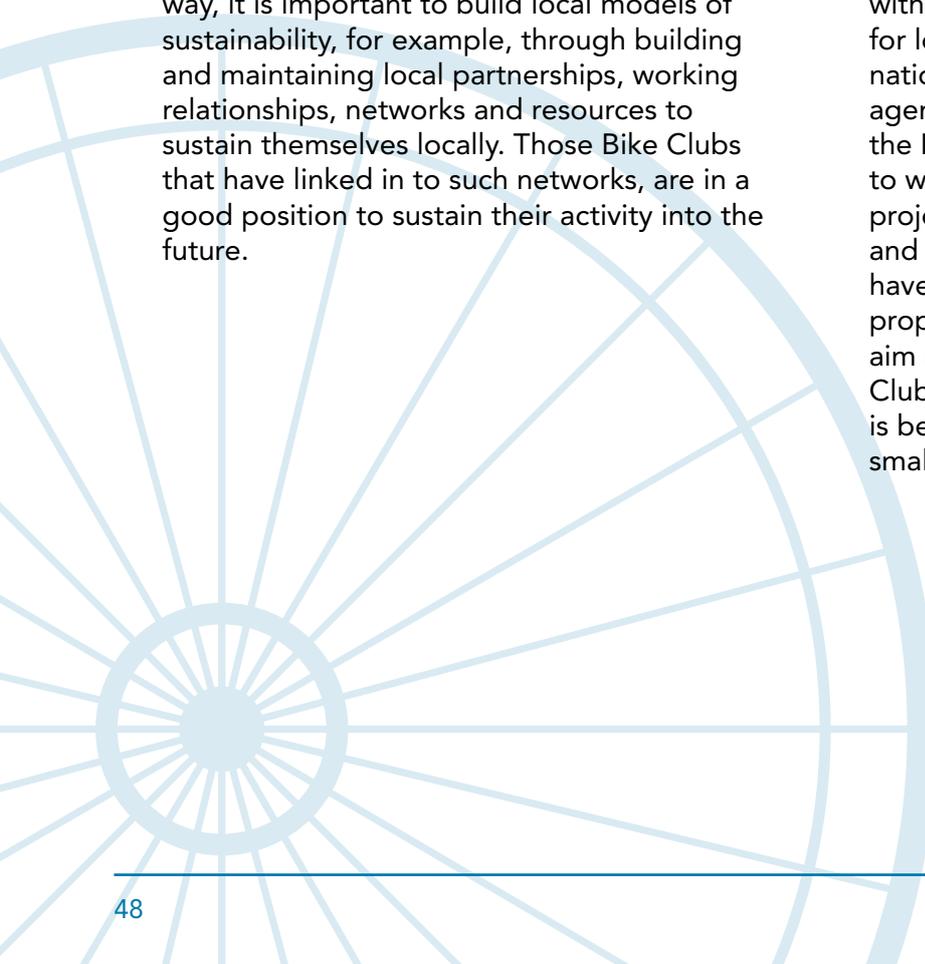


Figure 20: the estimated amount of time that Bike Clubs are likely to continue [Source: Bike Club Leader's survey 2012; base: 61 respondents to the question]



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- 4.7. What's been important for clubs to be able to sustain their offer, is to demonstrate the demand for it from young people, to have the equipment, qualifications and commitments from staff and volunteers to be able to keep the activity going. Those clubs that built sustainability in from the start are also in a good position to continue their Bike Club into the future. For example, the Bike Club in Camden Community School developed a model where funds are generated through sales of bikes restored by young people as part of their Bike Club activity.
- 4.8. Bike Clubs who have good connections with funding organisations, or understand where they can go for funding, are also in a good position to sustain their Bike Club activity. The Bike Club Leader's survey revealed that two-thirds (77%) of Bike Clubs managed to secure match funding (see figure 20) and a further 27 revealed that they have secured additional funding as a result of or following the set up of their Bike Club from a number of sources including national (Sport England, National Lottery, Sport Relief) and local sources (local authority, local charities, local businesses).
- 4.9. A challenge that Bike Club faces is to ensure that existing Bike Clubs have the necessary support to help them to sustain, for example, existing funding sources, local networks, where to purchase tools and training. In this way, it is important to build local models of sustainability, for example, through building and maintaining local partnerships, working relationships, networks and resources to sustain themselves locally. Those Bike Clubs that have linked in to such networks, are in a good position to sustain their activity into the future.

Considerations for the future

- 4.10. Overall the evaluation has shown that **Bike Club has achieved its aims** in that it has:
- Used the brand to establish 308 Bike Clubs across the UK, benefiting over 18,000 people;
 - Brought young people into cycling outside the school environment;
 - Reached targets of engaging young people from deprived areas and who have not traditionally had, or taken up, opportunities for cycling; and
 - Resulted in a wide range for outcomes for young people, including increased confidence and participation, better health, new skills and improved access to learning and employment.
- 4.11. So what do the results of the evaluation tell us about what should be considered in the future for Bike Club and/or any related programmes?
- 4.12. The challenge is now to build on this progress and develop a brand and model for Bike Club that can **sustain** the activity. The political and economic environment has changed radically over the last two years so any plans for Bike Club in the future has to take this into account.
- 4.13. Specifically **Government funding for Bike Club** (from DfT) has come to an end along with this type of resourcing model i.e. for local projects under the umbrella of a national programme. As part of its localism agenda, the Government has introduced the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), to which local authorities can apply for projects that promote sustainable growth and development. Some local authorities have included Bike Club activity in successful proposals although, as in Brighton where the aim is to reduce school traffic and a 'Bike Club approach' to community development is being used, this tends to be as a relatively small part of a larger project.

4.14. Further government funding for Bike Club, from whatever departmental source, will probably depend on Bike Club being able to show its direct relevance to increasing employment for young people as a Government key priority. This may be difficult because whereas Bike Club can clearly contribute to increasing employment opportunities for young people, this is through a 'pathway' of increased confidence, participation, skills and mobility rather than a direct route to 'jobs now'.

4.15. Some **local authorities**, such as Sefton and Woking are enabling Bike Clubs to continue through taking Bike Club Development Officers on to their staffing. However, this is usually with a much wider job description covering sports development and/or young people, and without the Bike Club branding.

4.16. In **Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland**, there are likely to be country-specific arrangements to continue supporting Bike Club as discussed above. These were funded by Asda, rather than DfT, and have strong partnerships with national organisations and local authorities (e.g. Youth Scotland, Cycling Scotland, Glasgow City Council/Glasgow Life, ContinYou Cymru, Belfast City Council), which are in discussions about future governance arrangements for each country.

4.17. This suggests that a **devolved model for Bike Club** across the UK may be most appropriate. 'Fit for purpose' governance arrangements can bring in the most relevant stakeholder organisations and respond to national policy contexts.

4.18. There will still be a need for a **UK wide brand and umbrella organisation** to raise the profile of Bike Club and realise its potential. This will require CTC working with the relevant Youth organisations to develop a **Vision and Strategic Plan** to take Bike Club forward in the new environment.

4.19. CTC would like Bike Club to become the brand for all their work with young people. In time, and with a higher profile, Bike Club could become the brand for all cycling activity with young people. This will require a dedicated **marketing and communications** strategy.



4.20. A **financial model** for Bike Club also needs to be developed. As described above, the national office has introduced a **membership scheme** that, for a £59 yearly fee, offers insurance and some staff support to individual Bike Clubs. The national office has also been working on a **toolkit**. This is in an embryonic form but it is hoped that it will generate some earned income. Although this is unlikely to be significant, it should also help promote Bike Club and show how it can lead to a range of outcomes.

4.21. Public sector funding also needs to be pursued but this is most likely to come from **commissioning** Bike Club, possibly as a franchise, rather than through grant funding. The new local authority responsibilities for Public Health may provide opportunities here so it will be important for Bike Club, nationally and locally, to pursue these through establishing and maintaining **partnerships and networks with other voluntary and statutory organisations** and show how Bike Club can help them achieve their outcomes – one of the main learning points from this evaluation.



APPENDICES



Bike Club Case Study: Blackpool

Case study activities

Interview with Development Officer – Damian Bonsall
Development Officer's blog

Fieldwork visits to Bike Clubs:

- Speedwell Centre – Pupil Referral Unit
- Boathouse Youth
- Connexions – Teenage Mums group
- Park School for young people with special education needs
- Telephone interview with Windmill Youth Development Group

Focus group of 10 young people at Boathouse Youth

Local Stakeholder interviews

- Carol Bracegirdle: Travel and Road Safety Manager, Blackpool Council
- Gavin Baxter: Cycling Blackpool Project Manager
- John Carr: Youth Offending Team Operations Manager Blackpool Council

1. Local structure and context

Blackpool is a seaside town in the North West Region of England in the county of Lancashire. The Health Profile for Blackpool in 2010 shows it to be an area where the health of the people is generally worse than the England average. People claiming incapacity benefit for mental health are twice the national average in England, and drug misuse is the highest in England. Life expectancy among men and women is among the lowest in the country and the health of children is generally worse than the England average. The teenage pregnancy rate is high and there are low levels of educational attainment (that is, achieving 5 GCSE's grades A-C including English and Maths).

Blackpool has some of the lowest levels of adult participation in sport and physical activity in the country. Car ownership is low, and Blackpool's largely flat terrain and urban layout enables most local trips to be achieved by a short bike ride, although bike ownership is also low. In 2008, Blackpool was selected by Cycling England as a Cycling Town. It had the following objectives:

- A sustained Blackpool cycling culture
- Cycling established as mainstream transport for 1 and 5 mile trips
- Cycling opportunities provided for all backgrounds, abilities and ages
- A measurable modal shift to cycling within the project period
- Cycling made fully available to the visitor market
- Further promotion of the resort as a top class cycling events venue.

2. Approach

Rationale for Bike Club

Bike Club Blackpool was established in 2009 and is based in the Travel and Road Safety Team of the local authority, working closely with the Cycling Blackpool Team. The team had identified a gap in the services they were providing and were keen to work with Bike Club to fill that gap. There was nothing specifically in place for young people in the age range 13-19 and the Cycling Blackpool Team was aware that they needed to reach further into communities who traditionally were hard to reach:

“We have recognised that one size does not fit all” (Local authority manager).

The flexibility of the Bike Club model was also important to the Travel and Road Safety Team. The ability of Bike Club to adapt and find solutions in many different situations rather than offering a standard package of interventions was seen as a strength in reaching the goals of the partners:

“Bike Club is not all about yellow bibs and helmets. It is ‘on the ground’ and able to offer a range of different options. It offers different solutions for different organisations’ needs” (Local Authority manager)

The Team was keen to give an image to cycling that was more than about a road safety issue as there was a concern that this image was a real “turn off” to young people. It also had the potential to raise anxieties in parents and be a potential barrier to participation. Bike Club was seen as having the ability to show that cycling is fun and that it can be integrated into other activities.

“Bike Club has created a community of young people, which wasn’t there before. Cycling facilities have brought them together” (Local Authority manager)

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer

The role of the Development Officer is seen by the local authority and the Bike Clubs interviewed through this research as essential for a number of reasons.

At strategic level

At a strategic level it has enabled partnership working with a third sector organisation. The grant enabled the Local Authority to start new projects and look elsewhere for match funding partners, such as Sport England.

It has also brought an important dimension to the Sustainable Transport Strategy. Bike Club has contributed to the application to the Department of Transport’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund, which would provide funding to continue to develop cycling and other activities in Blackpool.

The role of the Development Officer was seen as vital for making contacts, opening up new networks with young people, engaging communities that are seldom reached and facilitating activities:

“[The] Bike Club Development Officer has been an important resource in making things happen, finding the right networks and contacts. It made us (the Council) think more widely about who we should be working with” (Local authority manager)

With organisations

The Development Officer was considered an essential resource to Bike Club leaders. One volunteer at a Bike Club said: *“His (Development Officer) mobile is on speed dial in my phone”*. The experience and expertise of the Development Officer supported the Bike Clubs’ development through:

- Facilitating new partnerships
- Tailoring the clubs to the needs of the organisation
- Providing specialist knowledge on, for example, where to buy a fleet of bikes
- Opening up new networks
- Facilitating training opportunities
- Providing support to further funding bids

This required community development skills to reach into communities, an ability to engage with young people of all backgrounds and enhanced networking skills.

“He (Development Officer) has been absolutely fantastic, he helped us with the buying of the bikes, he’s given us really good information, best things to buy, (and) training course so we can teach bike-ability. If we say we want to do something, Damian makes sure we have someone qualified to do deliver it” (Bike club leader).

The Development Officer has made the most of his own links and partnerships through building relationships with different community and statutory groups in Blackpool. Using a community development approach he has found that the best way to initiate a bike club is to:

“Get on with an organisation and work with them over a period of time (to find the right solution)” (Bike Club Development Officer, Blackpool).

There are examples of the Development Officer adapting to the local needs and contexts of Blackpool (see more in section 3 below). One good example is the annual event to ride along the sea front at the start of the famous Blackpool

lights. Another example has been using the facilities of the large, highly esteemed park in Blackpool, Stanley Park. Another has been the strong partnership working required to build a pump track as a facility for young people in a neglected area of the town. A Bike Club is now being established there.

An important dimension is that the Development Officer is continuing to support the Bike Clubs after their initial set up which is enabling further developments and opportunities to embed the clubs as part of mainstream activities. This ‘embedding’ was also recognised by the Local Authority:

“Even when clubs are established, further developments are required to embed it” (Local authority manager).

3. Bike Clubs in Blackpool

The Development officer in Blackpool has established 12 Bike Clubs in Blackpool since 2009. The evaluation team had contact with six of these and obtained information on one other.

Bike Clubs have been established in organisations where their primary purpose was not cycling. In other words they are not cycling organisations, they are organisations where cycling is incorporated into their mainstream activities. As one Bike Club leader described it:

“We are a youth club who does cycling, not a Bike Club” (Bike Club leader)

A senior manager in the Local Authority gave the Bike Club that is working with young offenders as an example of the flexibility of the model:

“Work with the Youth Offending Team, the (Bike Club) programme adapted to this group. There was a lot of interest in cars and mechanics so ‘pitch’ was important. They are mending and re-cycling bikes now” (Local Authority manager)

Reach and engagement

Bike Club in Blackpool strives to engage young people and families in cycling who may not be reached through activities based around the school curriculum.

Bike Clubs have been established in a Pupil Referral Unit with young people with severe mental health issues, a school for young people with special educational needs, a group of young people who have offended and are not in mainstream school, a group of teenage mothers on a Connexions project, a youth club that serves the two most deprived wards in Blackpool and a Youth Development group.

Examples of Bike Clubs

A range of cycling activities has been developed to meet the needs of the individual groups.

Pupil Referral Unit

The Speedwell Centre is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) with approximately 50-60 young people in KS3-KS4. The focus of the unit is in supporting young people who have severe mental health issues and cannot cope with mainstream school. Illnesses include phobias, depression, eating disorders, bereaved young people, pregnant young girls and those who self harm.

"In many cases the medical need is linked to various types of anxiety, including agoraphobia (a fear of open spaces). The staff at the Speedwell Centre are fully aware of the benefits that physical exercise can have in relieving the symptoms of anxiety but, due to the nature of the illness' it is not possible to take young people out to enjoy the delights of a bike ride, for example" (Development Officer's blog).

There was no physical activity on site except for a Wii Fit game because of limited space. So when the Development Officer met with the Centre Manager it was agreed that the best solution would be to purchase spinning bikes. Working with the School Sports Partnership, a Bike Club was established and three shiny new spinning bikes were purchased. With the remainder of the Bike Club funding, the Centre sent a staff member on a course to learn how to be a spinning instructor.



The Centre Manager said that as a keen cyclist herself, she had wanted to "get cycling going". The school did not have Healthy School's status and to achieve this they needed to have more opportunities for physical activity. They had tried bike-ability courses but it was unsuccessful with their students. It was a step too far to move straight onto outside bikes. However, once the young people are confident on the spinning bikes, those who want to will be introduced to outside bikes. The spinning bikes are also available to staff at inset training days.

The benefits that the Centre have seen are many; it provides an outlet for frustrated and anxious young people, has enabled the young people to be part of a charity initiative and has made staff and students more aware of physical activity and healthy eating.

Boathouse Youth

The Boathouse Youth was the first Bike Club to be established in the UK in 2009. It holds the current contract from Blackpool Council for provision of youth services. It is situated and works with young people in two of the most deprived wards in Blackpool, Bloomfield and Waterloo and works with over 200 young people in the area. The organisation got involved with Bike Club because some of the young people attending the club had bikes that looked unsafe and they were not riding safely. The Youth Leader rang the local authority Road Safety Department and they suggested that the Bike Club Development officer came to see him.

Since then, the Bike Club at Boathouse Youth has gone from strength to strength. Through the Bike Club grant, an application was made to Sport England for a fleet of 24 bikes, which was successful. The Bike Club grant has funded training for the young people – bike-ability, as well as training for the staff and volunteers as bike and trail leaders. It is now in its second year of operation and three of the staff has been trained as bike-ability trainers through Bike Club so they can train young people in their club.

The Club recently won the CTC Young Person's National UK Group of the Year 2010. Also, one of the Sports Co-ordinator, a young volunteer, was runner up in the runner up in the National UK Young Volunteer of the Year Award from the same body.

The Bike Club leader thinks there are many benefits to young people in group cycling: it is fun, safe, easy, opens up opportunities. Since working with Bike Club, the Youth Leader said that: *"Bike Club has shaped our organisation"*.

Teenage mums at Connexions

This Bike Club is part of a Connexions project called 'Energise' which is an initiative designed to help young mothers regain their confidence and to acquire some key skills to help them back into further/higher education or employment. A crèche run by older volunteers is on site.

"When I came on this course I didn't think we would be bike riding, I thought it was just about baking and stuff". "I did as well" (two young women at the bike club)

Cycling was introduced as one of the activities to help increase the young women's self esteem and to bring health and well being benefits. It was also seen as an opportunity to give the young people a means of transport for getting to jobs or activities, as they did not have a great deal of money. The young women taking part had not been on a bike for 7 years and the others had given up when they were children. They explained why:

"I hadn't cycled for about 7 years, I just thought I was getting a bit old for it" (young mum).

They particularly liked the fact that the cycling was a group activity:

"I like going out in big groups of us, I don't like it when it's just like me. [It's] more fun, don't feel like an idiot, 'look at her on a bike'." (young mum)

"Don't like wearing a helmet, flattens hair, but everybody wearing one" (young mum)

"I think it's good, exercise is good for us. I want to get a bike" (young mum)

Park School for young people with Special Educational Needs

All pupils who attend Park School have a Statement of Special Education Needs and have moderate and/or complex learning difficulties with varying degrees of associated social, emotional and behavioural needs.

The staff saw huge benefits in cycling for this group of young people. Bike Club has funded 3 new, specially adapted bikes to add to the adapted bikes from Wheels for All. The club is held once a week after school at an athletics track in Stanley Park. One leader explained how the extra bikes had made a *“tremendous difference”* because it meant there were opportunities for more of their young people to cycle. The bikes enabled this group of young people to have mobility, move around, which for many of them was restricted. They often just traveled by car or bus and had little opportunity for freedom to be active.

All the young people observed – approximately 12 – were smiling and having great fun. Three of the pupils had progressed from cycling on 3 wheelers to cycling on two wheels. One obese boy who had found it difficult to do any physical exercise was very active on his bike. He explained that he *“liked the exercise”*. Staff observed that he had already lost weight and was more energetic.

The main barrier to engagement was the high numbers of staff and volunteers to students because of the intensive needs of the young people. Secondly, the cost of specially adapted bikes is high.

Windmill Youth Development Group

This group works with young people aged 13-25 and focuses on young people interested in the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the Outward Bound Trust.

Bike Club objectives fitted with those of the Youth Development Group and their aspirations for young people. They became a Bike Club principally so they could introduce bikes for young people to cycle on their Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. As a result, some of the Club staff has also done the trail leaders qualifications. 50 per cent of the Bike Club grant went to purchase new bikes and the bike club leader acknowledged the support of the Development officer in advising which ones to buy.

Only 30 per cent of the young people attending the group have their own bikes. The Bike Club leader and Chair of the Youth Development Group is himself a cycle enthusiast and wants everyone to experience the *“joy of cycling”*.

Youth Offending Team Bike Club

This Bike Club is a partnership between Bike Club, Cycle Blackpool and the Youth Offending team. It has been set up as a solution to an underused bike repair workshop at a youth centre in Blackpool.

The young people involved are all on reparation orders from the courts, whilst the bike mechanics are on the Future Jobs Fund scheme operated by Blackpool Council. The sessions are overseen by a qualified mechanic from the cycle hire scheme in Blackpool. The group recycles bikes that have been donated to the Council over the last few months.

Each young person is allocated a donated bike, a set of spanners/Allen keys, a puncture repair kit and tyre levers, and a can of GT85. They are able to keep the bikes at the end of their four-week course if the bikes back in a roadworthy condition.

The majority of young people involved are young men. A manager from the Young Offenders Team said:

“They (the young people) get a lot out of it, learn new skills which they pass on to siblings, friends and families” (Local Authority manager/ Bike Club leader)

“The young people look forward to going to the sessions” (Local Authority manager/ Bike Club leader)

The project is still developing but the Youth Offending Team hope to develop it further. They would eventually like to see, for example, a scheme where a young person who has stolen a bike is doing it up and returning it to the owner.

Bike Club at the Pump Track

A new pump track has just been opened in Blackpool after a year’s hard work in trying to find a suitable venue, funding and a hosting partner for the facility. A Bike Club is being set up in collaboration between Blackpool Young Peoples’ Services, the Police, Mereside Community Association and Blackpool Leisure Services. Bike Club has provided a fleet of BMX bikes, helmets and gloves, which will be used for coaching sessions and for young people who come up to the track from other Bike Clubs around the resort. The Development Officer in Blackpool reported:

“I personally think this is the biggest thing to happen in young peoples’ cycling in Blackpool because it has an appeal for everyone...Each time I have visited the track it has been really busy with young people from a part of the town which has traditionally been badly neglected. The local housing association and the Police are already reporting a significant reduction in nuisance and crime levels and the young people themselves are really loving the new facility” (Development Officer’s blog).



4. Youth Achievement Awards

Six young people at the Boathouse Youth project completed the bronze Youth Achievement award in October 2010 and were the first awarded within the Bike Club project. The leaders were keen to obtain accreditation for the achievement of the young people which was being administered by one of the Bike Club's partners, UK Youth. The young people are required to submit a portfolio of evidence for external modification by ASDAN who are responsible for the on-going responsibility of the awards.

The young people at Boathouse Youth had the following to say about the awards and what it meant to them:

"Because it looks good for college"

"It's classed as a GCSE"

"If you mention that in your job application you've got more of a chance"

"I think it is useful for getting a decent job"

The Bike Club leader and the Development Officer also reported that the young people had enjoyed putting their portfolios together, analysing and reflecting on their learning and the recognition of their achievements at a special celebration event.

"They recognise they (young people) have the power to do things, that they can do it" (Bike club leader).

One young person expressed an interest in doing further training so he could lead rides:

"Leading people.....cos you can do that on your Silver Young Achievement (Award)".

One of the young volunteers at Boathouse Youth is currently working towards a Platinum Youth Achievement Award.

5. Outcomes for young people

The following outcomes were identified for young people taking part in Bike Club:

5.1 Keeping occupied through a new interest:

A number of the young people interviewed spoke of how belonging to a youth club that included a Bike Club had given them something to do in their spare time and for some had built on an interest in cycling:

"Before the Boathouse (Bike Club) we'd just be wandering the streets...riding across the road, probably getting run over"; and sometimes when you go out you didn't check our maintenance and then when I went out one night without checking and went up this curb and my wheel fell off"

"Oh it's not as bad as what I did...I'd just changed the puncture in my back tyre and didn't even tighten it up, just went straight out and my chain snapped and my back tyre fell off"

"It filled in my spare time and keeps me from getting bored"

"It keeps me occupied".

For some of the young people cycling had become part of their routine and was even called 'an addiction' by one young man:

"It's part of my day because...it's part of my daily routine because I go home and get changed and jump on my bike"

5.2 Improvements in physical fitness and mental health: Some of the young people spoke of improvements to their stamina and overall fitness. Some felt this had enabled to try new physical activities that they had never tried before:

"Try new activities that I've never tried before"

"Fitness in other sports"

"Because when you're riding you like pant (pant, pant)"

"Run faster because like when your pedalling fast on a bike to get somewhere really fast it's like, if you wanna run really fast, because your legs have been going really fast on the pedals you can like run faster".

The Bike Club leaders at Speedwell Centre and Park school reported that two of the young people in Bike Club who were very obese had begun to lose weight. The young people at the Speedwell Centre were also become more aware of their physical health through using a calorie counter machine (reported above).

The Bike Club leader and Centre Manager at Speedwell reported improved mental health in the young people using the spinning bikes, in particular the ability to 'burn off' frustrations and anxieties.

5.3 Learning new skills: the young people we spoke to at Boatyard Youth had learnt new skills in how to stay safe on the roads:

"(We have learnt) to be sensible...because we just like ride bikes carelessly basically, but now since we've learnt...we're scared of a car crash";

"Cos we used to just tag across the road not even looking, just dodging the cars, but now we actually just look and then go";

"Stop, look and listen".

5.4 Developing social skills: The young people enjoyed the Bike Club because it is an opportunity to spend time with friends and family and was both relaxing and fun. Working as a group also helped them to be more patience and tolerant of others, particularly younger children, and a chance to help others:

"You are only as good as your weakest link, so you've gotta like put up with, I don't mean put up, I mean like do as a pace of the younger children... we just like go at the back, because if we get too far ahead.....so we just, like, casually ride at the back"

"Like, if they like, hurt themselves, then [we] help them";

"Taking more of a leadership role, because you've got to like, encourage the smaller children to go along with it"

At Speedwell, the Bike Club leader said the young people had improved their social skills by interacting together, having conversations on the bikes, developing peer to peer support.

5.5 Increased mobility and opening up new opportunities: the young people talked about using their bikes to get around from place to place. This had the potential to increase their mobility within and across communities. The teenage mums group talked about the benefits for getting employment; the young people with learning disabilities had an opportunity to propel themselves around independently; the young people at Speedwell were developing confidence and some may progress to outside bikes and cycle independently to school. One young man at Boathouse Youth put it this way:

““Yeah, its gets you there quicker...when you’re riding on a bike and you’re pedalling your feet and you stop pedalling, your wheels keep going round and don’t have to keep pedalling, but when you’re walking, I’ve tried it right, you’re running and you stop running you still don’t move””.

6. Barriers and challenges

Some of the barriers identified in developing and spreading Bike Clubs has been:

- The long and drawn out application for the grants
- The grants only allow either capital expenditure of services, such as training. Both are required in Blackpool to embed cycling
- A disadvantage at times of not being able to do direct delivery of training etc when needed to further a club’s progress.
- Barriers identified in terms of engagement of young people in Bike Clubs included:
- The high numbers of staff and volunteers to students because of the intensive needs of young people within Bike Club with specific needs
- High cost of specially adapted bikes
- One barrier identified by one Bike Club leader in carrying out the Youth Achievement Awards was the associated cost.

7. The future and sustainability

The Bike Clubs in this case study all have plans for the future and sustainability. At the local authority level, the link to future strategy and funding is through the Local Sustainability Transport Fund. The result of the application will be known in June/July 2011.

Partnership working is key to sustainability. In Blackpool, a number of partnerships have been developed both at strategic and club level. Strategic partnerships include the Sustainable Transport and Cycling Blackpool in the Local Authority, School Sports Partnership, Healthy Schools, and School Travel Plans. Within Bike Clubs, there are partnerships with Blackpool Young Peoples’ Services, the Police, Mereside Community Association and Blackpool Leisure Services. One club has links with the ‘Healthy weight’ leads from the NHS.

Training is another sustainability factor. The Bike Clubs had identified that in order to sustain and spread their activities they needed to look at becoming self-sustainable. For example, at the Speedwell Centre, staff were trained to train people to use the spinning bikes. At Boathouse Youth, they had trained some of the youth leaders in ride and track leaders qualifications so that within the club, the staff could do this additional activity without ‘buying in’ leaders.

The Blackpool Development Officer has recently organised a training event for Bike-ability training and as a result there are ten more adults trained to instruct young people in the techniques of keeping themselves safe on the roads.

Although Bike-ability training is currently offered free by the Local Authority, the Bike Clubs in this study saw the advantage of having their own staff

trained to deliver the training. The key reason for this was communicating with the young people involved: leaders were clear that they could facilitate the training with their young people because they knew them and how to facilitate communication. This had not always been the experience when using outside trainers.

One of the Bike Clubs was looking at **income generation** schemes through offering bike hire and training to other youth groups. Two of the clubs were re-cycling old or second hand cycles for selling to people at a competitive price.

The main **barrier to sustainability** identified in this case study was the low bike ownership. This meant that when young people, such as the young mum's group, experienced cycling, they did not own their own bikes to continue cycling in the future.

8. Emerging messages and implications for the future

Partnerships are essential for developing and sustaining Bike Clubs. The role of the Development Officer is key to facilitating Bike Clubs through building alliances and partnerships with key statutory and third sector agencies. This includes finding the most suitable training provider.

The **funding grants** have enabled Bike Clubs to be set up in established groups and clubs. However, there is a tension between spending the grant on capital expenditure (bikes) or on training. Both are required for sustainability.

The **Development Officers require skills** in communication, community development and facilitation if they are to reach disadvantaged young people in communities. They also require knowledge of the 'biking world' if they are to support clubs to develop and become self-sufficient.

There is a tension for Development Officers in having a **facilitating role** but no direct delivery role. At times, it may be appropriate for a Development Officer to do some direct intervention in order to develop and maintain a club, for example in providing bespoke training. Development Officer's need to be able to work with clubs for as long as they take to become established, which may vary from club to club.

Blackpool Bike Club has been successful in introducing cycling to organisations whose prime objective is not cycling. This has **integrated cycling** into their core activities and therefore is more likely to be sustainable because it is part of the organisational structures.

There appears to be a link between an **enthusiasm and existing commitment for cycling** from Bike Club leaders and the setting up of a club, which would be worth further investigation.

Blackpool Bike Club has been successful in **reaching the target group** of young people in Blackpool, particularly those living in disadvantaged communities. This however can take time to establish.

The **outcomes** for young people are significant. They include improved health and wellbeing, increased social networks, meaningful activity, developing new skills and routes to employment. These are indicators for a reduction antisocial behaviour and crime.

Barriers to participation include low bike ownership, finding the right trainers to communicate with more challenging young people, training staff to carry out training, costs involved in training, sufficient staff and volunteers to run clubs.

The **links to health** and the NHS are not strong at a strategic level. Developing relationships with public health, particularly as it moves from the NHS into the local authority, is important especially as there are signs that Bike Club can improve health outcomes for young people, in for example getting them more physically active, reducing obesity and improving mental health.

BIKE CLUB PLACE STUDY: SHEFFIELD

DRAFT PLACE STUDY REPORT

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- Interview with the Bike Club Development Officer
- Fieldwork site visits and interviews with Bike Club Leaders at:
 - o Hope Valley College
 - o Sheffield Stars Speedway
 - o Sheffield Park Academy
- Two discussion groups with young people at Hope Valley College (2, boys) and Sheffield Park Academy (4, boys)
- Questionnaires completed by 5 girls at Sheffield Park Academy
- Local Stakeholder Interviews
 - o Bike It Officer, Sustrans
 - o Cycle Champion – Sheffield, CTC
 - o Woodlands Project Officer, Sheffield City Council

1. Local structure and context

Sheffield is a city in South Yorkshire, northern England. 61% of the Sheffield area is green space and a third of the city lies within the Peak District National Park. There are more than 200 parks, woodlands and gardens in Sheffield.

Across a number of health indicators, Sheffield has higher levels of deprivation than the England average and improving health inequalities is a priority for the area. Early deaths caused by smoking, CVD and cancer are all significantly worse than the national average.

24.3% of children in Sheffield live in poverty, compared with the England average of 20.9%. Although child obesity in the city is not significantly different to the England average, a far lower percentage of children spend at least 3 hours a week on school sports (49.5%, versus 55.1% England average). For adults, physical activity levels are not significantly different to the national average.

GCSE attainment in Sheffield is lower than the England average with 49.2% of students achieving 5 GCSEs at A* – C including Maths and English, compared with 55.3% nationally.

Incidents of injury and death on the roads in Sheffield are significantly better than the national average.

Geographically, Sheffield is both an opportunity and a challenge for cycle promotion. Easy access to the Peak District National Park is a great asset for encouraging mountain biking, racing and other types of recreational cycling. However, Sheffield is a hilly city and so commuting by bike into and around the city itself is relatively physically demanding.

2. Approach

Sheffield sits at the north of a wider Bike Club 'patch' that includes Derby and Leicester, the latter two areas having been identified as cities with pre-existing cycling culture and strong local partnerships. Sheffield was added to this group following the recommendation of CTC colleagues already working in the city who saw the potential for Bike Club activities to add value there.

The picture painted by stakeholders in Sheffield is one of a strong cycling culture and network, with a number of existing work streams around cycling in the city. These include work streams led by CTC, Sustrans and an officer in the local council who have a remit around cycling. In addition there is a wide range of cycling groups in the area, as well as the funded Bike Clubs themselves.

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer

The Development Officer is based in the CTC office in Sheffield City Council and works closely with the Bike It Officer and CTC Cycle Champions. The Development Officer has developed a basic working relationship with the Woodland Project Officer at Sheffield City Council, who has a remit around cycling, which has given the Development Officer access to contact details and has provided opportunities for joined up activities such as a local cycling event.

The Development Officer for Sheffield has worked mostly with community groups in Sheffield, but also with schools. The community groups he has supported vary in that some were already cycle-focused whilst others offered a broader range of activities. The Development Officer has supported the establishment of 18 Bike Clubs across Sheffield to date.

The Development Officer sees his role as working towards outcomes beyond simply getting more people riding bikes, more often.

He aims to promote healthier lifestyles and more environmentally sustainable ways of living through Bike Club in Sheffield. He views his role as "to encourage informed choices" about health and transport – whatever those choices may be.

The Development Officer has specifically supported the establishment of Bike Clubs by fine-tuning applications, advising on training and suppliers, or facilitating conversations between Bike Clubs and strategic partners for access to further funds. He also takes a more hands on approach such as accompanying organised bike rides and supporting events.

The Development Officer describes his approach to working with clubs as "consultancy". He is viewed as the "local cycling expert" who provides advice as and when clubs need it regarding grant applications, ongoing support and cycle-specific information. This is in contrast to his earlier work with Bike Club which tended to be more intensive and hands on, helping to set up a small number of clubs. He has found that continuing this level of support would be infeasible in terms of his time with now a high number of clubs established in the city. As a result he now has hands on contact with a small number of clubs who need the most support, and provides more ad-hoc support to others as they need it.

3. Bike Clubs in Sheffield

The Development Officer in Sheffield has had most contact with community organisations and schools in Sheffield. In particular he has established a relationship with the School Sports Partnership Officer who works at secondary schools across the city to promote uptake of school sports. However, most commonly Bike Clubs in Sheffield have come from within community groups. This has come about through an initial tranche of marketing done by the Development Officer when he came into post, and subsequently, through word of mouth helped by the well established cycling network/partnership in the city.

EXAMPLE 1: Sheffield Cycle Speedway

The Sheffield Stars Cycle Speedway is an established speedway club in Sheffield. They put in a successful application to Bike Club to fund a series of winter coaching events with young people, and in particular this was intended to redress a gender imbalance in the club's membership by encouraging more girls to take part in racing. More widely the events were an opportunity to engage with groups outside of the club's usual membership. This included those from more deprived backgrounds and who might have further to travel to the club.

The events ran in 2010 successfully, with plans to repeat in 2011. The club ran 154 rides over winter, with nearly 60 different young people attending, and 14 of whom were girls. However, the activities had not targeted young people from BAMER backgrounds – assuming that they would cross-over with the groups that were being targeted. In fact, this didn't work well, and there were low levels of ethnic diversity amongst participants. The club will consider a different approach to this for the upcoming events in 2011.

The importance of Bike Club support was that it was "just right" for the club. It was enough support without being overbearing, which for a relatively experienced club was an important balance to reach. They also benefited from the Development Officer's experience, and reported that "[the DO] recognised some of the challenges that come up".

Away from their project work, the connection with Bike Club now means that the Speedway is linked into an even wider network:

"He [the Development Officer] gives us events to promote what we offer ... other people in other regions are now exploring Cycle Speedway ... raising awareness of the sport".

Similarly, the Bike Club was an important opportunity to access funds for non-core activities, and as a result the club has reached new volunteers and participants: *"We have our day-to-day stuff ... we could roll on and do that for the next 150 years, but it gave us a project, a focus".*

In terms of sustainability, the club is well established and so is able to continue running as they have done in the past, albeit at a small loss. However, as a result of the Bike Club new people have been attracted to the club, and two trainers received coaching training. This enhances what the club can offer in the future.

EXAMPLE 2: Hope Valley College Bike Club

The Hope Valley College Bike Club offers extra-curricular activities to school children and to local adults and families as well as providing cycling through the school curriculum. The Bike Club Leader applied for a Bike Club grant to cover the costs of 4 mountain bikes and storage, as well as local money for a cycle trail.

They describe the difference that Bike Club has made as transforming the offer of the school in terms of cycling – previously it was sporadic activities not embedded in the curriculum, and with no community offer. Through the help of the Development Officer with advice on infrastructure, support on partnership working and practical suggestions they not only have a range of bike rides on offer to both secondary and primary school children, as well as the wider community but also have a cycle trail which can continue to be used in the future.

"DO was fantastically supportive with the grant application" (Bike Club Leader, Hope Valley College)

4. Outcomes for young people

Stakeholders in Sheffield anticipate a wide range of outcomes from Bike Club activities, and evidence for some of these have been identified through interviews, a focus group and a survey for young people involved in Bike Club activity in Sheffield.

Improved educational attainment and qualifications

In particular, there are a series of linked outcomes that arise from Bike Club activity delivered in schools. Bike Clubs have helped school children **gain qualifications**, or achieve higher marks. Hope Valley College has seen students get A* GCSE in PE having been engaged and encouraged by the mountain biking element provided in its extra-curricula activity supported through Bike Club. In another college – Sheffield Park Academy – the Bike Club is able to offer a mountain biking award. These are both qualifications that demonstrate the achievement of young people, and is thought will improve CVs and support Higher Education applications.

In the views of all Bike Club Leaders we spoke to, offering choice to students and young people is a key aim of the Bike Club project. In schools in particular this was valued as **offering choice within classes** such as PE and extra-curricula activity, which will make PE and extra-curricula activity more appealing to a wider range of students:

“Some people don’t like football, so can ride a bike instead” (Male participant, Sheffield Park Academy).

“Sometimes you can do an hour of doing what you want [on your bike]” Male participant, Hope Valley

However, more generally this is seen as assisting students in **developing autonomy** and taking ownership of the types of physical activity they want to do, as the Bike Club Leader at Hope

Valley College explains “they can choose, rather than being told what to do”. This also aligns with the Development Officer’s aim of enabling young people to make informed choices about physical activity.

Finally, the availability of bikes through schools ensures that bikes and therefore cycling activity is accessible to **all young people, regardless of their income**, particularly important for schools based in deprived areas. Bike Club Leaders reflected on this being important as not every pupil owned a bike of their own.

“It means that all kids can have access to cycling no matter what income” (Bike Club Leader, Park Academy)

Improvements in physical fitness and mental health

Although physical fitness isn’t monitored by clubs, all of the Bike Clubs involved in the research were leading to an increase in the amount of cycling being done by young people, by introducing new cyclists to bikes, and encouraging young people to use bikes more often. The anticipated outcome is that this higher level of physical activity will lead to improved fitness.

The Sheffield Speedway Bike Club has seen an **increase in the numbers of new participants** through their Bike Club activity, and in particular an increase in the number of girls taking part in speedway racing, with 16 girls currently involved in the Bike Club. Similarly, all school Bike Clubs have reported **increased number of journeys** being made by bike – including pupils travelling to and from school by bike.

The potential for cycling to contribute to physical fitness is highlighted by the Development Officer, who sees Sheffield itself as a challenging landscape in which to cycle; the fitness challenge for those using bikes around the city is significant. In line with this, many Bike Clubs actively aim to develop endurance levels with their club members.

“You feel more confident”, “a good way to keep fit” (Male participants, Sheffield Park Academy)

Bike Club activities also have also had a role in improving the emotional **health and wellbeing** of young people through greater opportunities to socialise, as well as confidence building.

Increased cycle skills and confidence on bikes

Bike Clubs in Sheffield have focused on teaching and developing cycling skills for beginners and those already able to cycle. In particular, young people are learning more about risk awareness and riding skills – such as doing u-turns and taking corners which encourages them to cycle safely. A significant outcome therefore is increased skill levels and confidence for young people in using bikes. This has been observed by many Bike Club Leaders and is evident in the qualifications that young people have gained through Bike Club. There’s also evidence that this improvement in cycling skills is enabling young people to use their bikes more often, including outside of school:

“You can train [at school] and it makes you more confident when you go on bike rides [outside of school]” Male participant, Sheffield Park Academy

Providing a ‘worthwhile’ activity

A number of different interviewees, including participants, Bike Club Leaders and stakeholders talked about Bike Club and cycling as providing a routine of regular activities, and importantly, “worthwhile” activities for young people. Participants agreed that Bike Club “gives you something to do, [so we] don’t get bored” (Male participant, Hope Valley College).

Using local facilities

Getting local amenities into use was a common aim of Bike Clubs in the area, and in particular making use of local parks. The Sheffield Stars Speedway found that their Bike Club programme helped young people understand that they didn’t need to go to specialist venues for cycling activities. The project made “people aware they can do fun stuff, like tricks; in the park... you don’t have to go to a velodrome” (Bike Club Leader, Sheffield Speedway). As a result the Bike Club Leader describes the success of their scheme as seeing “local people using local facilities”.

A further development of this outcome would be for Bike Club activities in general to engender **civic pride in young people**. In the view of the Development Officer, the shared use of local green spaces such as parks and trails encouraged young people to take ownership of local facilities, encouraging young people to look after their environment as well as enjoying it.

Travelling quickly and independently

Getting involved in Bike Clubs and gaining the skills to ride safely enables young people to use bikes as a mode of transport. Participants described the benefit that bikes “get you around quicker, and it’s fun” (Male Participants Hope Valley College). There’s also some evidence that Bike Club members are using bikes as an **alternative method of transport**. This helped them to be independent as well as potentially making a contribution to a reduction in the number of car journeys being made in Sheffield.

“I cycle everywhere, ride to places. Like Sheffield when my mum and dad can’t take me. That’s 32 miles!” (Male participant, Hope Valley College)

“I go on bike rides with my brother, and my mum’s getting a bike soon” (Male participants, Sheffield Park Academy)

“I cycle to friends’ houses and local BMX jumps” (Male participant, Hope Valley College)

Alongside this, part of Bike Club's remit is to teach **road safety skills and awareness**. Encouraging young people to wear helmets handle their bike safely and accurately and being traffic aware should lead to fewer injuries in the future. Participants interviewed for this research appeared to be taking on the message:

"I never used to wear my helmet, but now I do"
(Male participant, Hope Valley College)

5. Barriers and Challenges

From speaking to a wide range of people involved in Bike Club in Sheffield, there are three main barriers and challenges to improving upon the existing successes of Bike Club.

Engaging new audiences in cycling

Firstly, many interviewees reflected on the difficulties experienced so far in engaging hard to reach groups – including particularly BAMER communities.

So far, specific efforts to engage these groups had not been made, instead when particular groups were targeted, targets tended to be geographic areas which were considered deprived, with the assumption that BAMER communities would be covered by this to an extent. However, one club found that BAMER communities remained under-represented despite their efforts to target areas of deprivation more generally. A stakeholder held the view that BAMER communities were not being properly engaged because this required more resources than were available to Bike Clubs.

Many interviewees thought that barriers remained to attracting groups who might not conventionally get involved in cycling. A factor affecting this was people's existing fitness levels. As is often the case with promotion of physical activity, it can be intimidating for people who do not feel fit or 'sporty' to participate. To compound this, the physically demanding nature of cycling in the city makes for a further deterrent for beginners.

Sustaining Club success

The sustainability of Bike Club activities is also seen as a major challenge for clubs going forward. There is less money available through Bike Club with the end of funding from the Department for Transport, and similar spending cuts are taking place at a local level through the City Council.

Individual clubs are also facing pressures on their time and resources, although this is not the case across the board. Some clubs are suffering from a lack of time to adequately promote their Bike Club – something which they have found works best with 'face to face' promotion. Similarly, for one group they face the questions of how to finance their club, as up until now they have been operating on a small loss, and expecting that they will need to find volunteers to take on some of their work.

Developing a volunteer bank is work already in progress, with some volunteers starting to express an interest working with Bike Clubs.

Partnership working

Partnership working around cycling in Sheffield is seen to be strong. These partners include staff from other CTC projects other third sector cyclist groups such as Sustrans. It was described as "a close knit cycle fraternity" of "like-minded people", qualities which greatly ease their ability to get things done.

From a local authority perspective, a number of organisations work city-wide and independently of the Local Authority, but are aiming towards the same goals. For them, "Big picture wise, we get more added value" (council stakeholder)

However, there was a feeling that the relationship between CTC and the local authority could be closer. The Bike Club Development Officer felt that a big challenge for him was not having direct or close links with the Youth Service of the council, or indeed very close links with the Sustainable Travel team. Another CTC colleague

agreed that the council could do more to support Bike Club and other cycling activities. Where there were productive relationships, these tended to be based on strong personal relationships.

Additionally, Bike Clubs also see themselves as offering something significant to the strategic partners across the city; as one said they are effectively the “workforce” for cycling objectives across the city, covering a range of types of cycling and a number of audiences.

Youth Achievement Awards

In Sheffield, none of the Bike Clubs we interviewed were running Youth Achievement Awards (YAAs). One club’s feedback was that YAAs are resource intensive, and require someone to manage and monitor the scheme. This was particularly a problem when clubs wanted to offer cycle-specific awards, such as mountain biking or mechanical qualifications. In these cases, it simply wasn’t feasible for them to run a generic YAA as well.

6. The future and sustainability

Sustainability is the big question for the Bike Club Development Officer going forward. With Bike Club grants coming to an end, he sees a need to adapt his way of working with clubs.

The Development Officer therefore sees the challenge going forward as how to work with existing clubs to maximize the impact of the grants they have received. For example, this might involve working with them to ensure that new audiences are given the opportunity to use equipment and facilities, helping clubs sustain their activities or to find markets in which they can become financially self-reliant, including setting up as a social enterprise. A second challenge is that with no new money for grants, new groups will have to be engaged in other ways – it’s thought that the considerable expertise of the Development Officer will be the main selling point for this.

Developing a volunteer base or local ‘champions’ both within individual clubs or at a city-wide level is a route that the Development Officer and a number of clubs wish to pursue. The Development Officer noted that identifying enthusiastic individuals within clubs was key to achieving a successful and sustainable Bike Club – simply because the Development Officer cannot maintain momentum and motivation for all clubs. He sees his role as to “sow seeds” and encourage individuals to drive forward Bike Club activity.

Similarly, some Bike Club Leaders thought that recruiting and training volunteers would relieve some pressure on their time as well as increasing the number of skilled individuals working to support and maintain Bike Club activity. One example of this given was a plan to train volunteers in bicycle mechanics – therefore enabling clubs to access these specific skills for maintenance of bikes in the future.

Emerging Messages and Implications for the Future

Working with schools to set up Bike Clubs has been a considerable success in Sheffield, as it can offer positive outcomes – including gaining qualifications, improving educational attainment and supporting equality of access to cycling – for large numbers of children. The role of the School Sports Partnership Officer here has been important in bringing bikes into schools, however at schools who don’t have access to a Partnership Officer, the Development Officer’s role in supporting schools in setting up a Bike Club has been essential. Another stakeholder observed that offering Bikeability or other cycling activities was good for schools and is recognised positively in OFSTED reports.

All stakeholders commented on the number of different organisations and individuals working on cycling in Sheffield and reflected on the benefits this brought about to the local cycling agenda. Within CTC there are two programmes – Cycle Champions and Bike Club – which can offer two different types of support to cycling groups.

Other stakeholders spoke about their own personal approaches to cycling – for example whether they are mountain bikers or road bikers tended to influence the advice and ideas they gave. This diversity was seen as a strength, and individual officers welcomed the fact that they had a community to ‘bounce’ ideas off.

However, a risk of this model was that although the variety of approaches provides strength to the cycling ‘sector’, many organisations rely on similar sources of funding. Funding cuts faced by Bike Club is also being experienced by other parts of CTC and partners such as Sustrans. To an extent this undermines the financial sustainability of the sector.

The Development Officer in Sheffield described his approach as ‘consultancy’. He saw himself as a “local cycling expert” who could offer his support as and when it was needed by clubs. Although this meant he couldn’t get very hands on with having 18 Bike Clubs throughout Sheffield, which was sometimes “frustrating” it does mean that the Development Officer can now respond to the changes in Bike Club resourcing and focus on the clubs which he can help to become more sustainable, rather than having commitments to spend large amounts of time with a large number of clubs who are reliant on his support.

Targeting groups who are harder to engage in cycling activity remains a challenge in Sheffield. Bike Clubs that have tried to attract participants from target groups such as BAMER young people found that direct targeted was needed rather than assuming that more generic outreach work would attract such target groups to participate. An example of this is how one club hoping to increase the number of BAMER participants as a result of working in more deprived areas hadn’t been successful. On the other hand, a group which ran classes at times chosen so that children who also attend a Mosque could take part has seen more success.

BIKE CLUB PLACE STUDY: BRIGHTON AND HOVE

DRAFT PLACE STUDY REPORT

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- Interview with Development Officer – Rose Rickford
- Local Stakeholder Interviews
 - o local authority officer at Brighton and Hove City Council
 - o 4 Bike Club Leaders in Brighton and Hove
- Peer evaluation support with 67 Centre Bike Club, including training and support of 2 young peer researchers, peer-led interviews with 9 young people, an analysis and interpretation session with the peer researchers and a Graffiti session with the peer researchers to illustrate the key findings from their research.

1. Local structure and context

Cycling in Brighton and Hove has grown substantially over recent years, with a 27% increase recorded over the 2006 and 2008 period. Brighton was selected as one of six national 'cycling demonstration towns' chosen to lead the way in promoting cycling as a popular, safe and healthy means of transportation. Brighton is also part of the National Cycle Network with an official route running along the beachfront. There is a local network of traffic free cycle routes across the city, as well as bridleways and tracks for off-road cycling in the Sussex Downs. Over recent years, cycle parking and other cycling facilities have been installed throughout the city.

Brighton and Hove City Council is dedicated to encouraging cycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of transport for the city. The council has set an example as an employer through the creation of its Staff Travel Plan which encourages staff to cycle to work. It is progressing its cycling scheme as part of the European Civitas fund and the council is working with the YMCA on a scheme to refurbish abandoned bikes in the city. The council has also created a city wide cycle map and facilities map and has developed a dedicated webpage to cycling in the city. A Bike-it member of staff, employed by Sustrans in partnership with the council, works with local schools in the city to promote cycling amongst children and families. Bike-it is a scheme run by the national charity Sustrans and aims to enable more people to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

Brighton is the major part of the city of Brighton and Hove, situated in East Sussex on the south coast of England with a population of around 480,000 people. The health of people in Brighton and Hove is mixed compared to the England average. Although mortality rates and early death rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke have fallen over the last 10 years, early deaths from cancer remain significantly higher than the

national average. The estimated adult smoking rate is worse than the national average, as is the rate of road injuries and deaths, smoking related deaths, hospital stays for alcohol related harm and drug misuse.

Approximately 16% of Year 6 children in Brighton and Hove are classified as obese, however, a higher than average percentage of pupils spend at least three hours per week on school sport – which paints a mixed picture, pointing to inequalities across the city. The level of GCSE attainment in Brighton is generally worse than the England average. Deprivation in Brighton and Hove is higher than average, with 10,555 children living in poverty (2011 Health profile, Brighton and Hove, Association of Public Health Observatories).

2. Approach

Bike Club Brighton and Hove was established in 2009. The Development Officer – Rose Rickford has desk space in Brighton and Hove City Council, working with the Principle Travel Planner who managed the Cycle Town programme and a team of three officers including a Sustrans Bike-it Officer. Now that the Cycle Town programme has come to an end, the Principle Travel Planner is managing a number of cycling projects funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund as well as work in other funding streams, for example, the council have recently received funding from Sustrans to develop a new segregated cycle path on a major arterial route.

It was identified early on that the Development Officer could add value to the Cycle Town team's approach in Brighton and Hove, as there was a gap in engaging certain age groups in cycling activity. The Bike it Officer's remit was 'working with the willing' at the younger age ranges and as such, worked closely with local schools. It was agreed that Rose would target older young people and specifically, those groups of young people who were harder to engage, such as vulnerable young adults.

This arrangement proved mutually beneficial, providing the Development Officer with a focus and an understanding of where her work fitted in to the overall strategy and priorities for the city, and for the Cycle Town team at Brighton and Hove, it gave added value with the resource filling an identified gap.

Further advantages for the Development Officer being based within the Cycle Town team at the city council included:

- Access to other relevant council services such as Children's Services, and relevant networks and partnerships;
- Access to and sharing of information, such as policy updates, progress on work streams and local activities related to cycling;
- Access to relevant contacts e.g. teachers, school travel planning officers and road safety officers;
- The opportunity to work in partnership and share relevant information with the Sustrans Bike-it officer;
- Opportunities for partnerships/joint working for example, local cycling events; and
- Opportunities for match funding for Bike Club projects.

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer
The Development Officer in Brighton and Hove sees the focus of her role to be that of development and support – working with local organisations to develop a Bike Club that suits their needs.

"[It's about] working with people to do something that suits them, find out what their needs are, what works in their location and giving them the tools to do it, providing the right training, equipment, advice and support" (Development Officer)

the Development Officer has a relatively structured remit around targeting older young people in the city, although initially found it challenging engaging those harder to reach

young people. Initially, Rose found it easier to work with schools as they were much more forthcoming. However, more recently, the Development Officer has worked hard to engage more vulnerable young people through directly targeting specific organisations and groups in the area, such as the Fostering Service. Although trying to engage with such groups can take a longer and more complex approach, from the perspective of Rose Rickford, this has started to pay off as the Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove have become more diverse, benefiting a greater range of target groups.

In order to engage harder to reach, more vulnerable young people in Bike Club, the Development Officer spoke of how important it was to develop trusting relationships with individual organisations whose job it is to support vulnerable young people, as well as providing ongoing, intensive support. For example, the Development Officer built a relationship with the Fostering Service in Brighton and Hove and supported them with ideas for Bike Club activity that fitted in with the core aims of the service, and provided them with ongoing advice and support around planning and delivering a sustainable project.

More recently, the Development Officer is working intensively with a small number of the most successful Bike Clubs in Brighton to ensure they have the necessary tools for sustaining their Bike Clubs, for example, helping them to access the right training, planning activity and supporting risk assessments.

3. Bike Clubs in Brighton

There are 14 Bike Clubs across Brighton and Hove that engage different target groups particularly disabled young people, looked after young people and young people at risk of exclusion. Those 14 Bike Clubs to date have engaged a total of 1,074 young people (between April 2010 and September 2011).

Most of the Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove focus around mountain bike activity. The Development Officer suggests this is partly a result of her limited cycling knowledge in the early stages, but mostly because this is the type of activity that most groups wanted to deliver because of the easy access to the Sussex Downs which is conducive to mountain bike activity.

Examples of Bike Clubs

Downs' View all ability cycling project is a special needs school accessed Cycle Town funding from Brighton and Hove City Council which was used to buy a fleet of all-ability cycles for the school, as match funding to a Bike Club grant used for staff training and maintenance costs. The Development Officer also provided support in setting up the project. The school runs cycle activities for pupils almost every day in the school playground. The Development Officer has used the fleet of bikes to run two local events as part of Brighton and Hove's sport event Take Part that hosts a wide range of free sports activities for young people and families in the city. Each event in 2010 and 2011 attracted over 300 participants and the cycles were well used.

There are two local organisations offering cycle training, maintenance and maintenance training in the city. However there is a gap in mountain bike leadership training locally, as CTC, who run this, do not have a venue or trainer in the area. This has meant that the Development Officer has had to wait until there was enough participants for a bespoke course, which has caused delays for some projects.



The Brighton and Hove partnership mountain bike project is a consortium of local organisations, groups and projects in Brighton and Hove who have jointly established a mountain bike resource through securing a combined Bike Club grant. Turnerland originally secured £1500 for bikes which has been match funding for the project. The bikes were not bought until the Bike Club grant had been secured, and the Bike Club grant provided additional funding for bikes. They now have a fleet of mountain bikes and a secure storage container for the bikes to create a joint resource for shared use by a number of young people's projects across the city. A steering group has been established made up of stakeholders and young people from all of the local organisations involved. All the groups have committed to the project – it is sustainable. The steering group includes:

- Turnerland Children and Young People's Project
- 67 Centre – a statutory youth project in Moulsecoomb, a deprived area of Brighton, who have established a bike maintenance project;
- Deans Youth Project
- Brighton & Hove City Council Fostering Service/Intensive Placement Team
- Active for Life – a local authority Sports Development initiative, working in deprived areas of the city to develop community sports projects; and
- University of Sussex who have provided land for the bike container as in kind support.
- University of Sussex Students' Union who have had leaders trained to volunteer for other projects in the steering group as well as running their own rides

The facility has made available a cycling resource at very low cost to small youth and community groups with limited resources. In the future, once the project becomes established, more small groups in the city will be encouraged to use the facility.

The project has a relatively strong element of sustainability because of the fact that it is managed by the steering group of organisations and each organisation has had training to enable them to run their own activities. The Bike Club grant includes servicing for the first 3 years and a major aspect of the user agreement relates to maintenance and upkeep of the bikes. It is felt that the large number of partners involved places the group in a good position to fundraise for maintenance and expansion of the resource in the future.

The 67 Centre is part of Brighton and Hove City Council Integrated Youth Support Service and is on the steering group of the Brighton and Hove Mountain Bike Project. The 67 Centre offers a wide range of activities and opportunities to young people aimed at developing their social, mental, physical and emotional well being. They deliver a range of youth work which includes project work, outreach, group work, open youth clubs, outdoor activities, sports and arts activities, designed and delivered to raise aspirations through supporting young people's learning. The 67 Centre Bike Club is aimed at young people 11-19yrs old to engage in learning maintenance skills and cycle awareness. They were funded to deliver two, three month projects, to give young people opportunities to gain local or national accreditation by engaging in bike maintenance, Bikeability training, Graffiti art and local bike rides. Pimp My Bike Art Project was designed to encourage young people to take an interest in bikes leading to young people riding their bikes with confidence and pride. The project offers young people opportunities to design stencils, work with an experienced Graffiti artist and an experienced bike mechanic to rebuild bikes.

The club has also led bike rides using the shared fleet of bikes through the Brighton and Hove mountain bikes project.

4. Outcomes for young people

A peer research approach was adopted to capture the views of young people involved in one Bike Club in Brighton and Hove. The Bike Club chosen to participate was the Bike Club at the 67 Centre, building on the Graffiti art work the young people had engaged in as part of their Bike Club activity.

The peer research involved a session with two young people involved in Bike Club activity to support them in the design of the research questions for the peer research and light touch, interactive training with them around interviewing technique. The two young people encouraged a third young person to get involved, and the three conducted nine interviews with young people during a Bike Club maintenance session and this was followed up by a session with a Graffiti artist and an evaluator to support the young people in analysing and interpreting the results of the research. The key findings were represented as Graffiti art on boards and the young people worked with the Graffiti artist to create a final design that represented the views of young people. The key findings from the research are presented below.

Why do you go to Bike Club?

Most young people involved in the peer research were attracted to the Bike Club at 67 Centre because they were keen to learn how to fix their bikes. Other reasons included meeting up with friends or making new friends and giving them something to do over the school holidays. One young person explained how he was at the 67 Centre playing football, when he saw Bike Club going on and wanted to join in.

“Don’t want to be stuck indoors”

“Learn how to fix my bike and I like meeting new people”

“To learn about fixing bikes – take the chain off, put it back on, take the bike apart”

What do you like best about Bike Club?

In terms of what people liked most about Bike Club, a number of reasons were given including acquiring the skills to fix their bikes, spray painting their bikes, putting new parts on their bikes, meeting up with friends and having lunch (which is provided by the centre).

“[I like] putting new parts on”

“Seeing all my friends”

“Spraying our bikes”

Have you learned anything new at Bike Club?

In terms of learning outcomes, the young people involved in the peer research explained how Bike Club had taught them how to maintain their bike, including how to fix brakes, chains and punctures and learning how to use maintenance tools and equipment.

“Learned how to use a chain de-linker”

“I learnt to fix a puncture and then my back brake was broken and I learnt how to fix it. Then my chain kept coming off and now I know how to put it back on, it’s easy.”

Has going to Bike Club made you do anything differently?

The peer research provides evidence that Bike Club is leading to changes in behaviour of young people involved in the Bike Club activity, most commonly, increased cycling activity/use of their bike, maintaining their own bikes and cycling to and from school.

"I bought a new bike."

"I ride my bike more. I ride to school. I fix my own bike."

"Bike to school."

"Fix bikes"

There was a clear enthusiasm for bikes and cycling from all the young people involved in the Bike Club at the 67 Centre. When asked about their aspirations for Bike Club in the future, many said how they would like to go on longer, organisation bike rides and others wanted to learn more advanced maintenance skills and were keen to develop their experience and skills using different types of bikes, such as mountain bikes and stunt bikes.

Other evidence of positive outcomes

The peer research has evidenced the broad range of outcomes and anticipated outcomes for young people through the Brighton and Hove Mountain bike project – which have a different focus for the different groups involved.

Dean's Youth project is a detached youth project in north east Brighton working with young people from deprived communities and at risk of exclusion. It works with young people from the Deans areas, which are on the rural outskirts of the city which can lead to isolation for young people. The project applied for Bike Club funding and is part of the Brighton and Hove Mountain Bike project. The youth worker spoke of the

benefits he had seen for the young people involved:

- It enables young people to get out into the countryside around where they live – on the Downs, which many haven't experienced and to see it as a resource;
- Provides an opportunity to work in small groups with young people, and as the majority are boys, there is also an opportunity for them to meet male role models (at the university), which many of them lack;
- The activities of Bike Club allow a 'space' for young people to open up and talk about issues, which they would not normally do in a more formal situation "They just blurt it out – all comes out. It creates the space to talk"

The Bike Club Leader has seen changes in the young people's behaviour by being out and not under 'teacher rules'. He talked about the 'downhill rush' – the 'euphoria of speed' that young people experience and how this has a positive affect on their state of mind.

There are also health benefits such as stopping smoking which some of the young people are considering. The Bike Club Leader has recently given up smoking himself and he is acting as a role model for the young people.

Another outcome has been for the Bike Club Leader himself. The leader had not been a cyclist until the Bike Club was established. He has recently given up smoking and with the money he worked out he was saving he purchased his own bike and has subsequently planned his first 60 mile race: *"I've been converted – it's magic!"*

The Bike Club Leader at Brighton & Hove Fostering Service who is also part of the Brighton and Hove Mountain Bike project anticipates a range of outcomes for the young people in care who will be involved in cycling activity once it gets underway. This includes:

- Introducing a new activity – providing an opportunity for children and young people in care to have a go at cycling, as some may have never had the opportunity;
- Raising their confidence and self-esteem;
- Working in groups;
- Having fun;
- Improve their health and fitness; and
- Practical skills for travelling from A to B, and ‘setting them up for using Brighton’s cycle lanes in the future’.

Tarnerland Children and Young People’s Project is based in an area of high deprivation, with high rates of crime and low aspirations among local young people. The Youth Project Leader leads on the Brighton and Hove Mountain Bike project. The Bike Club Leader anticipates the following outcomes for the young people involved in Bike Club activity:

- Provides an opportunity for disadvantaged young people to ride bikes and learn bike maintenance and practical skills;
- Promotes awareness of university and raises aspirations;
- Reduces crime, for example, bike theft;
- Promotes team work and sense of responsibility (looking after bikes);
- Provides volunteer opportunities for Sussex University students;
- Supports young people to make positive choices about their lifestyle and their future – health, crime, improve life choices and raise aspirations.

5. Barriers and Challenges

Sustainability is the biggest challenge facing Bike Club in Brighton and Hove on two levels. Firstly, the lack of a dedicated Development Officer resource after March 2012 will leave a gap in terms of support for existing and potentially new Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove. Particularly as the Development Officer has been seen as crucial to establishing links with young people’s services and projects as part of the local cycling agenda, and providing support in the development and set up of Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove, particularly for more vulnerable young people.

An early challenge faced by the Development Officer was relatively limited knowledge about bikes and cycling. This coupled with pressure to get Bike Clubs established (monitoring targets) led to the first tranche of Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove being from those organisations who were more forthcoming (such as schools) and in most cases, did not engage as many target groups as the Development Officer had hoped.

At this early stage, the Bike Club grant application form and system was in the early stages of development and didn’t require detailed information around sustainability. This has meant that some of the earlier Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove are not as innovative, not as diverse and are more at risk of not being as sustainable as others. However, as the application form developed and the Development Officer’s knowledge around cycling increased, Rose has supported more recent clubs to build sustainability into the design of their clubs from the beginning and as a result, clubs established later are much more sustainable.

It was also recognised by the Development Officer that there has also been an organisational learning about how to set up Bike Clubs. As a team, they were on a steep learning curve at the beginning as they developed a model which worked.

Another challenge that emerged through the research was local evaluation of Bike Club, and how Bike Club Leaders can capture outcomes for young people as a result of Bike Club activity. For example, there were concerns raised around how individual Bike Clubs could measure some of the longer term outcomes for Bike Clubs as identified on their applications and concerns about being able to attribute any changes specifically to Bike Club activity.

There were concerns about the lack of monitoring data from Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove and about the monitoring systems in place centrally. The lack of monitoring data is thought to be due to the fact that Bike Clubs are not obliged to provide monitoring data after their first year, however, for many it can take up to 9 months for to become fully established which has resulted in a lack of any real monitoring data from such clubs. A lack of monitoring data doesn't however mean that a sustainable Bike Club hasn't been established, but at present, there is no way of capturing that information. Clubs can (and are encouraged to) re-register as Bike Clubs for subsequent years for a cost of £50. But they're not obliged to do this so the terms and conditions of the grant currently only require monitoring over a set up period which is largely inactive.

6. The future and sustainability

The biggest concern for the sustainability of Bike Club in Brighton and Hove is the lack of continuation funding for a dedicated Development Officer post in Brighton after March 2012. This raises questions about the provision of support for existing and potentially new Bike Clubs in the city, particularly for those organisations and groups working with vulnerable young people as these are groups who have required the most intensive support.

However, an advantage of the Development Officer being located within the Transport Planning/Cycle Town team at Brighton and Hove City Council has been her ability to illustrate the importance of adopting a community engagement approach to widen the reach to older young people, particularly harder to reach and more the Development Officer has brought to the Cycle Town team's approach an emphasis on harder to reach young people bringing community engagement to the forefront, with a focus on using cycling to engage harder to reach young people and the wider benefits of cycling. The Cycle Town team has been able to see first hand the value of this approach and are exploring ways to build community engagement into its wider programme of work.

The Development Officer sees the key to the sustainability of Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove as having enough people adequately trained in leading cycle activity and maintenance and having access to cycling equipment that is in good condition. Also important is having cycling embedded within an organisation through buy in from senior managers which enables adequate resources to be allocated to Bike Club activity, and means that if Bike Club Leaders move on, the Club is more likely to continue.

Emerging messages and implications for the future

Bike Club activity in Brighton and Hove has focussed on using cycling as a means to engage harder to reach young people and promoting the wider benefits of cycling. The Development Officer has supported a wide range of Bike Clubs to become established across Brighton and Hove that benefit a diverse range of young people. Key outcomes for young people involved in cycling activity to date involve skills development, increased confidence, enjoyment and mobility/ cycling more often for example, to and from school.

The Development Officer in Brighton and Hove has worked to ensure the sustainability of Bike Clubs in the city through supporting individual clubs to embed cycling within their organisations, in accessing the right training and equipment and through early sustainability planning, such as the development of an innovative consortium of Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove centred around the acquisition of a fleet of bikes and storage.

Importantly, the Development Officer has been successful in demonstrating the value of a community engagement approach to engage some of the more vulnerable and harder to reach young people in the city's cycling agenda. However, questions remain as to the ongoing provision of support for existing and new Bike Clubs in Brighton and Hove without a dedicated Development Officer after March 2012.



BIKE CLUB PLACE STUDY: AYLESBURY / LEIGHTON-LINSLADE

DRAFT PLACE STUDY REPORT

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- a group discussion with two Bike Club Development Officers and Bike Club leaders
- a separate interview with a Bike Club Development Officer and a Bike Club leader
- an interview with a local authority officer at Buckinghamshire County Council plus additional information provided by email
- peer research with a dozen pupils at Furze Down school
- observations and conversations with young people attending a summer cycling event organised by Pages Park Youth Scheme (PPYS) and supported by the Woodcraft Folk project and the Bike Club Development Officer



1. Local structure and context

Aylesbury was one of the first (of six) “demonstration” towns selected to be a **Cycling Town** by Cycling England in 2005 with the aim of showing that increased funding and bespoke projects could have an impact on levels of cycling in different areas. Leighton-Linslade was confirmed as one of ten new Cycling Towns in June 2008. Whilst they are actually two separate Bike Club areas, they have been developed as a single case study area for this study because of their close proximity and because there is a single Bike Club Development Officer managing both areas.

The Aylesbury/ Leighton-Linslade Bike Club spans two small towns, 10 miles apart, in the south east of England that sit across the two local authority areas of Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury Vale) and Central Bedfordshire (Leighton-Linslade). Even though they are geographical neighbours, they are also quite distinct from each other.

Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire is principally an urban area with a population of around 174,000 people. It is a fairly compact town and has a flat topography which is conducive to cycling. The health of people in Aylesbury is generally better than the England average, with higher life expectancy for males (80.2 years, compared with an England average of 78.3) and similar life expectancy rates for females at around 82 years. However, life expectancy is 5.3 years lower for men and 4.8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Aylesbury, compared with the least deprived. Levels of deprivation are also lower in Aylesbury, although 10.1% of children are living in poverty compared to an England average of 20.9%. Over the last ten years all cause mortality rates have fallen in the area as have early death rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke and they remain considerably better than the England average. Educational attainment by young people in the area is well above average. However, Aylesbury has slightly below average levels of physically active

children and adults and above average rates of road injuries and deaths (2011 Health profile, Aylesbury Vale).

Leighton-Linslade has a population of around 37,000 people and is a rural area, split by a river, a canal and a train track running approximately through the middle of it which means that there is one main road into the town, and two busy roads and two footbridges over the railway (with steps) that need to be negotiated by cyclists. There is no health profile for Leighton-Linslade but its town profile shows that it is very similar to Central Bedfordshire in terms of age profile, ethnicity, unemployment and health. The health of people in Central Bedfordshire is better than the England average. Life expectancy for men is slightly higher (79.2 years) than the England average whilst female life expectancy is about the same. Deprivation levels are below average but there are some pockets of deprivation as life expectancy is 6.9 years lower for men and 4.8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas. Around 12% of children live in poverty, compared with 21% across England. Over the last ten years, all cause mortality rates have fallen and early death rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke have fallen, although early deaths from cancer are only just below the England average. However, educational achievement is slightly below the England average and there are higher rates of road injuries and deaths (52.3) compared with the England average (48.1).

The cycling vision for Buckinghamshire and for Central Bedfordshire is for “more people cycling, more safely, more often” which was adopted from the Cycling England vision. The core objectives of have centred on reducing car dependency and increasing levels of participation in cycling.

2. Approach

Bike Club Aylesbury/ Leighton-Linslade was established in 2009. The Bike Club Development Officer has a desk in both local authorities and works across both the Travel and Road Safety Team (now the Sustainable Travel Team) at Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) and the GoCycle team at Leighton-Linslade Town Council (in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Cycling and Walking Team).

The flexible approach of Bike Club is one of its key strengths. It can tailor activities to suit a broad range of young people’s needs:

“Bike Club not only offers bikeability training but also offers young people greater freedom, physical fitness and better health” (Local Authority Officer)

“Our special schools are very interested in Bike Club because it gives young people a sense of achievement and that they are keeping up with their peers” (Local Authority Officer)

It has also provided funding for some schools outside of the Aylesbury area in special circumstances, such as the Furze Down School which, although not based in Aylesbury has 75% of its pupils living in Aylesbury. Developing a travel plan can be a particularly challenging task for special schools because the children are transported to and from the school over long distances and therefore cycling to school is not an option:

“Children are often delivered from home to school using organised transport, such as taxi’s, because they often have long journeys to get to school” (Local Authority Officer)

Bike Club worked alongside Buckinghamshire County Council to develop a bid for funds and not only was it successful, but Furze Down was awarded the Modeshift Cycling Initiative of the Year in 2010.

Schools have played an important role in the development of Bike Club across Aylesbury and Leighton-Linslade. This is, in part, due to the Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Education (DfE) joint initiative to ensure every school developed a travel plan by 2010. As a key objective of the Cycling Town initiative was to reduce car dependency, this chimed very well with travel plan targets to reduce single occupancy in cars, increase car sharing and increase the number of young people walking or cycling to school. In addition, there are many other Bike Clubs in youth clubs, community groups and charities across the area.

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer

Working across two local authority areas has required the Bike Club Development Officer to be flexible, adaptable and able to get on with lots of different people at varying levels within statutory organisations, with volunteers and with young people.

The role of the Bike Club Development Officer in Aylesbury /Leighton-Linslade is essentially that of a **networker** who links up what's happening on the ground to the strategic priorities of statutory organisations. The role has enabled the Bike Club Development Officer to work across local authority boundaries, helping council officers build up a picture of cycling activity across their patch through **sharing information and knowledge** about Bike Club activity gained from their contacts and by providing a direct link into Bike Clubs and their leaders.

"The experience and contacts [of the Bike Club Development Officer] have been shared with the [local authority] team" (Local Authority Officer)

Their networking role has been particularly important given partnership working did not work particularly well during the early stages of Bike Club:

"Difficulties in partnership working have included changes in staff" (Local Authority Officer)

"It's been more about individual connections and links than formal partnership working" (Bike Club Development Officer)

The Bike Club Development Officer also needs to ensure that Bike Club activity in the locality spans the broad range of target groups required by the funding, such as by gender, ethnicity and disability, as well as deprived areas. They therefore **provide specialist knowledge** about the scope of Bike Club funds and activity and this is becoming more important as they are increasingly supporting clubs that are outside their traditional catchment area, such as in Amersham, Milton Keynes and Luton. This is important because restricting Bike Club funding to just the catchment area can be limiting:

"Being restricted to the Aylesbury area has been a challenge" (Local Authority Officer)

"You can't just say no because they {clubs in other local authorities} are outside the catchment area. You need to share the learning more widely" (Bike Club Development Officer)

The Bike Club Development Officer also performs a vital supporting function which involves helping Bike Club leaders access bike club funds through providing assistance with completing application forms both for Bike Club funding and for projects trying to access funds from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and other appropriate funding sources. They also bring Bike Club leaders together as a group so that they can share knowledge, ideas and resources in a supportive environment, although this aspect of the role could be developed further. This can be quite challenging as many of the Bike Club leaders are volunteers and therefore Bike Club Development Officers need to put in a lot of energy to keep them inspired:

"I provide a lot of support and chivvy along [to Bike Club leaders] and I get them to try different things so that they can decide for themselves what's best for their group" (Bike Club Development Officer)

Overall, the role of the Bike Club Development Officer has been viewed very positively:

"The Bike Club Development Officer was brilliant" (Local Authority Officer)

"From the schools that we have worked with we have received excellent feedback regarding the work that they have done with Bike Club. All feedback has been positive" (Local Authority Officer)

3. Bike Clubs in Aylesbury /Leighton-Linslade

There are 25 Bike Clubs across the two areas with a fairly even spread across each locality. Each Bike Club is at a different stage of development with new clubs also being developed, such as in Watford, Buckingham, Luton and Milton Keynes. There is a lot of variety across these Bike Clubs in terms of target groups including those who are considered harder-to-reach e.g. young people NEET (Not in Employment, Education and Training), homeless young people, girls, black and minority ethnic (BME) young people and children with learning disabilities. The initial target for Bike Clubs was to recruit 100 young people each year but it was soon realised that this was not a realistic target and in Aylesbury / Leighton-Linslade they have recruited around five or six young people per club. The other main target is to ensure that 15% of their recruits are 'hard to reach' and they estimate that they have hugely exceeded this target with around 60-70% of young people being 'hard to reach'.

Examples of Bike Clubs

EXAMPLE 1: Woodcraft Folk

Woodcraft Folk is a national project with a local group in Leighton-Linslade. It was initially set up to get 6-9 year olds to undertake more outdoor activities, but then expanded to older age groups. Bike Club was an opportunity to do this, as it combines well with the Woodcraft Folk's environmental concerns. The Bike Club project aims to:

- improve the confidence of young people in cycling
- enable them to organise a cycling event of their own, and
- develop their outdoor skills through camping.

Woodcraft Folk does this through engaging young people in off-road bike riding and organised trips that teach them skills in orienteering, map reading and film-making – they are also seeking to make a promotional video for the project. They have struggled to recruit enough volunteers and therefore had concerns about the club's sustainability, especially as a bike ride had to be cancelled recently because of the lack of volunteers. However, the meeting with Bike Club leaders for the evaluation provided an opportunity to start sharing resources across the catchment area – and there is evidence that this is starting, through an event organised by the PPYS (see following).

EXAMPLE 2: Pages Park Youth Scheme (PPYS)

Pages Park Youth Scheme (PPYS) supports young people (aged 10-15 years) who live in a deprived area. The youth group now includes a Bike Club which provides support for repairing and fixing bikes so that they are roadworthy plus cycling activities once per month. A new bike rack has been installed at the youth centre and new bike locks and lights provided so that the young people can come to the park on their bikes. They also organise bike events during the summer to help build young people's confidence in riding a bike.

The first event was held in June and around 20 young people turned up to take part, with around a third of them being girls. In addition, a Bike Club leader and some members from Woodcraft Folk came along to provide support, as did the Bike Club Development Officer. There was also a youth club volunteer who had recently joined PPYS, who was able to provide bike maintenance at the event as well as a professional bike trainer from Cycle 4 Life who had been paid for the session to run the activities. It was an energetic session with a great atmosphere. Feedback from some of the young people attending the session was obtained via some brief discussions between the activities. Some of the reasons why young people liked coming to Bike Club were:

"Maintenance, they fix your bike" (Young female)
"Gets you about quicker" (Young male)

There was also an appetite for Bike Club to do more exciting activities such as building ramps and letting them do stunts, as well as holding more regular activities:

"I would like Bike Club to be on every week" (Young female)

EXAMPLE 3: Furze Down School

Furze Down School is based in Winslow in Buckinghamshire, about ten miles from the centre of Aylesbury although a majority of the pupils travel in from there. It is a school for students (aged 4–19 years) on a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). The school initially got involved with the Cycling Town initiative through developing a School Travel Plan as part of the DfT/ DfE joint travel plan initiative. Usually these funds were available to enable more young people to cycle to school but because the students have moderate learning difficulties and have to travel a considerable distance to get to the school (and so often come by bus/taxi) it was decided that they would receive bus passes instead. In addition, all KS4 children (Key Stage 4) would be supported to achieve the Bikeability Stage 1.

However, the school were keen to do more and so, following a very positive response from parents about their ideas for a school Bike Club they worked with Buckinghamshire County Council and the Bike Club Development Officer to set one up in the school. This was particularly welcomed by the school because they had no PE teacher at the school.

Furze Down is a good example of partnership working. To achieve its aim of increasing opportunities for student's independence, health and social interaction the school needed bikes, helmets, training and storage. They therefore contacted the county Travel Plan Advisor who put them in touch with Bike Club and Cycle Training (part of Cycling England). They also used their own school funds to pay for a cycle storage container which they hoped to repay using the Capital Grant for their School Travel Plan. The school had to purchase bikes as the students are unable to bring their own to school as they travel on Home to School provided taxi's and minibuses.

As a consequence of Bike Club, they have successfully trained three teachers to teach the Bikeability training and all 27 of their KS4 pupils passed Bikeability Stage 1. The Bikeability training is now part of the school curriculum and is part of their sustainability plan as they can now offer Bikeability training to other local schools for a fee. They also received the Modeshift Cycling initiative of the Year in 2010 and have been upheld as an example of good practice:

"The most successful project has been the work with Furze Down School" (Local Authority Officer)
"Bike Club has worked very well at Furze Down" (Local Authority Officer)

Furze Down School was selected for undertaking peer research with the students and this is described in more detail in the outcomes section below.

4. Outcomes for young people

In order to capture the views of young people's experiences of Bike Club and the impact it has had on their lives, a peer research session was undertaken at Furze Down School. The peer research approach, getting young people to lead the group discussions themselves, was seen as beneficial because it ensured that the evaluators could learn about the student's experiences of Bike Club and enabled the students to gain some practical experience of leading group discussions themselves. In total, 14 young people attended the interactive session, as well as three teaching assistants and two evaluators.

What do you like best about Bike Club?

One of the main features that the Furze Down students liked about Bike Club was its focus on safety and security. This is perhaps not surprising given many of the students were fairly new to cycling and the focus was on Bikeability 1 which prepares young people for cycling on the road with trainers:

"You have to get on your bike from the clean side" (this means the kerbside and therefore away from the chain and the traffic)

"I'm getting rid of bad biking habits.... you must use two hands and no wheelies. You can't ride without a helmet and you must use the gears and brakes to stop, not your feet"

"It's very important to lock your bike. You need to remember the code or key"

Another good thing about Bike Club is that it gives young people the freedom and independence to get around and about on their own:

"I don't need a lift from my parents"

"You can see more... you're getting out and about seeing more of the countryside, with a bike you're constantly moving"

Other 'likes' about Bike Club included learning new skills, such as co-ordination skills and building confidence, and the fun element of riding a bike and playing with the bell!

What have you done differently since you joined Bike Club?

In terms of outcomes, the students at Furze Down discussed some of the changes that Bike Club had made to their lives which included improvements in both their fitness levels and in their health and wellbeing:

"Getting on a bike can make you feel happy and more confident"

"I feel fitter and stronger"

There were also benefits for them in terms of enabling them to have greater independence and to get around more easily which is perhaps more important in a rural area:

"It's quicker and easier to get around by bike rather than walking or getting the bus"

"It's faster than walking"

"Bikes are a better way of transport. The buses are useless, they're never on time"

Several of the Furze Down students had gone out on their bikes with their families which they wouldn't have done before Bike Club at the school:

"I can now go to weightwatchers with my mum" (they go on their bikes)

"I cycled to Wendover with my dad"

The students also felt that going by bike makes a day out more fun:

"It's more of a day out"

What else would you like Bike Club to do?

There a lot of interest amongst students in having the opportunity to go out of the school grounds and go on longer bike trips outside the school gates. This is perhaps because the school used to go out more but whilst the teachers were doing their training they could not do this activity.

"You need to let people know what it's like to go out on the road"

"We were taught how to do snaking"

"It's great to go out for the whole day and have a packed lunch"

There was also a need for more three wheeler bikes at the school because some of the students are unable to use two-wheelers.

Other evidence of positive outcomes

As mentioned above, Furze Down won the Modeshift Cycling Initiative of the year in 2010. An illustration of some of the achievements were also highlighted in the application form:

"I can now cycle to the town centre from where I live"

"I mended my friend's bike when he had a flat tyre"

"I can now ride to Aylesbury town safely"

It's also worth noting that some of the young people who attended the Pages Park Youth Scheme cycling events felt that Bike Club had changed their lifestyles as they now could cycle to school with their friends, which was quicker and more fun, and they could also cycle to the shops. In summary, understanding the importance of bike safety and security is necessarily the first stage of getting young people to ride a bike, especially when riding a bike on the road, and therefore it is not surprising to see these issues coming up as some of the main benefits of Bike Club. This is especially true in a rural school with disabled students, where bikes need to be locked away overnight and students need to return their equipment to the locker at the end of each session and work hard on meeting their needs to feel secure and confident. The added benefit of Bike Club is that it provides the young people with greater freedom and independence to get out and about by themselves or with their family and friends, especially in rural areas where public transport is limited and they rely more heavily on their parents to drive them around.

5. Barriers and Challenges

The two locations covered by Bike Club in Aylesbury /Leighton-Linslade pose different challenges for Bike Club. The flat topography and compact, urban nature of Aylesbury makes it more suited to cycling, whilst Leighton-Linslade is rural and split by a train track, river and canal which means that there are not many easy cycling routes to schools. There has also been a problem **recruiting volunteers** in Leighton-Linslade, which may be because many workers commute out of the area and so may not have the time to volunteer. Similarly, there is a need for greater linking up between projects in Leighton-Linslade to ensure limited resources are shared more effectively. An example was given by the Woodcraft Folk project which had to cancel a big charity event because they did not have enough volunteers to support young people on a sponsored bike ride. By sharing paid staff and volunteers, linking up on cycling events and even sharing bikes, especially in rural areas, there could be greater resilience across the Bike Club network.

A particular challenge has been setting up Bike Clubs in more **informal settings**, such as in youth clubs, rather than in schools. The network of Bike Clubs in Aylesbury developed in a more piecemeal way than in Leighton-Linslade and tends to have more youth club-based Bike Clubs which require more input. The GoCycle project that formed part of the Cycle Town initiative in Leighton-Linslade had a strong emphasis on school-based cycling and hence schools have formed a core element of the Bike Clubs in the area.

There is also a challenge around maintaining interest in cycling over the **winter period**. One Bike Club leader found that young people were much less likely to turn up in the winter and when they did turn up, they tended not to come on their bikes, even though bike lights were provided. He thought that this may be due to parents being more concerned about their children's safety as it gets darker and because the Bike Club is located in the middle of a park.

Some Bike Club leaders have found it very time consuming trying to access **information** about using bridleways, canal towpaths and cycle tracks, as well as where to get permits, how much they cost etc. With each leader having to do this individually it means that there is less resource available for running the events. Some support with accessing information and the provision of guidance on these issues would be very helpful and the Bike Club Development Officer is already starting to explore potential options for better information sharing, such as through the Bike Club website or as part of the Bike Club Toolkit.

In the **current economic climate** a key challenge will be to maintain Bike Clubs when there is the threat of losing the support of both the Bike Club Development Officer and the local authority cycling team. Bike Club leaders were concerned that local authority cycling support teams were being reduced and that the future of the Bike Club Development Officer was unknown. There are important questions to answer about the future of Bike Club and how to sustain existing Bike Club activity without the support of these key people.

6. The future and sustainability

A core feature of the Bike Club sustainability plan in Aylesbury /Leighton-Linslade is '**train the trainers**'. There is a bike mechanic (employed by the Buckinghamshire Young Carers Project) who has provided some support for Bike Club leaders through bike maintenance training courses, however this training has not actually happened in the way that was intended. The training is supposed to consist of an individual two hour training session on bike maintenance for the bike club leader who is then equipped with the skills to train the young people to be able to do bike maintenance themselves. However, because of the lack of time for Bike Club leaders to do the training individually (they are mostly unpaid volunteers), usually what happens is the training happens at the youth club or at a youth group meeting with everyone who has turned up for the club/ meeting. Moreover, those who have managed to do the training, both volunteers and paid staff, have then left leaving skills gaps. Therefore, bike maintenance skills are not being passed on as effectively as they could be and this has stalled sustainability plans.

Similarly, many young people may have a bike but do not use because it is broken, even though it may only require a minor repair. **Sharing bike maintenance skills** was therefore viewed as crucial to the future of Bike Club in Aylesbury Leighton-Linslade, as well as increasing access to a wider pool of bikes across projects by sharing them, rather than having bikes for use by a single project only. It is also a good idea to have a Dr Bike Session (bike mending with or without the coaching as part of it) near the beginning of a project in order to assess the quality of all bikes and get them roadworthy, or find other organisations to lend bikes or buy in second hand ones, so everyone has access to a bike.

One of the challenges identified above was around sharing resources and this could be further exploited to make best use of resources and thus enhance sustainability. For example, at the PPYS the Bike Club leader is struggling to persuade young people of the benefits of being able to fix an inner tube, especially when you can buy a new one cheaply; however this approach fits neatly with the ethos of the Woodcraft Folk project which seeks to bring environmental concerns into their Bike Club project.

Interestingly, the meeting with Bike Club leaders organised by the Bike Club for the evaluation, was the first time Bike Club leaders had met and they viewed it as an opportunity to start sharing resources across the catchment area.

Emerging messages and implications for the future

The issues raised above about the sustainability of Bike Club suggest that local sharing of information has to be improved before more resource sharing can become a reality:

"I think it would be good for there to be a list of all the Bike Clubs that have been supported with or without funding on the Bike Club website, not just Blog details added by Bike Club Development Officers, with a link to their websites so that people can see things like awards and all the good work that has been done" (Bike Club Development Officer)

This is especially important from a sustainability perspective because if a Bike Club leader or Development Officer leaves, there is a real risk of all the information that they have built up over time, such as contacts, local networks, lessons learned and good practice being lost. Could this information be shared on the Bike Club website in a way that it can be accessed locally?

The provision of information and guidance on bridleways was viewed more as a national issue more than a local concern and therefore something that head office could pick up, although there would still need to be a local element to this information.

Overall, the messages about Bike Club were very positive, from local authorities, Bike Club Development Officers themselves, Bike Club leaders and the young people attending Bike Clubs. There has been some very good practice demonstrated in the area, such as in Furze Down school, and the targets set to recruit 'hard to reach' young people have been surpassed, however the real challenge is to ensure that the benefits gained in the short term can be capitalised in the longer term. The role of the Bike Club Officer has been crucial in building a solid platform on which to continue this success.





Bike Club Place Study: Belfast

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- Meetings and interview with Bike Club Development Officer – Tim Edgar (June 2011 and February 2012)
- Fieldwork visits to Bike Clubs, activities and events:
 - Bike Dock Belles and Young Guns
 - Falls Park / Suicide Awareness
 - Belfast Urban Sports (BUS) visit to outdoor Urban Sports Park
 - Partners meeting at launch of Bike Week Belfast
- Outcomes workshop with 6 Bike Club leaders – February 2012
- Outcomes workshop with 9 young people – February 2012
- Local stakeholder interviews:
 - Cormac McCann: Leisure Development Manager in Parks and Leisure Department at Belfast City Council
 - Ryan Haire: Partnership Officer in Parks and Leisure Department at Belfast City Council
 - Noel McGuire: Project worker for Youth Build at Belfast Activity Centre

1. Local structure and context

Belfast is the capital and largest city in Northern Ireland with a population of 268,700 (ONS mid year statistics 2010). Over 60% of Belfast's total population is of working age. Belfast is a young city, with 19.5% of the population under 16 years old, and 43.9% under 30 years of age.

98% of the residents are of white ethnic origin. The largest minority ethnic groups within Belfast are the Chinese community (with 1,318 residents) and the mixed community (with 729 residents). The religious breakdown in the city is roughly equally split between those people of a 'Protestant and other Christian' community background (48.6%) and those people of a 'Catholic' community background (47.2%).

According to the Northern Ireland Index of Multiple Deprivation (2005), Belfast has high levels of deprivation with eight out of the ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland (Belfast Profile of the city 2010). Whilst male and female life expectancy increased across Northern Ireland in 2006–2008, the improvements in life expectancy in the 20% most deprived areas were markedly less than those seen across Northern Ireland as a whole. The male life expectancy was 71.8 years in 2006–08, and 78.4 years in women (Rodgers and Stewart 2011: NI Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System) compared to 76.4 for men and 81.3 for women.

Northern Ireland has a long history of sectarianism dating back centuries with the most recent Troubles lasting for 30 years between 1969 and 1998. The Good Friday Agreement in 1998 established the Northern Ireland Assembly, and although the Assembly was suspended four times between 2002–2007, full power was restored in 2007. The most recent Assembly, dissolved before May 2011 elections, was the first to complete a full term since the Good Friday agreement (Insight on Conflict: Conflict Profile Northern Ireland 2011).

The conflict resulted in increased segregation between Protestants and Catholics in high-density areas such as Belfast (The Economist 2006), and over time, Belfast has become more and more segregated. The 2001 census revealed that Belfast was marginally less segregated than 1991, but still more segregated than it had been in 1971 when The Troubles began.

An important context for Bike Club One is the impact this has had on partnership working. As a result of The Troubles, sectarian feelings and behaviours are almost endemic in Northern Ireland Society and this has impacted on partnership working, “in spite of a respectable veneer at some levels within society” (Community Relations Council 2011). As one stakeholder commented:

“Trust is essential in Northern Ireland because it is a small place. If you upset one person they soon tell another”

Cycling in Belfast

Cycling is an essential part of the Council’s vision for creating a more active city and Belfast has many dedicated cycling routes. It also has four facilities for BMX cycling. A dedicated page on the City Council’s website describes some of the cycle friendly routes in Belfast.

Belfast welcomed the opportunity to have Bike Club and CTC presence in the City to support them to achieve their vision. There had previously been no cycling officer at the Council.

2. Approach

Bike Club is funded by ASDA and was introduced into Northern Ireland in 2010. The Development Officer Tim Edgar came into post in August 2010 and the grant scheme was launched in November 2010. Tim is based in Belfast City Council, Parks and Leisure Department, and works closely with six development officers. He is line managed by CTC in England. The Bike Club Development officer finds it useful to be based in the city Council for:

- Giving credibility and status to Bike Club
- Allowing access to open space facilities for Bike Club events
- Building relationships with the City council
- Opening up opportunities for networking

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer

The role of the Development Officer:

- Developing strategic partnerships and relationships in order to develop and embed Bike Club and cycling in Belfast
- As part of introducing CTC and CTC training into Northern Ireland
- Working with clubs to find solutions to any barriers they have in becoming Bike Clubs
- Promoting cycling in Belfast through events and activities
- Advice on cycling equipment including the purchase of bikes
- Establishing links with schools
- Working with community groups

Bike Club leaders and the City Council see Tim’s dedicated role as essential if cycling is to be increased in Northern Ireland.

One factor that supported the development of Bike Club in Belfast is the fact that the Bike Club Officer comes from Belfast and understands the local context:

“Tim is doing things the ‘Northern Ireland way’, which is very important and we have a way of doing things like, talk about it a bit, then we get it sorted. Tim is managing it very well, he is a very approachable person, you can’t go in here and offer everything and deliver nothing – you have to be very careful that way” (Bike club leader).

Tim is a keen cyclist himself and regularly competes in cycling challenges.

At strategic level:

- Contribution to the City’s Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy: Making Belfast More Active

“I was keen to have Bike club in Belfast because it fitted with out Physical Activity and Sports Development strategy to have people more active and in particular to target unrepresentative groups” (Belfast City Council).

- Potential to strengthen the City Council’s partnership with local health and social care agencies by demonstrating impact on health in deprived communities
- Partnership with CTC because the presence of Bike Club in Northern Ireland presented an opportunity to develop a new and constructive partnership with a highly regarded cycling organisation
- Developing area-based work which addresses mobility between communities and breaks down barriers to integration across sectarian backgrounds
- Developing relationships more widely with Cycling Ulster and Cycling Ireland

With organisations

- Some organisations saw opportunities to become CTC trained because there are no CTC trainers in Northern Ireland:

“The Partnership with Bike Club is very important as it will be a route for me becoming a tutor for CTC” (Belfast Activity Centre).

- Is a way of strengthening community organisations relationship and visibility with the City Council
- Raises political awareness with organisations about the value of cycling for young people and families

For communities

- Stakeholder commented that Bike Club had the potential to build peace and reconciliation between communities, and if so, it will be key to attracting further funding to develop physical activity and sports. One youth worker said: “(Bike Club) has given me another tool to reach into the community”.

For younger people

- Involve young people in their own self directed learning
- Reduce isolation and fear in young people through exploring boundaries and promoting reconciliation across communities
- Promote young people’s mobility for education, employment and training across the city
- Develop leadership skills through increased responsibility and confidence
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Develop a means of transport that is sustainable

“Cycling is now the way forward for young people and (Bike Club) is something they can take and apply to their own bikes in the street” (Belfast Activity Centre).

3. Bike Clubs in Belfast

The Development Officer has supported **17** Bike Clubs to be established in Belfast since the project was introduced into Northern Ireland in November 2010. There are **7** more clubs in development. The target for clubs in Belfast is **34** by December 2012.

The specific groups to be targeted in Belfast are:

- Segregated communities on Unionist/ Loyalist and Nationalist/ Republican and Protestant and Catholic religious grounds
- Looked-after young people
- Young people with disabilities and special needs
- Girls and young women
- Families
- Black and Minority ethnic youths

Examples of some of the Bike Clubs include:

Example 1: Women cycling and involving families: Bikedock Belles and the Young Guns

Bikedock Belles is a women-only group, which had started as a low-key, informal group with 4 women cyclists. They let it be known that they were going out on a Wednesday evening, and any women who wanted to join them could meet them at pre-determined venues. 90% of the women who came along were non cyclists.

The Belles are committed to a women only group because they believe it is more relaxing and women are more likely to give it a try. They feel it makes women feel better about themselves and is a good stress reliever. They have rejected being a Women's Cycling Club because in their view it would deter many women from participating:

"Some people have said you could make this a women's cycling club, but making this a club would ruin it, it would be too advanced for many of the women. There are hundreds of clubs for athletes. There is no way my sister would have come anywhere near it if it were a registered cycling club"
(Bike Club leader)

Bike Club was a perfect solution for them. The Development Officer was able to facilitate the CTC membership package, which included developing a constitution and insurance. This means that the Bikedock Belles can now draw in other funding sources such as the council sports development grants.

Another benefit was that two of the women have undergone the mountain leader training and the trail leaders, which has developed their skills.

The Bike Club leader says the club works across communities:

"All the girls that come out with us, I don't even know what religion they are, and I don't care, nobody cares, not even the kids, it just goes beyond all that" (Bike Club leader)

In January 2011, the Belles launched the Young Guns club for children aged 4 to 13 years old. It was a way of involving children in cycling and giving them some healthy enjoyment. It also helps mothers to get out and enjoy open spaces with their children:

"It's a mum's group from another perspective".
(Bike Club leader)

Example 2: Belfast Activity Centre

Bike Club is part of a youth project, Youth Build, at the Belfast Activity Centre focused on the Greater Shankill Area and has now opened up to all communities across North Belfast. The focus of the Bike Club is on mountain biking, which the Bike Club leader believes is important for engaging with their target group of young people. These include young people who are not in education, employment or training and those with ante social behaviour:

"I find no matter where they are coming from, they want to bike, so we now have a niche of something they (young people) want to do – they build up respect, learn how to ride technically etc." (Bike Club leader)

The Bike club leader has now completed the CTC Mountain Bike Trainers course so that he can train another group of trainers to set up more clubs.

He sees important gains for improving cross community relationships:

"In North Belfast and Shankill Road, (there) is very much a religious divide but Bike Club has spanned that; there is no religion in cycling like there isn't in boxing". (Bike Club leader)

Example 3: Young People in Foster Care

The Hairy Bikers Club is for young people in foster care aged between 14–18 years old. At the moment the club has a core group of 4 boys, who are a mixed group in terms of religion and some have special educational needs such as Asperger's syndrome.

The Bike Club leader thinks it is helping this group of young people because it gives them an opportunity to gain support from each other:

"The nice thing is that when I picked up one of the guys on the first day, he said 'But what do I have in common with them?' I said, 'They are in care' and he replied 'So everyone's like me then?' They talk about football and TV and they also talk about being in care". (Bike Club leader)

4. Youth Achievement Awards

12 groups are undertaking the Youth Achievement Awards. One Bike Club leader found the Youth Achievement Award an important focus for the young people:

"It (YAA) is important because many of them may never get any formal qualifications from school". (Bike Club leader)

5. Outcomes for young people

Promoting independence:

Bike Club was recognised by the young people and some stakeholders as a way of increasing the independence of young people. It gave them a degree of freedom to move around the city and an alternative to public transport. One stakeholder said:

“Young people are afraid to use buses or walk even a mile through ‘different’ communities, which restricts their opportunities for employment and training” (stakeholder)

One mother reported that as her son had Asperger’s syndrome she was anxious about him cycling around the City. However, once she knew he was training to do Bikeability, she was happy for him to continue. This led to him being able to cycle from his foster home to see his mother because he was worried about her health.

The best thing for one young man was: *“Going on the bikes”*

Improving behaviour

Bike club leaders found that Bike Club could help young people improve their behaviour. One example was one young man, who had a bad reputation in his community performing a cycling display with 5 or 6 other young men in front of a visiting member of the Royal Family. The Bike Club leader explained:

“Once he showed his skills, a lot of people changed their attitude towards him...they could start talking more positively about him, and suddenly he is reacting positively to positive comments rather than negative behaviour” (Bike Club leader).

For some who are not motivated to participate in other activities, cycling seemed to encourage them to get up in the morning: *“It’s good to do something adventurous”* and *“It’s good to do something new”* and *“It makes me want to cycle more”*.

Improved confidence through learning

One young person was now qualified as a trail cycle leader and also won a national cycling award. He is now taking a leadership role in Bike Club and is perceived as a positive role model within his community.

The YAA was particularly mentioned as improving confidence in young people who may not achieve school qualifications.

Some young men found joining Bike Club useful for their GCSE course in Physical Education.

Improving health and wellbeing

Cycling was thought to help fitness: *“It keeps me fit”*. It was felt to draw young people away from television and computers and encourage them to get out and about. Some found it a personal challenge but enjoyed the sociability of a group and having fun. It can also improve mental health:

“Bike Club is healthy living, everyone knows that physical activity is good for your mental health, that in itself can lead on to something more” (Falls Road and Suicide Awareness Bike Club)

It also provided opportunities for children and families to do activities together.

6. Barriers and Challenges

Time to build relationships and partnerships

Bike club was new in Belfast and there was no history of CTC's presence in Northern Ireland. This meant it took time to establish the relationships and partnerships required to develop Bike club. As has been illustrated, relationships in Northern Ireland, because of its history, have to be negotiated carefully if they are to succeed. A longer timescale was required in Belfast to meet the expectations and targets of the Bike Club project, if these relationships and Bike Clubs were to become embedded in the Belfast context.

Training and resources

The training of Bike Club leaders was carried out by CTC trainers who, because, CTC was just becoming established in Northern Ireland, did not live in Northern Ireland. In order to make best use of limited resources, the Belfast Development officer needed to have a number of leaders wanting to establish Bike Clubs and receive the training before training could be set up. This led to further delays and frustrations in launching the Bike Clubs. The training, once carried out, was well received by the Bike Clubs and the clubs were able to move forward.

Management arrangements and supervision

In line with the rest of the Development Officers, the Belfast Development officer was managed by the Bike Club manager in England. This meant that the supervision and project planning was less accessible on a day-to-day basis, and in-depth knowledge of the local context was not possible. The view of some local stakeholders was that this was a barrier for the Development Officer being able to exert more local traction and get the project established more quickly. One stakeholder commented:

"He (DO) is taking it slow – wee frustrations, delays because decisions have to be made in England. I have seen Tim manage it very well, but there is a process it has to be gone through" (local stakeholder).

7. The Future and Sustainability

A key factor in embedding Bike Club in Belfast and enabling sustainability was the need to have local partnerships in place to build the local infrastructure. A key part of this was the involvement of local independent retailers who would support local Bike Clubs. There was a view that local retailers would be interested in supporting young people and there was the potential to establish productive relationships. If a bike was purchased locally, the retailer would gain too because people were more likely to go back to the supplier for repairs.

CTC and the Development Officer have carried out cycling training in Belfast. There has also been a 'train the trainers' activity in order to build the capacity of Northern Ireland to train its own people in cycling, for example through training youth leaders in mountain bike trail leaders courses. This is essential if Bike Club is to become an activity outside established cycle clubs and to sustain and spread it throughout Northern Ireland.

8. Emerging messages and implications for the future

The Development officer has an important role in facilitating the on-going development of Bike club in Northern Ireland:

"It's about having Tim, going round, shaking things up. Once that goes away, it could be a negative thing. It (Bike Club) is really getting some momentum now, it would be a pity if it just ends" (Bike Club leader).

The partnership with the Local Authority should continue to develop and Bike Club linked into local strategies. Other strategies outside the Parks and Leisure Department could also be explored.

It would be beneficial for the Development Officer to be managed on a day-to-day basis by a local manager in Belfast, such as the Bike Club in Scotland.

An increase in the number of 'train the trainers' courses would significantly support the scaling up and embedding of Bike Club in Northern Ireland.

A network of Bike Club leaders, which was facilitated by the Development Officer and that met regularly, would allow information exchange, problem solving, new relationships and the spread of ideas to be take place.

Bike Club Place Study: London

This place study is based on the following research activities:

- Interviews with **Development Officer** – Frances Challoner
- Interview with Development Manager for the South East – Tejesh Mistry
- **Local stakeholders interviews**
 - David Shannon, Cycle Instructor, Road Safety Team, London Borough of Islington
 - Phillipa Rob, Cycle Instructor (independent)
- **Bike Club Leader Interviews**
- Interview with Nathalie Brossard, The Camden Society Bike Club
- Interview with David Eales, Ealing Cycle Campaign Bike Club
- Two **fieldwork visits** to South Camden School Bike Club which involved:
 - Interview with Chris Levack, Bike Club Leader
 - Interview with Chris Mead, School Safety Officer
 - Interviews with five young people participating in Bike Club

1. Local structure and context

London is one of the largest, diverse and densely populated cities in the world. It has a total population of 7,825,200 (ONS mid year statistics 2010 for Greater London). It is an ethnically diverse city with 300 different languages spoken by its residents.

Obesity and physical inactivity in London is a major problem and one that is worsening, particularly amongst children. One in five young Londoners is obese and one in three is either obese or overweight. Childhood obesity levels in London are higher than the national average: 21 per cent of year six pupils in London are obese, compared to 18 per cent in England.

Levels of obesity vary across the city, and are worse in inner London boroughs such as Tower Hamlets and Lambeth. Rates are also higher in deprived areas and where there are higher populations of certain BAME groups. Childhood obesity has increased significantly over recent years. One of the major causes in the rise of obesity is the levels of physical activity. Only one in three boys and one in four girls in London meet the recommended level of sixty minutes of physical activity per day (A review of Childhood Obesity in London, Greater London Authority, 2010).

Cycling in London

Cycling in London is an increasingly popular way for residents and tourists to travel around the city, particularly since the turn of the century. This has been aided by the launch of the Barclays Cycle Hire scheme in July 2010, which provides 6,000 bikes to hire at 400 docking stations in nine central London boroughs and in the main, has been well received.

Over one million Londoners own bicycles but as of 2008 around 2 per cent of all journeys in London are by bike: this compares to other cities in the UK such as York (18 %) and Cambridge (28%). In 2007 there were more than 500,000 cycle journeys each day in the capital – a 91 per cent increase compared to 2000.

A target was set by the former Mayor of London to increase cycling by 400% between 2008 and 2025. A £400 million of initiatives was announced to improve and increase cycling and walking to achieve this target. To be co-ordinated by the TfL and London boroughs the aims include having 1 in 10 Londoners making a round trip by bike each day and five per cent of all daily trips by bike by 2025.

In addition to the Barclays Cycle Hire scheme, these initiatives included extra cycle parking facilities at train and tube stations, new cycle routes from inner and outer London and cycle zones around urban centres, include 12 Cycle Superhighways across central London, and Bike Zones throughout Greater London for shoppers and children going to school around “urban town centres”.

2. Approach

Bike Club London is funded by Asda's Pedal Power Campaign and was established in 2010. Frances Challoner started as Development Officer in April 2010 and is based in the UK Youth offices in Limehouse, East London. It was initially intended that Bike Club activity would be targeted within four London boroughs: Brent, Barnet, Camden and Westminster. Although some Bike Clubs have been established within these boroughs, the Development Officer initially faced challenges to limiting activity in this way, in particular, the often complex and changing structures within London boroughs. As such, it was decided early on that Bike Club in London would be opened up to the whole of London. Role of the Bike Club Development Officer Frances Challoner, in her role of Development Officer, has responsibility for a range of activities to support Bike Clubs across London which includes:

- Raising the profile of Bike Club across the city and regular communications, through setting up local events and roadshows, building links with relevant local organisations such as Access Sport, and the London Cyclist Instructors and Local Cycling networks, blogs, and Facebook updates
- Developing and maintaining relationships with contacts, and using these as conduits to spread the word on Bike Club, for example, Champions and London borough partnerships, such as Camden cycling network

“I'm the middle man – telling potential partners about it.” (Local Bike Club stakeholder)

- Providing practical support for individual Bike Clubs, with application forms and with establishing Bike Clubs and helping to get them up and running, for example, helping to source appropriate bikes and equipment.

3. Bike Clubs in London

The London based Development Officer has helped to establish 18 Bike Clubs across London between September 2010 and January 2011.

The 18 clubs are very diverse in nature, although a high proportion target young people from disadvantaged communities, young people from BME communities and young people at risk of exclusion. The target number of clubs in London is 37 by December 2012.

Examples of Bike Clubs in London include:

The Camden Society

The Camden Society is a London-wide organisation providing a range of modern services that emphasise the human rights of people with disabilities.

Founded 40 years ago, it runs services to support people to live, work, relax and socialise in the ways that they choose.

The Camden Society Bike Club is part of the Peer Activity Support Scheme (PASS). It allows young people with learning disabilities or mental health issues to access a bike, learn how to cycle, be part of an evening club, join the 'Critical Mass' every month and go on outings.

The idea was to create a bike club which would run every week to provide young people with learning disabilities or mental health issues with the opportunity to cycle. The aim of Bike Club was to address the issue that people with learning disabilities or mental health issues tend to be unrepresented in activity such as cycling and do not have the means to buy and ride a bike.

The Bike Club grant has enabled Camden Society to purchase 8 bikes and safety accessories. It is run essentially by volunteers as well as the PASS volunteer Coordinator and two key workers. The overarching aim is to help people with disabilities to access Camden's mainstream fitness offers.

"I was a really passionate cyclist. And I saw that cycling was a trend, and people with disabilities tend to be excluded from these kinds of trends. And so I really wanted to set up a bike club. I contacted the BC and that's when I met Frances – and it was a great opportunity for us. We set up a lot of projects here, involving everyone... inclusive"

"I want our group to be inclusive, to be part of the community and to share. It's what we defend – that people disabled people can become part of the community and have a role and be involved" (Bike Club Leader)

Ealing Cycle Campaign

Ealing Cycle Campaign (ECC) is the local branch of the London Cycle Campaign and provides support to new and existing cyclists for the London Borough of Ealing.

ECC has a diverse number of means of achieving its aims; running social rides, free bicycle checks at community events, lobbying the council and private business as well as running a successful programme of maintenance lessons.

The Bike Club grant enabled ECC to run more regular cycling activity from different estates on a rolling basis, and in this way, engage more sections of the community in cycling and maintenance activity.

A local housing association Catalyst provided secure storage and funding and ECC provide teaching resources and a supply of recovered bikes to work on. The aim was to run semi-formal teaching sessions rather than the ad-hoc sessions currently delivered. They also planned to run an "earn-a-bike" scheme whereby candidates attending sufficient sessions and displaying acceptable behaviour will be able to work on a recovered bike to keep.

Other aspects included bicycle art from scrap bikes as well as making belts from old tyres. During the course of the project ECC aimed to reduce involvement and let the housing association take over.

South Camden Community School Bike Club

South Camden Community School is a secondary school in north London. Pupils at the school are from extremely diverse backgrounds – with a high proportion of pupils from a black, minority ethnic background. The school also has a high proportion of pupils who have been or are at risk of exclusion.

The Bike Club is led by a behavioural support officer who works at the school two days a week to re-engage young people who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion in education. He saw the Bike Club as an opportunity to incentivise such

young people attending after school sessions in the school's Learning Support Unit. Pupils who attended this session to catch up on core subjects or work on homework could then take part in Bike Club. Bike Club activity is fixing bikes donated from the local police that have been stolen or lost and unclaimed. This donation is part of the police's contribution to community safety. Young people taking part fix up a bike which is then sold and the profits going to Bike Club. Then the pupils have the opportunity to fix up another which they can purchase themselves for £25.00.

The Bike Club grant paid for new tools and for Chris to go on a five week cycle maintenance course.

4. Youth Achievement Awards

15 Bike Clubs initially stated that they would offer the Youth Achievement Awards (YAA). There were positive responses from Bike Club Leaders about the Youth Achievement Awards:

"The Youth Achievement Award will be an excellent tool to engage and retain girls".

"It gives the young people a template for recording their achievements."

However, in practice most Bike Clubs in London had not yet started them. Reasons given included perceptions of the process taking too much time and resources and negative perceptions from the young people themselves. One Bike Club Leader also suggested that he needed more information about the YAA, particularly the benefits for young people – perhaps in the form of examples from elsewhere. Another wanted more support:

"The Young people often see the YAA as "homework". They feel that they have come to Bike Club as a fun choice after a long day of having to write/be academic and they often do not feel like writing even more"

"time – people attend when and where they can – we open seasonally – so closed at mo not enough time to prepare as the application took so long to go through to CTC that by the time we got it the bike season was already upon us – i.e. not enough back up time to prepare anything and not enough support"

"Too formal, too expensive"

5. Outcomes for young people

Re-engaging pupils in education

The Bike Club at South Camden School was designed to act as a 'reward' for young people who have been excluded from education after spending 2-hours after school catching up on missed work (core subjects) or working on homework. The young people interviewed saw the benefits of this approach, and the teachers were already seeing the difference it had made. One teacher spoke of how much more one individual was engaging in the classroom through 'putting his hand up in class to answer a question'. The Bike Club leader explained the scheme as 'life changing' for the young people involved.

The young people interviewed were very happy about the set up. They could see the benefits of spending time catching up with their school work before spending time fixing bikes. Most of the young people said how Bike Club incentivised them to go to the Learning Support Unit to catch up on their school work and how that was helping them with their education.

"..It's good for us, can catch up on core subjects. I'm catching up on my maths. It's good for me... [Gong to the homework club] makes a difference towards my grades – if I keep working it will make a difference" (male, 14 years old)

"To come to Bike Club we have to do one hours work – school work or homework or stuff that need to catch up on. It's fair, but time could be a bit shorter. ...It's a good space to do homework in. I've been catching up on maths homework." (male, 15 years old)

"I've just come back from exclusion, so I've missed a lot so can catch up here but I also catch up at home. But when I'm at home, there's a lot of distractions so it's good to come here too. It is helping me to catch up."

"...You need to achieve something to get bikes – you don't get something for nothing.

"...It's good for the school – you don't mess about coz you don't want to lose the opportunity of having Bike Club". (male, 14 years old)

Diversionsary activity

The Bike Club leader and the police officer attached to the school spoke of the difference Bike Club is making in terms of the behaviour of the pupils involved both in and out of school. The attached police officer was very positive about the scheme – particularly its value as a diversionsary activity and a way of engaging young people in cycling and in education. One young person spoke of how he was able to pass the skill on to his friends and family so it 'gets them out of stupid things'.

"[Bike Club] has helped young people to really engage in bikes, keeping them out of anti-social behaviour and [away from] theft and robberies. A lot have built their own bikes – it gives them a goal and a sense of achievement they may not have got through academic work. One young person actually said to me 'it keeps me away from crime'" (school safety officer)

"I've attended [Bike Club] for 3 weeks now. I've just come back from exclusion so missed some of the sessions. It takes you out of trouble; I'd be messing about with my mates [if I didn't come to Bike Club]" (male, 14 years old)

"The Bike Club is good for the school and other pupils –have something constructive to do rather than hanging about on the streets" (male, 15 years old)

Maintenance skills

The Bike Club grant had enabled the Bike Club Leader to purchase relevant tools for the club and enabled him to gain the necessary skills to teach the young people maintenance skills. All of the young people spoke to had obviously learned a great deal from participating and saw it as a useful skill to have, for example, to pass on to their family and friends and one young person said how the skills could even help in the future with jobs. The small group numbers and therefore the ability for the Bike Club Leader to take pupils through the process slowly, giving one on one support was seen as an important element to their learning.

"Before, I just knew what a bike was. Now I know how to fix punctures and know how to take tyres off. I [now] know 100% about fixing bikes – I know what to do and what parts I need. ...It's a handy skill to have." (male, 14 years old)

"I didn't know anything about bikes [before]. I was into bikes but didn't know how to fix bikes. [the Bike Club Leader] teaches us how to do things. He takes us through it, not rushed, so we learn more. ...I almost know everything [now] to fix bikes". (male, 14 years old)

"[At Bike Club I have] fixed bikes, had to change tyres. Before I didn't know how to take the inner tool out of the tyre, you need a special tool, so now I know how to do it".

Similarly, the Ealing Cycle Campaign Bike Club had increased maintenance skills of a group of young people involved in activity on a regular basis:

"Basic mechanical knowledge they're learning it's quite telling when someone picks up a screwdriver and says 'how does that work?' It's the throwaway generation, and no-one knows how to change a plug etc. so this is a more practical skill." (Bike Club Leader)

Increased enthusiasm for cycling

Interviews with the young people showed their enthusiasm for bikes and when probed, almost all said that through participating in Bike Club had increased their enthusiasm. So much so, that they are regular attendees at Bike Club – with most attending twice a week and are keen to own their own bike so they can cycle to school and cycle more outside of school in their leisure time. One young person was keen to pass on the maintenance skills he has learned to his family and friends. It was clear that the Bike Club Leader's enthusiasm inspired the young people, something which was confirmed by the school safety officer: "Chris' enthusiasm is infectious. ...His enthusiasm and positivism feeds into that of young people".

Comments from young people included:

"I like cycling more now"

"I've got friends, families, nephews, kids in the future.. good experience of bikes that I can teach them. It's a good skill to pass on"

"I've been interested in cycling before – but just rode bikes then. But I'm more interested now"

"Kids are wanting to help run the club. ...Lots want to be involved." (Schools safety officer)

Skills and confidence

The Bike Club Leader at Camden Society spoke of how Bike Club was helping disabled young people to develop their cycling skills "people moving on from tricycles to two-wheelers, despite some very challenging behaviour". The Bike Club Leader also noted that Bike Club had helped her young people's confidence to improve, which in turn was encouraging them to try new things and 'connect' more.

"They get a bit lost amongst organisations, I think to have a group a young people who socialise together outside of college. It's normal for people without disability to go to sports clubs but for disabled people they are still very institutionalised – but CSBC is their bike club... That's what we're aiming for. It's still early days." (Bike Club Leader)

Community cohesion

On a wider level, there was some evidence to suggest that Bike Club activity was helping to build community cohesion with specific localities. For example, the Bike Club Leader at the Camden Society was confident that Bike Club had a part to play in **building a more inclusive society**.

"It's just a really good thing to have people with disabilities out there cycling. Makes more people aware of that. There is still prejudice, people still stare in the streets – people still think this and so to have this out there is to make a more inclusive society I think" (Bike Club Leader).

The police officer attached to South Camden School spoke of how Bike Club was helping to keep young people "off the streets" and had seen a **change in localised anti-social behaviour**, and the Bike Club Leader at Ealing Cycle Campaign spoke of how Bike Club was supporting sharing of bikes locally on an estate.

There is evidence of how Bike Club has helped to **develop and strengthen local partnerships**. For example, Bike Club has enabled the Camden Society to formalise its relationship with the council which has benefited them through access to local resources and involvement in local activity and developments.

And for both South Camden School and Ealing Cycle Campaign Bike Club has helped to strengthen their **relationship with local police**, which is important for the sustainability of both clubs in terms of accessing the bikes and parts they need to continue activity.

6. Barriers and challenges

A number of key issues have posed challenges for Bike Club in London, particularly in terms of the local context.

Lack of local support structures

Finding the right contacts within an area to support Bike Club has been found to be important, and the Development Officer spent a lot of time doing this early on in a difficult and changing environment. There was found to be a lack of local support structures and inconsistency in existing support structures in each borough. In the four areas initially identified as target areas for London, these were found to be particularly challenging. The flexibility of Bike Club enabled London Bike Club to expand its target area however, the sheer size of the new catchment proved to be a further challenge.

The Development Officer's strategic versus practical role

The development officer found it challenging to couple the practicalities of the role and the strategic relationship building, particularly in the context a large city and particularly as the numbers of Bike Clubs grew in size. Some of the clubs Frances was supporting needed a lot of hand holding, which was very time consuming. This meant that less time was able to spend on developing some of the strategic links. This was exacerbated given the context of London and its varying borough structures, each borough in effect being a different locality and the structures being in a state of flux, for example, some of the early contacts that the Development Officer made in London Boroughs moved on shortly after. She found that others acted as 'gatekeepers' to local school contacts.

Developing and maintaining local partnerships

Where Bike Clubs relied on local partnerships for their Bike Clubs to flourish and grow, this was sometimes a challenge. For example, the Ealing Cycle Campaign Bike Club model relied on support from the local housing association and the local council – particularly in terms of sustaining activity. However, maintaining interest from partners was found to be challenging, particularly in the current climate where resources and time are squeezed.

7. Sustainability

The London Development Officer role funded through Asda's Pedal Power Campaign is funded through to December 2012 and as such, Bike Clubs in London will have continued access to Frances' time and expertise during this period. Frances will also continue to support new Bike Clubs during this period. She intends to place a certain amount of focus on helping Bike Clubs to sustain their Bike Club activity, particularly through developing local partnerships.

The Bike Clubs involved in the place study were positive about the future of their Bike Club, particularly those who were pro-active about maintaining and growing activity. All three Bike Clubs involved in the place study had plans to grow their Bike Club in the future; in terms of involving a wider group of people (e.g. Ealing Cycle Campaign had plans to extend participation to families); improving facilities (e.g. South Camden School Bike Club had plans to build a new cycle storage facility on the school grounds) and further developing the skills of Bike Club members (e.g. Camden Society had plans to support Bike Club Leaders amongst its group of young people).

However, all mentioned the difficulties around future funding, which they felt would be needed – albeit on a relatively small scale to maintain activity, particularly, maintaining their bikes and equipment.

“The main fund is around bikes, and we are going to keep them, maintain them – will need a bit money for that after 1 year (1 year is paid through BC) but hopefully we can find it. Hopefully we will also have the volunteer lead as well – it runs on no money really. It's totally sustainable.”

“There's also the finance required for biked – they break they need parts. Volunteers can't be expected to cover those.”
(Bike Club Leaders)

8. Emerging messages and implications for the future

The main implication for Bike Club in London, particularly for the Development Officer is balancing local support to Bike Clubs particularly those in need of advice around sustainability, support to new clubs and nurturing strategic relationships. Although there are ambitions from existing clubs to sustain and grow, there is evidence to suggest that they may need support to enable them to do this, particularly around **sourcing future funding**.

It seems as though Bike Clubs in London could learn a lot from one-another, and the Development Officer may want to consider linking Bike Clubs Leaders together for this type of sharing, even on a virtual basis, or on a borough or tri-borough basis.

A key lesson from Bike Clubs involved in the place study was the importance of regularity of sessions to help **maintain engagement** in bike club activity, but also to encourage a wide range of participants:

Engaging the whole community has worked well – it's not just teenage boys, which is what we would normally get. ...it's because we're there again and again and again, rather than someone turning up and spotting us they know we'll be there this week, or in two weeks time. It attracts more people” (Bike Club Leader)

And similarly, the importance of **local partnerships and promotion** particularly for sustainability was an important lesson that emerged through the place study research. For example, Ealing Cycle Campaign was able to build relationships with local Housing Association to help with promotion and with the local police to source old bikes and parts for the project. These relationships, if maintained, will support the longevity of Bike Club activity.



BIKE CLUB PLACE STUDY: CARDIFF

DRAFT PLACE STUDY REPORT

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- A **group discussion** with the Bike Club Development Officer and 12 Bike Club Leaders
- An **interview** with the Development Officer
- An **email interview** with a local authority stakeholder
- A **fieldwork visit** to the “Ybike” summer cycling event, including a brief discussion with the ASDA Community Life Champion, a local bike shop manager (Tredz, who provided the Dr. Bike session) and peer research with 5 young people who attended the event.

1. Local structure and context

Cardiff is a large coastal city in south Wales with a population of around 317,500. This reflects a rise of around 4% between 1996 and 2006, compared to a rise of around 2.6% for Wales overall. The city performs around the average (for Wales) on many health indicators with similar levels of life expectancy for males and females, and a similar proportion of adults undertaking physical exercise. There are fewer people reporting a limiting long-term illness in Cardiff (18.2%) than in Wales (23.3%). The rate of accidents on roads is noticeably higher in Cardiff than for the rest of Wales. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2005 reveals that 16% of Cardiff’s areas fall in the 10% most deprived areas in Wales, but the majority of its areas are less deprived than the Wales average (<http://www.assemblywales.org/cardiff.pdf>).

In March 2009, the Welsh Government announced that, through a joint venture with Cardiff Council, Cardiff would be the first Sustainable Travel City in Wales. This was in recognition of the need to develop a more strategic approach to improve Cardiff’s cycle network and led to the creation of the Strategic Cycle Network Plan.

Cardiff Council's vision is for "an integrated transport system that offers safe, efficient and sustainable travel for all, and where public transport, walking and cycling provide real desirable alternatives to car travel". To deliver this vision, the Council's key priorities are:

- Widening Travel Choices – ensuring that a range of real and alternative travel options are available for most trips and that people know about them;
- Managing Demand – introducing a range of measures to reduce the demand for travel overall and restrain the use of the car, where appropriate; and
- Network Management – using a range of measures to make best use of the existing network and improve facilities and accessibility for all modes of travel and, in particular, for alternatives to the car.

Cardiff Council's Transport Policy team first met the Bike Club Development Officer at an event in Port Talbot where the Bike Club Development Officer delivered a presentation about Bike Club. The Bike Club approach was seen to support the Council's key priorities on cycling and as such, the Development Officer was invited to sit on the Cycle Liaison Working Group – one of the main formal cycling structures within the Cardiff area. The Working Group makes decisions on cycling-related funding allocations – as well as on the national Welsh Cycling Steering Group that, like British Cycling, aims to raise the profile of cycling across Wales.

2. Approach

Bike Club (Clwb Beicio in Welsh) was established in June 2010. Initially funded in English towns by the UK Department of Transport, Bike Club extended into Wales (as well as Scotland, Northern Ireland and London) through additional funding (£1.2mn) from ASDA's Pedal Power Campaign. The Cardiff Bike Club was officially launched by the Welsh Assembly's Environment Minister Jane Hutt at the Urdd Headquarters at the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay.

The focus of the Cardiff Bike Club is to engage young people aged 10-20 to encourage them to use cycling as a means of transport, to engage them in learning activities and to make cycling an enjoyable part of their lives.

The Cardiff Bike Club is based in a business park approximately 10 miles outside of Cardiff city centre, however the Bike Club Development Officer does not spend much time there as the job involves a lot of travel around Cardiff and the surrounding areas meeting young people, Bike Club Leaders and other organisations involved in cycling. There is also a desk for the Bike Club Development Officer to use at the local authority, and she also uses Cardiff library as a base, both of which are closer to the city centre and therefore much more accessible.

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer

From the Development Officer's perspectives, one of the key functions of her role is **to raise the profile** of Bike Club. This is an element of her role that the Development Officer aims to deliver on a daily basis, through **networking and making links** in order to get more organisations and young people involved with cycling:

"One of my key aims is to raise the Bike Club profile and I am always doing this!" (Bike Club Development Officer)

Through networking activity, the Development Officer has found a lot of support from partners in Cardiff, and this support fosters a positive working environment for Bike Club to flourish:

“There is a supportive environment in Cardiff which works hard to promote cycling in Wales through sharing information and promoting each others activities and initiatives. Of course, we have to compete for funding but we try and work alongside each other where possible” (Bike Club Development Officer)

“There’s always someone I can phone” (Bike Club Development Officer)

The main aim of the networking and engagement activity of the Development Officer has been to build relationships with partners and ultimately to get Bike Clubs applying for grants, working to the target of two per month. Until recently, the Development Officer did not have to do any marketing to achieve this target as there was a lot of interest in the initiative. More recently the role has involved an increased **marketing drive** from the Development Officer to raise awareness about Bike Club and she is currently working on a press release to showcase what Bike Club has to offer.

The local authority has viewed the Bike Club Development Officer’s role as key to **engaging with young people** on cycling-related issues. For example, as part of the development of a strategic cycling network for Cardiff the local authority wanted to consult with young cyclists on it and the Bike Club Development Officer helped to set the meeting up:

“Last year, [the Development Officer] organised a specific meeting for me to informally go through the plan with the young people and get their feedback, which proved very useful” (Local Authority Officer)

Moreover, engagement with young people is seen as a difficult task but one that adds considerable value to the development of strategies and plans on cycling across the city:

“Engaging with young people is not always easy and having a group such as YBike [the YMCA Bike Club] with an interest in both cycling and getting involved is very valuable to the work we are doing to develop the network and to promoting cycling in general” (Local Authority Officer)

From the perspective of the local business community, the ability of the Bike Club Development Officer to reach out and connect with young people who are interested in cycling has proved very useful to them:

“The added value of Bike Club is that the Development Officer goes out and engages with young people and therefore knows what’s going on locally in terms of cycling activities and can organise events, such as this one, which we don’t have the time or resource to do” (Local Bike Shop Manager)

“Our role is one of support, such as providing lunch for events such as this one... we meet with the Bike Club Development Officer about four times a year, it’s useful for us to know what’s going on” (Community Life Champion)

Bike Club Leaders see the Development Officer role as essential in **supporting the sharing of information** across the different Bike Clubs in Cardiff and its surrounding areas, such as best practice on setting-up a Bike Club in a school. They also valued the opportunity to meet other Bike Club Leaders at their first network meeting in July 2011, organised by the Development Officer, and agreed to meet once a term (three times a year).

More recently, the Development Officer's role has shifted more towards supporting Bike Clubs to deliver on their funding requirements, as opposed to setting up new Bike Clubs. This has involved **providing support and advice** to Bike Clubs, such as signposting them to potential sources of funding, rather than providing specific funding advice and setting up workshops so that learning can be shared; for example, successful Bike Club applicants sharing their learning on completing the applications forms with those who are about to go through the process.

3. Bike Clubs in Cardiff and surrounding areas

Reach and engagement

There are 15 Bike Clubs across Cardiff that are fairly evenly spread across a broad range of target groups, including young people who live in deprived areas with low employment status, homeless young people (e.g. YBike at the YMCA), young Asylum Seekers (e.g. OASIS), young people from ethnic minority groups, young members of an arts and crafts group and students at a comprehensive school. This illustrates the broad cross-section of groups who have successfully applied for Bike Club funding across the Cardiff area. The Bike Club Development Officer aims to have 33 Bike Clubs set up by December 2012.

Examples of Bike Clubs

A wide range of cycling activities have been developed through Bike Clubs in Cardiff to meet the needs of different target groups, some of which are described in more detail below.

EXAMPLE 1: Cardiff YMCA's YBike

Cardiff YMCA's "YBike" has been established for nearly a year. Whilst they had some bikes at the youth club they were not being used and so the youth worker contacted Cardiff Council about Bike Club funding who put her in touch with the Bike Club Development Officer. There were no cycling activities at the YMCA until they got involved with Bike Club. Now they organise cycling activities throughout the year, including several "YBike" events during the summer which involves the

Bike Club Leader completing health and safety paperwork for the event, carrying out the Bikeability training with young people (the youth worker has completed the required training) and leading cycling trails. There is also a Youth Forum at the YMCA which provides a voice for young people in Cardiff on a broad range of issues that affect them and many of these young people now also participate in the Bike Club.

EXAMPLE 2: Clubs for Young People Wales

Clubs for Young People Wales applied for a Bike Club grant on behalf of themselves and two other organisations – Youth of Bettws and Dowlais Engine House (DEH). They are based in two separate locations and so instead of setting up an individual Bike Club, they wanted to run a range of cycling activities affiliated to Bike Club. This was partly because of their geography and also because they

already ran a range of cycling activities but wanted to develop these further, through more formalised training, such as the Bikeability training. DEH had ten bikes of their own and wanted to link up with other local organisations who were interested in developing cycling activities because they needed smaller bikes for younger members. The Bike Club Leader also feels that he needs maintenance training himself and would like to train other young people in bike maintenance.

EXAMPLE 3: Cyfarthfa High School

Cyfarthfa High School (1400 pupils) in Merthyr Tydfil has recently had a grant application accepted for a Bike Club that will be set up when the students return to school in September 2011. It is being set up by a teacher who is interested in sustainable development, recycling and who had already set up a 'cycle to work' scheme at the school through the local authority. He subsequently received an email

from the local authority about starting up a Bike Club in the school which led to him developing a grant application. The aim of the Bike Club was to support young people who fall out of the school system (i.e. known as PREVENT), and plans to use bike maintenance training to engage with these young people and will also encourage 6th formers to provide peer support as part of their Welsh Bacallaureate which requires young people to do thirty hours of community action work over the year.

EXAMPLE 4: Torfein Bike Club

The Torfein Bike Club is a partnership between schools and local voluntary groups and was borne out of local young people not knowing where to go cycling locally. The partnership was awarded Bike Club funding to train leaders and will start to run their first rides as part of a summer school of activities.

They have already set up the Bike Club and have run Bikeability and bike maintenance sessions. To date there has been more interest in cycling from junior schools and less in secondary schools and therefore they are currently targeted the eleven plus age group and their families to encourage them to get more involved.

Other Bike Clubs that are still in the process of being set up in Cardiff and its surrounding areas include:

- **The Trelai Bike Club** has been running for three years and aims to offer alternative activities for 11-25 year olds through providing organising regular bike rides through the woods for both juniors and seniors.
- **Oasis Bike Club** is a group for Refugees and Asylum Seekers that provides bike maintenance and Bikeability training in different languages, as language may be a barrier to cycling and Refugees and Asylum Seekers may not know or understand the rules of the road.
- **Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School** is located in a deprived area (E3 Priority 1 area) and aims to increase physical activity in sport through Bike Club activity. Two teachers will be trained to deliver Bikeability and bike maintenance during the lunch hour in school and then take children on bike rides with the aim of giving young people something to do “keeping them off the streets”.
- The **Willows Centre School** has recently received a Bike Club grant and will be providing bike rides through an after school Bike Club.
- **Arts and Crafts** will encourage the use of cycle paths through providing cycle rides to galleries and other creative destinations to encourage families to cycle to those locations together.

In addition, Morryston School is outside the catchment area for Bike Club and so they were unsuccessful in putting in an application for funding, however the Bike Club Development Officer saw the potential in what they were doing and continued to provide advice and support to help them get their club up and running. This included helping to pull their ideas together and advising on how to link their ideas with the resources already available in the area and as a consequence they are able to draw on a

broad range of volunteers to help with their sustainability plans, including two police officers. The Development Officer also provided advice on training options, maintaining interest over the winter months and providing bike storage facilities outside of school hours, for example, through partnering with the local leisure centre. The activities contributed to the club acquiring funding from both Community First and the Big Lottery and consequently is a much bigger and sustainable Bike Club as a result.

4. Outcomes for young people

According to the Bike Club Development Officer there are a wide range of benefits for young people who participate in Bike Club including:

- health benefits through physical exercise
- greater independence through improving transport options, especially in areas with limited public transport
- developing new skills through wider learning opportunities and building confidence by enabling young people to apply their new skills in a safe environment
- basic ‘job ready’ skills through improving time keeping and encouraging young people to think about their future as they acquire new skills.

In particular, the Development Officer sees the development of skills by young people as crucial to the sustainability of Bike Club as the more young people who are able to take on tasks, such as distributing information or leading bike rides, the more clubs will be able to sustain themselves.

The peer research – young people undertaking research with each other – highlighted some of the actual outcomes for young people. This research involved the young people on the YBike event taking turns to interview (and film) one of the longstanding members of the YBike Bike Club about the benefits and impact of Bike Club on him. This provided an interesting case study for the research.

The 19 year old initially got involved in the YMCA because some of his friends had joined and it gave them “something to do”. Subsequently he got interested in cycling through participating in a Welsh Assembly event in Cardiff on sustainable transport where they were seeking young people’s views on how to encourage more young people to participate in cycling activities. He met the Bike Club Development Officer at this event and decided to join the Bike Club at the YMCA because:

“there were not many young people using their bikes at the time, and those that did were not very safety conscious... they would cycle on pavements and not wear helmets”

Some of the positive outcomes of Bike Club centred on a better understanding of the safety and legal issues associated with cycling:

“I no longer ride on the pavements as I now know that you can get fined for doing it. I am more safety conscious.”

As a consequence of participating in Bike Club, the young person had not only gone out on his bike more but had also started to engage in activities that he hadn’t done before, such as local events:

“I haven’t changed as a person since joining Bike Club but I do go out on my bike more often”

“I’ve enjoyed this activity [YBike event], I haven’t done this before”

“I’d like Bike Club to organise more events like today”

Whilst the peer research centred on the experience of one young person, feedback from the other young people who attended the YBike event was also positive. When asked about how they’d found their first Bike Club experience, the responses included:

“Nice”

“Interesting”

“Relaxing”

All of the young people who attended the event said that they would definitely like to do it again. Moreover, marks out of ten for the event ranged from 7-9 and their hopes for future Bike Club events included improving their cycling skills – “not falling off your bike” and better cycling routes, which allowed more sustained cycling: “going on a route where you don’t have to get off your bike and walk.”

The peer research and feedback suggests that the impact of Bike Club has been very positive although the longer term aspirations of the Bike Club Development Officer have yet to be realised. Similar aspirations are also held by Bike Club Leaders as they envisaged Bike Club having positive outcomes for young people:

“More independence for young people and therefore less reliance on parents to ferry them around” (Bike Club Leader)

“It’s an opportunity to learn more about their local area through going on bike trails. Merthyr has a poor reputation and young people and the community don’t realise the positive elements of the area so Bike Club will help to overcome these negative perceptions” (Bike Club Leader)

Moreover, from the local authority perspective Bike Club has wider benefits through providing a route into engaging with young people to get their views on a range of broader issues that affect young people:

“Bike Club has helped the local authority achieve some of its broader objectives, such as consulting with young people which is now a requirement of any Equality Impact Assessment” (Local Authority Officer)

“Consultation, particularly when they can see the impact of their feedback, can also be very empowering to young people which has wider societal benefits” (Local Authority Officer)

“It also has the potential to inform other groups such as Cardiff Council Access Focus Group meetings who would value input from a broader range of equality groups” (Local Authority Officer)

From the Bike Club Development Officer’s perspective, a long term successful outcome would be to have cycling embedded within an organisation, such as an arts and crafts centre or a homeless hostel, where everyone is encouraged and supported to travel by bike. Getting Bike Clubs to be able to run themselves, that is without Bike Club funding, would be another successful outcome.

5. Barriers and Challenges

Given the Bike Club Development Officer’s role is one where they are often on the move and meeting lots of people, they require strong organisational and communication skills. It also means that they can be pulled in lots of different directions and may end up not being able to meet everyone’s needs effectively.

Timescales for delivering Bike Club projects can vary considerably because of the wide range of time commitments that volunteers are able to make. For example, some projects have not started on time because volunteers may have another job which restricts their ability to attend training. This is especially problematic for training that lasts more than a day, particularly in schools where teachers are in the classroom every day. The Bikeability training for one school, for example, required the Bike Club Leader and four teachers to participate in four days training “which proved almost impossible to set up” (Bike Club Development Officer).

This has led to delays in setting up Bike Clubs or Bike Clubs being run by untrained leaders. Another example includes a grant application workshop that was set up on a day for potential Bike Club Leaders, but many were unable to attend. A further timing issue relates to the provision of grants when, for example, one school received its funding just as they reached the main holiday period.

According to the Bike Club Development Officer there are additional challenges around managing the changeover of both staff and volunteers, which is both costly in terms of time and resource in the short term but also in terms of the loss of the skills and investment that have been made over the longer term. This is also a primary concern of Bike Club Leaders who are concerned about staff and volunteers leaving and taking their newly acquired skills and experience with them, especially Bikeability and bike maintenance training which requires a time commitment of

several hours a week over the course of a year. To combat this problem, some Bike Club Leaders have been trying to hold back on training people until they feel more confident that they will stay but they face the challenge that they cannot stop people from leaving whilst others are asking new starters to sign a training contract which requires them to pay back training money if they leave within a certain time period. This problem underlines the importance of passing skills on to the young people as soon as possible so that they can do it themselves.

Measuring impact has also proved difficult for both Bike Club Leaders and the Development Officer as they are at the early stage of getting grants and completing training courses so they are only just starting to deliver their service. There are also broader concerns about how to measure success, such as the best way to measure raising levels of self-esteem or increased confidence. It was agreed that the best way to do this is through asking young people themselves, for example, through completing feedback questionnaires and providing healthy incentives to encourage a high response rate and other methods to measure changing lifestyles through monitoring how many miles a young person cycled each week. It was suggested that this would be something that Bike Club could help with through the Bike Club Tool Kit.

Whilst the application process was viewed by Bike Club Leaders, as “straightforward, much easier than some other grant application processes”, there were some niggles that if sorted out was felt could improve the process. For example, submitting an application form to two email addresses was felt to be confusing and the .pdf application form only allows limited information to be submitted which was frustrating for some. Bike Club Leaders also had to register twice, on a single and multiple register but the reason why was unclear.

6. The future and sustainability

Sustainability of projects has been a primary concern for Cardiff Bike Club:

“It is not just about using Bike Club funds to pay for one-off maintenance sessions but to train leaders to be able to give the maintenance training themselves, as well as young people to run bike rides” (Bike Club Development Officer)

Encouraging the Bike Clubs to undertake the training is something that the Bike Club Development Officer feels has “worked quite well” but this has been hampered by both staff and volunteers leaving before the skills have been transferred to the young people.

Moreover, there is often too much reliance on a single individual to keep a Bike Club going. There is a need to have more than one person trained up so that if someone leaves or is sick then the activity/ club can continue and this is especially important if a Bike Club Leader works part-time. There is also a particular concern about the sustainability of Bike Clubs in schools, especially with the 16-18 age group as they are starting to reach a period of change in their lives:

“Keeping older young people interested in cycling is a sustainability issue as there are a lot more distractions” (Bike Club Leader)

“When setting up a Bike Club in a school you know that your 6th formers will be moving on but the positive thing is that you are likely to be able to really get to know them over two years” (Bike Club Leader)

Both the Bike Club Development Officer and the Bike Club Leaders agreed that resources across Bike Clubs could be better joined-up, especially when clubs are located in the same area. A more joined-up approach would also help broaden opportunities for young people as it enables them to go on different bike trails with different clubs and therefore see other parts of the area that they wouldn't usually visit.

Emerging messages and implications for the future

Bike Club activity in Cardiff is thriving due to a combination of successful partnership working between the local authority, other wider partners (Youth Cymru, ContinYou, CTC) as well as effective engagement with young people, principally through the Bike Club Development Officer's links with Bike Club Leaders and young people. Relationships between Bike Club Leaders are embryonic but there is a commitment from them and from the Bike Club Development Officer to develop them further.

In particular, the Cardiff Bike Club has provided opportunities for the local authority to consult young people on key issues that interest them, such as designing routes and cycle infrastructure that meet young people's needs, as well as broader health and wellbeing issues.

Sustainability has a strong focus in Cardiff and this has been a key consideration in setting up Bike Clubs. However, a key barrier is providing bike skills (maintenance and trail/bike ride leadership) that are passed on from Bike Club Leaders to young people within a climate of change, both in terms of staff and volunteers moving on as well as young people themselves.

BIKE CLUB PLACE STUDY: GLASGOW

This case study is based on the following research activities:

- Interview with Development Officer – Victoria Leiper
- Development Officer's peer evaluation update/reflections diary
- Development Officer's blog (on Bike Club website)
- Outcomes workshop with Development Officer, two Bike Club Leaders and partner from Glasgow Life/City Council
- Fieldwork visits to Bike Clubs, activities and events:
 - Wellhouse Bike Club
 - All Glasgow Bike Club ride (15 April 2011)
 - Pedal to the Picnic (25 June 2011 part of Cycle Week)
 - First Birthday of Bike Club in Scotland and premier showing of Glasgow video (30 August 2011)
- Peer evaluation support for Wellhouse Bike Club to produce video
- Local Stakeholder interviews
 - Jake Lovatt: Cycling Strategy Manager, Glasgow Life/Glasgow City Council
 - Glasgow CTC representatives (on all Glasgow Bike Club ride and at Picnic in the Park)
 - Suzanne Forup, Network Development Manager, Youth Scotland.

1. Local structure and context

Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland and while it faces challenges in terms of levels of deprivation, also looks forward to opportunities for tackling these, not least through the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Young people, deprivation and health

Over 190,000 Glaswegians, a third of the city's population, reside in the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD 2009) – compared to 5% and 7% of Aberdeen and Edinburgh's populations respectively. (In contrast, only 17,000 people (3% of the population) live in the 10% least deprived areas in Scotland).

Despite these stark figures, the level of deprivation in Glasgow has reduced over recent years, although the population in deprived areas includes more children and elderly people – whereas adults of working age are more strongly represented in not-deprived areas (Glasgow City Council). Child poverty indicators show that 64% of Glaswegian children live in low income families.

Despite Glasgow having near identical levels of deprivation to English cities Manchester and Liverpool, Glasgow has a very different health mortality profile. Premature deaths are more than 30% higher, and all deaths are approximately 15% higher. (Walsh, D. et al, 2010).

Inequalities in health within the city are also stark. For example, while a boy born today in the city might expect to live to 70, this estimate alters dramatically depending on socio-economic circumstances. A boy born in an affluent area is likely to live 14 years longer than one born in a deprived area.

The most recent report from Glasgow's Director of Public Health emphasis the adverse effects of the current economic climate on health and the danger that young people will be hit the hardest with record numbers of young people

who are not in school, further education, training or working. He also questions whether lower incomes may lead people to spend more time in health-promoting activities as *“we need considerably more progress in making it easier and safer for people to get out of their cars and onto bikes or public transport and walking”*. (DPH report 2009 –11)

Cycling in the city

Scotland has seen a rise in the popularity of mass participation cycling events and substantial developments in cycling infrastructure and promotion in recent years. With cycle trips into and out of the City Centre in excess of 5,000 per day, representing an increase of over 50% in three years, Glasgow’s Strategic Plan for Cycling seeks to build on this public interest and work towards the vision of making cycling the largest participation activity in the City by 2020. The Plan emphasises that cycling is unique in its diversity and ability to deliver outcomes across many themes from great sporting achievements to active travel, from physical activity to environmental benefits.

By 2020, Glasgow will have some of the best cycling facilities in the country. Key projects such as Connect2 and Smarter Choices Smarter Places are providing opportunities for many people to cycle who may previously have been deterred due to concern at cycling in heavy traffic. The sporting landscape for cycling in Glasgow is also being transformed with the development of a new national base for cycling in the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome which includes an external circuit for training, events and recreational cycling.

The Plan recognises that the physical infrastructure alone will not produce an increase in recreational cycling or the number of citizens incorporating active travel into their daily lives; however that when coupled with the projects and programmes within the Plan more Glaswegians will be inspired to cycle more often. **Bike Club** is one of these projects!

2. Approach

Bike Club Glasgow is funded by Asda and was established in 2010. Victoria Leiper started as Development Officer in April 2010 and is based in the Glasgow Life offices which ensures close liaison with the Cycling Strategy Officer. Scottish Cycling’s Regional Development Officer for West of Scotland is based in the same offices.

Bike Club in Scotland was launched on 30 June 2010. There are two Development Officers: Victoria in Glasgow – although Bike Club has funded some groups outside the city in Dumbartonshire, Ayrshire and Lanarkshire – and her colleague in Edinburgh (who also covers the Lothians, Falkirk and Fife). Both officers are managed by Suzanne Forup from Youth Scotland on behalf of Bike Club.

Role of the Bike Club Development Officer The role of the Development Officer covers:

- helping new Bike Clubs to secure funding and establish themselves
- recruiting and supporting Bike Club Leaders
- developing Bike Club across Glasgow through city-wide activities and events
- contributing to Glasgow’s Strategic Plan for Cycling, especially through promoting and encouraging cycling in local communities

This role is viewed by the city council and the Bike Clubs interviewed through this research as essential for a number of reasons:

At strategic level:

- Contribution to the city's Strategic Plan for Cycling – especially through work on cycling within diverse, and deprived, communities (over and above cycling sport)

"We are setting up working groups for the Strategic Plan – Bike Club will be represented on the one for schools and communities" (Glasgow Life)

- Partnership working, particularly with Glasgow Life and Cycling Scotland on widening participation, has been very productive

"Bike Club will feed into the new Glasgow cycling web site" (Glasgow Life)

- Partnership working with CTC and other cycling organisations

"CTC is not a very well known brand and therefore Bike Club really enhances this" (CTC Glasgow)

"We {CTC} has an old people image – so Bike Club is great for getting the youngsters involved – and the Velodrome and Commonwealth Games will help" (CTC Glasgow)

- Promoting cycling within Glasgow and raising the interest of young people in cycling

"Bike Club has revolutionised cycling in the city" (Glasgow Life)

"Bike Club has raised the profile {of cycling} – definitely – Victoria does this through organising events like the East End meetings of Bike Clubs and lots of city wide activities" (Glasgow Life)

With organisations:

The Development Officer is considered an essential resource to Bike Club leaders. The experience and expertise of the Development Officer supported the Bike Clubs' through:

- providing opportunities for leader training and development;
- acting as an advisor when a Bike Club faces problems (e.g. with premises, facilities, staffing)
- bringing together leaders for peer support and sharing ideas/good practice
- bringing together young people and their families from across Glasgow through city wide activities and events

"They [the two Scottish Development Officers] are excellent officers – with community development skills and able to meet needs and support clubs – e.g. by sending leaders on the right courses. So they are good quality clubs" (Youth Scotland)

The encouragement to Bike Club leaders is clearly important, as some of these have not got a cycling background and have become involved with Bike Club as teachers or youth workers. Others started as participants and have been supported through training as volunteer leaders.

"I had to re-learn to cycle. I came on the course" (Bike Club leader)

"I was out of my depth to start with – now I feel confident" (Volunteer)

Several of these leaders talked about unexpected benefits as a result of Bike Club.

"I started cycling a year ago and it is now part of my everyday life, commuting seven miles each day on my bike. I have lost two stone during this time and saved the cost of commuting by car" (Bike Club leader)

Outcomes and objectives

An initial 'outcomes workshop' identified the following outcomes as important:

For communities

- Bike clubs as community hubs – for adults and kids to access training and activities (whether they have a bike or not)
- A Glasgow wide network of bike clubs – that come together, work together, ride together and feel city-wide
- Being able to go to a different bike club every day – as all around Glasgow at different times, days etc
- Bike clubs helping to break down a 'can't go there' culture – so span all areas, not linked to cliques/gangs, young people can go on rides/visits outside their home areas
- Cycling normalised as a mode of transport – like any other – not weird or sporty
- Bike clubs involving schools – fully linked up
- Cycling for all
- For young people
- Young people who don't cycle – to cycle
- Young people to feel healthier – on a range of health and fitness outcomes – through cycling as active travel
- Engaging young people – who are not participating (in formal activities)
- Target groups engaged in bike clubs – NEET/MCMC, girls, disabled young people
- Young people learn to ride on the road – so they feel confident in Glasgow – now (don't have to wait for cycle ways etc)

3. Bike Clubs in Glasgow

The Development Officer has helped to establish 28 Bike Clubs in Glasgow since June 2010. Twenty of these had been set up by April 2011 with the remainder since then. Two more are in the development stage. This means Glasgow is well on the way for teaching the target of 37 clubs by the end of 2012.

Wellhouse Bike Club

Bike Clubs have been established in a very wide range of organisations and communities. This case study looked in detail at the Wellhouse Bike Club and worked with the Development Officer, Bike Club leader and young people from Wellhouse on the peer evaluation project – making a film to capture the difference that Bike Club is making to young people in Glasgow.

The Bike Club is based on the Wellhouse estate in the East End of Glasgow. It was one of the first clubs set up in Glasgow, linked to an existing youth group and community centre. The club runs sessions at weekends for younger people (under 12) and older groups (up to 19). These include cycle training on an indoor sports pitch (see photo) and trips in and around Glasgow. Numbers in the club have been growing and the club has recently changed its name to 'Hub Shifters'.

Reach and engagement

Bike Club in Glasgow strives to engage young people and families from deprived communities in cycling, who may not be reached through more mainstream activities. This approach has resulted in an impressive number of Bike Clubs that are engaging specific communities or groups of people. Some of these are shown as boxed examples overleaf.

EXAMPLE 1: Council for Homeless Young People and Barnardos 16+ Project

The two organisations have come together to establish a fortnightly Bike Club targeting young people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds (homelessness, young care leavers, asylum seekers) aged 16 to 25 in the Queens Cross area of Glasgow. The aim of the club is to encourage young people who lack the financial means or opportunities (and are not current regular cyclists) to participate in a regular healthy activity through providing organised cycle rides, cycle maintenance and cycle safety skills.

To encourage participation the Bike Club has purchased eight borrow bikes, locks, helmets, high visibility vests and lights using funding secured through the Bike Club grant programme. Access to the bikes allows the group to develop cycle skills, build confidence on the road, experience the freedom that cycling brings and generally have fun. Bike Club funding also provided training for one member of staff to complete a Weldtech Cycle Maintenance qualification to maintain the bikes and teach basic bike maintenance skills.

Many of the young people whom Barnardos and CHYP work with lack the resources to continue cycling once they move on from support, with limited incomes and little or no family contact; therefore in order to sustain continued participation in cycling activities they plan to offer young people attending on 10 or more occasions a supervised budget of £200 to purchase a bike, lock, helmet, puncture repair kit, pump and lights. (The Development Officer is working with them to secure additional funding to cover the cost of this). They will then be able to use these bikes as active transport to attend appointments, job interviews, shopping etc. – which will also help their transition into independent living.

EXAMPLE 3: Deaf Connections Bike Club

Research conducted by Deaf Connections – the leading voluntary organisation delivering specialist services to deaf people in the West of Scotland – found that more and more young deaf people feel isolated and lack opportunities to socialise with their peers. This reflects a declining participation in community organised activities within the deaf community in Glasgow, and young deaf people's confidence to interact within others in the community as well as in wider society. By setting up a monthly Bike Club for young deaf people, Deaf Connections has addressed this by encouraging groups of young people to come together to learn new skills and join in with organised cycling activities and training.

Seven members of staff and volunteers completed Cycling Scotland's Cycle Trainer course and now deliver National Standards Cycle Training specifically for deaf young people using British Sign Language. They also run cycle maintenance sessions and recently ran a build your own bike course with Glasgow Bike Shed.

Providing a friendly and welcoming social environment for young people to meet others in the city is the key outcome of the Bike Club and membership has grown recently, with a regular core of ten young people attending every month. Activities have included a 24 mile bike ride from Glasgow to Falkirk! Other outcomes include building greater general wellbeing, encouraging healthy eating and raising awareness of climate change. They recently secured further funding to expand their club through Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Communities Fund and are looking to expand their club and set up other 'branches' in Fife and Edinburgh.

EXAMPLE 2: Somali Community Regeneration Organisation

The Somali Community Regeneration Organisation (SCRO) is an independent organisation working to improve the lives of the Somali Community in Glasgow. Since establishing the group just two years ago, the SCRO, ran entirely by volunteers, has set up a number of health promoting projects including a walking club, football league and a 'play program' for young people. They also have internet facilities, a jobs club and offer accommodation support and advice.

Earlier in 2011, the SCRO applied for Bike Club funding to add a cycling club to their youth play program. Consultation with young people in the community found that mountain biking in-particular was something which interest the group but seemed out of reach largely due to economic reasons as well of lack of experience and knowledge of where to go. Bike Club awarded the group funding and support for a programme of two consecutive Go Mountain Bike courses with local providers Alba Adventure and Glasgow Community Safety Services. Over a 12 week period, the group visited various mountain bike sites in and around Glasgow, including the 2014 Commonwealth Games mountain bike track at Cathkin Braes. Bike Club also supported the group to apply for additional funding from Cycling Scotland to buy their own fleet of mountain bikes as well as Trail Cycle Leader and Weldtech training for 3 volunteers. The project has grown considerably in the last three months and the waiting list to take part in the next programme is already full!

Bike Club leader Ahmed Abdilahi says "We are so pleased with the Bike Club...until recently, the young Somali community living in Glasgow had very little chance to experience outdoor activities. The Somali Bike Club aims to address this and organise regular and accessible bike trips outside the city so that the Somali community have equal opportunities to experience rural Scotland and get fit and healthy in the process."

EXAMPLE 4: A.C.E RaceRunning

The Ayr Carrick Eagle (A.C.E). RaceRunning group is coordinated and supported entirely by parent volunteers who work predominantly with young people with Cerebral Palsy, many of whom have very restricted mobility, including those who rely on power wheelchairs. The running bike is very light and the slightest momentum can carry the bike forward – giving the user with independence and a sense of freedom of movement which many members have never experienced before.

A.C.E RaceRunning currently has 11 young people who regularly attend the weekly club based in South Ayrshire. This travels around to introduce other youth groups to the running bike – including to Scotstoun Leisure Centre in Glasgow, which has its own monthly club and 5 young people now gaining regular access to cycling through the Scotstoun Disability activities group.

The running bikes are difficult to transport due to their size and shape and do not fit easily into most cars, including MPVs, and so limited their activity. With Bike Club funding, the group has purchased a trailer which has allowed the group to step up their 'Come and Try' mobile service and has ultimately introduced more young people to this great opportunity.

A.C.E RaceRunning is currently supporting other projects who work with disabled young people to set up their own running bike clubs. The Development Officer is working with them on several additional applications for funding to purchase more running bikes to add to their 'Come and try' fleet.

Women and Bike Club

One of the aims of Glasgow Bike Club is to attract more women and girls to cycling as they are underrepresented in this activity. Several clubs are now aimed at women and others have encouraged girls to join, including by training female leaders and volunteers to act as role models.

“Girls asked me if I could do it [become a volunteer leader] ...lots of guys do it but if I do it, girls will enjoy it [Bike Club]” (Wellhouse)

The **Cycling Belles** are a group of ladies living in Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire. They started their Bike Club in 2011 and have been working hard over the last few months to get trained up to deliver National Standard Cycle Training and maintenance sessions for young people living in the area. With a female friendly approach to cycling, they offer cycle training in schools and a ladies (mums and daughters very welcome!) only cycle club. Their aim is to get more mums out cycling with their kids, learning good off road skills and gaining confidence with the support of other women. Bike Club funding has supported their training and bought them a fleet of bikes for women who want to join the club but don't yet have a bike. They also secured further funding from Cycling Scotland to purchase some smaller bikes and tools for their school cycle training sessions.

A **new joint initiative** funded by Bike Club and the Forestry Commission Scotland was launched in September with an information evening for ladies and girls in Glasgow. Open to females from traditionally under represented communities in cycling, the event provided the opportunity to find out more and sign up for a 'Ladies learn to ride' programme starting on Saturday 1st October. Managed by **Backbone**, an organisation which specialises in “celebrating diversity through adventure”, the project has many partners including Glasgow Life, the Scottish Ethnic and Minority Sports Association and the Scottish Police Muslim Association.

Six sessions will introduce 12 women and girls (all completely new to cycling) to various off-road cycling spots in and around Glasgow. Delivered by female coaches from the Glasgow Bike Station, the programme will ensure the group progress at a steady and manageable pace. The course will also include additional maintenance and bike safety sessions and the opportunity to complete a three-day leadership course delivered by Backbone. Bike Club will then work with the leaders to establish their very own Bike Club, especially for young women.

A Glasgow wide Bike Club

One of the key features of Bike Club in Glasgow – and undoubtedly one of the reasons for its success in terms of numbers and scope of individual Bike Clubs – is the identity of a 'Glasgow Bike Club'. This has been driven by the Development Officer, not least through a series of Glasgow wide Bike Club events. These have included:

- All Glasgow Bike Club Cycle Rides – on Sundays and in the school holidays – when all Bike Clubs are invited on a ride. This usually includes a picnic and either a visit to something in Glasgow (e.g. a museum or exhibition) which the young people would be unlikely to do on their own, or to the countryside around Glasgow. For example, one of the rides on 15 April (with Si participant observation) was to Kelvingrove Park and the new Transport Museum, which attracted over 20 Bike Club members and leaders, the Development Officer and CTC partner.
- Pedal to the Picnic and Bike Week Cycle Festival in Kelvingrove Park (25 June) – Several Bike Clubs joined a 16 mile charity cycle ride to raise money for the Lodging House Mission (LHM), which provides essential support to homeless and vulnerable people.
- Glasgow East End Cycle Gala (17 September) – where the peer evaluation film made by young people from Wellhouse Bike Club was shown using a pedal powered projector.

4. Youth Achievement Awards

YAA provides an opportunity for young people involved in Bike Clubs in Glasgow to achieve different levels of accreditation through at a basic level, participation in Bike Club activity, through organising activity and at a more advanced level, through developing varying degrees of leadership skills. YAA is a flexible process that can act as an open framework and a useful tool to help 'plan, do and review' Bike Club activities.

YAA has not been actively pursued to date in Glasgow because the priority has been on getting good quality Bike Clubs set up which has involved engaging young people from some very deprived areas and/or excluded communities. The YAA can be incorporated into existing Bike Clubs in Glasgow, offering young people the opportunity to achieve accreditation through their involvement in existing activity and clubs are now looking into how they can mould the Awards around their existing activity.

5. Outcomes for young people

The voices of young people and leaders in the film, and conversations with them as part of the case study fieldwork, has provided a wealth of evidence around outcomes for young people, their families and communities. These outcomes fall into a number of types although they are invariably interrelated in cause and effect.

Confidence and leadership skills

Leaders invariably talked about how they had noticed an increase in confidence in the young people and women participating in Bike Clubs. Participants tended to explain more about what the increased confidence had enabled them to do – whether this was longer and/or on-road cycle rides, becoming a volunteer or undertaking leadership training.

"Lot's more confidence and trying new cycling trails" (Wellhouse)

"We build up women's confidence who want to take their kids out – so they do things as a family which benefits the community" (Cycling Belles)

"We did a 16 mile cycle ride and raised money for the Lodging House Mission" (Reidvale)

"We've been increasing the level of cycling – sending people on BCL training" (Freewheel North)

Health and fitness

Young people were quick to identify health benefits to cycling. These were usually expressed as feeling healthier and fitter rather than in terms of weight loss or other objective measures.

"I've lost my baby tummy!" (Cycling Belles)

"I feel healthier – and it's fun" (Cycling Belles) "I'm getting fitter" (Reidvale)

"What's good about Bike Club – you keep fit" (Wellhouse)

Cycling skills and bike maintenance

These outcomes were often the first mentioned when young people were asked about the difference Bike Club had made to them. Road safety skills and awareness were clearly very important to equip young people with the confidence for on-road cycling – and thus participation and access to wider range of services and opportunities, including for learning and employment. Bike maintenance skills were frequently mentioned, especially by young women, who felt more independent with these skills (and were possibly more open about needing to learn them).

"Lots about gears – and how to clean your bike" (Wellhouse)

"Going on the road – knowing about hand signals" (Wellhouse)

*"Making people not knock you off" (Wellhouse)
"Learning to repair punctures" (Wellhouse)*

"Road safety – to go on the roads – I feel more confident on the road" (Wellhouse)

"Learning how to stop with the brakes" (Deaf Connections)

Getting around, freedom /independence

Getting out and about Glasgow, as well as further afield, was very important to some young people who would not have had these opportunities without Bike Club.

"We do a different run every week – as a community" (Freewheel North)

"It [Bike Club] is somewhere to go – we have more pride than hanging around on the street" (Bishopriggs BMX)

"Keep fit and go to new places" (Reidvale)

Strengthening friendships, families and communities

Bike Club in Glasgow has clearly improved outcomes for families and communities, as well as for individual young people. The increased social interaction that was described by young people took place through the actual Bike Club sessions, specific events and festivals, and cycling with family and friends. There are also early indications that Bike Club has shown what is possible in communities and led to other types of social and sports activities.

"If mum and dad do it [cycling] children do it too – parents are role models" (Cycling Belles)

"We had a great BMX cycle festival" (Bishopriggs BMX)

"It's mainly boys but if they [Bike Club] bring bikes along the girls have a shot – which is good" (Bishopriggs BMX)

"Getting a laugh, being together" (Reidvale)

"Being together – in a unit" (Deaf Connections)

"Bike Club can help with other things as well – community sport initiatives and street football" (Glasgow Life)

6. Barriers and challenges

Bike Club in Glasgow is seen as successful by participants, leaders and stakeholders. This success is in no small part due to the ability of the Development Officer to overcome barriers and meet challenges to date. There are also some challenges which still require addressing for Bike Club to achieve the range of outcomes that are important and ensure sustainability for the future.

- **Leaders' skills and capacity** – it has been important to attract Bike Club leaders who have a range of skills, including working with young people and teaching cycling skills. They also need community development and partnership working skills to be able to link Bike Club to other community activities and facilities, such as other youth groups, community centres, schools and local events. One of the important roles of the Development Officer has been to encourage leaders to come forward (either as part of their paid role as a youth or community worker or as a volunteer) and identify where there might be gaps in their skills that need to be addressed. In one Bike Club, for example, the leader left and the new leader was very good at working with young people to develop their cycling enthusiasm and skills, but less experienced in organising and developing the Bike Club in the community. The Development Officer assessed the situation and organised leadership training as well as volunteer support – with the result that this club is going from strength to strength.
- **Resources** – Bike Club funding has been essential to get clubs up and running but is often not enough to support them to grow and engage young people from vulnerable or disadvantaged groups and/or in areas of high deprivation. Bike Club in Glasgow has been able to rise to this challenge through the Development Officer working with the clubs and using her good understanding of
- and links with other to help them secure additional funding, especially through Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Communities Fund.
- **Working with schools** – Schools being 'fully linked up' was identified as an outcome for Bike Club in Glasgow and although there has been progress on this and an increase in the number of schools involved – recent examples including Swinton Primary School (in the East End) and Springburn Academy (in the north east of the city) – this remains a challenge. Schools do not seem to be sufficiently aware of their role in encouraging cycling. Although some teachers and parents are interested, there is a need for a holistic approach involving the council's planning and education services driving this forward and encouraging schools to work with Bike Club as their delivery partner/ mechanism. The new Strategic Plan schools and communities working group should provide better leadership and opportunities for developing this work with schools.
- **Time needed to embed cycling in communities** – Bike Club has shown that introducing and sustaining cycling amongst young people living in deprived communities has to be a long term approach. This contrasts with previous short term cycling projects in the city and is vital for sustainability (see below). However, this means that some of the desired community outcomes, such as breaking down barriers between communities (e.g. related to gangs and the 'can't go there culture') and normalising cycling as a mode of transport (e.g. not just 'weird or ultra sporty') will take time. This is also something that Bike Club and its partners on the Strategic Plan schools and communities working group will be addressing.

7. The future and sustainability

The sustainability of Bike Club in Glasgow is seen as a city wide issue – rather than in terms of individual Bike Clubs,

Partnership working with Glasgow Life and the Glasgow City Council and Cycling Scotland is clearly key to sustaining Bike Club. The city council are keen that the Development Officer remains in post as it sees Bike Club as essential to delivering the Strategic Plan and the Commonwealth Games legacy for the benefit of young people and their families who are living in Glasgow's most disadvantaged communities.

"Previous to Bike Club, cycling in communities was a shot in the arm, a one off. But that doesn't work, it's not sustainable, That's why Bike Club is important – you have to work long term with young people, you have to give them support – otherwise a lot would struggle" (Glasgow Life)

"Bike Club are an integral part of the Strategic Plan, which is being launched in November at the Cycling Scotland conference" (Glasgow City Council)

8. Emerging messages and implications for the future

Bike Club has been very successful in Glasgow. There are now 28 Bike Clubs in the city (with two in progress) involving young people and their families from diverse communities living in some of the most deprived parts of the city.

This 'place study' has identified a number of factors which have helped achieve this success. These are:

- Ability of the Development Officer to work strategically with city-wide partners and operationally to support individual Bike Clubs and their leaders
- Community development approach– linking with existing community organisations and working with them to add cycling, through Bike Club, to their activities
- Active partnership working – between Bike Club, Glasgow Life and Cycle Scotland
- A programme of city-wide and East End Bike Club activities to bring clubs together
- Widely recognised contribution of Bike Club to Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling
- Supportive Scotland context – Bike Club adds to Youth Scotland's portfolio of activities and helps achieve the Scottish government's outcomes framework, Curriculum for Excellence.

Bike Club in Glasgow is funded by Asda until December 2012. There is a target of setting up 37 Bike Clubs in the city by then which – with 30 clubs to date – is well on the way to being reached.

The importance of Bike Club to delivering the City's Strategic Plan for Cycling, the support of Youth Scotland and Cycling Scotland and the close partnerships that have been formed both city wide and with a host of community organisations, should stand Bike Club in good stead to continue into the future. However this will not happen automatically and an important focus for the coming year will be to use these opportunities to both grow and sustain Bike Club in Glasgow.

Keep up to date with what is happening at Bike Club in Glasgow on:

<http://bikeclub.org.uk/category/glasgow/>

Peer evaluation – Capturing young people's voices through making a film

Actively involving young people from Wellhouse Bike Club in making the film took a lot of planning and persistence and would not have been possible without the time, energy and commitment of Victoria Leiper, the Glasgow Development Officer. One of the initial tasks was to get across that the film needed to get across the difference Bike Club was making to young people (e.g. outcomes) and how it was doing this, rather than just be a promotional film showing activities.

The film making was supported by a specialist film maker – Geraldine Heaney – who also had experience of working with young people. The evaluators from Shared Intelligence advised on the peer research process, observed some of the peer interviewing and filming, interviewed the young people and leader from Wellhouse Bike Club about the experience, and attended the 'premiere' of the film at Bike Club Scotland's first birthday celebrations in Glasgow on 30 August 2011.

Following initial discussions between all concerned, the first session with the young people from Wellhouse took place on 1 May 2011, followed shortly afterwards by an initial filming session at the Cycling Belles launch event. The first two sessions were structured around understanding the purpose of the film and deciding what questions the group would like to ask the other Bike Clubs. After watching examples of cycling related films for inspiration, the group decided how they would like their film to look to appeal to their peers.

The group decided on the following interview questions:

1. Why did you join your Bike Club?
2. What is the best thing about your Bike Club?
3. What is the main thing you have learned from being in your Bike Club?
4. Where is your favourite place to go cycling with your Bike Club? Would you have gone there before joining the club?
5. Can you still join in if you don't have a bike? Can you borrow one from your club?
6. What do you want to see happen in your Bike Club in the future?
7. Did you cycle before you joined the club? Were you interested in bikes and cycling before?
8. What is your favourite Bike Club memory so far?
9. What do you hope to achieve from being in your Bike Club?
10. What do you think defines your Bike Club?

The group then practised interviewing by taking turns to interview each other and learn how to use the camera. They were initially really shy and reluctant to appear on camera; however the more they spoke about their Bike Club and their own experience, the more they gained confidence and by the end of the first session they took turns interviewing each other. During the second session, the launch of the Cycling Belles Bike Club in Cumbernauld, the group used their pre-planned questions to interview the Bike Club leader and one of the club's young members.

Due to staff changes at Wellhouse, the filming had become delayed and the planned third session ended up as a discussion the Development Officer, the Si evaluator and the new Bike Club leader about how to re-invigorate the peer evaluation and filming work.

Four more filming and interviewing sessions were held during June, including:

- filming at Free Wheel North Kaldis Bike Club
- filming at Council for Homeless Young People Bike Club session and meeting Deaf Connections
- filming at Bishopbriggs Cycle Festival and meeting Bishopbriggs BMX Bike Club (
- filming and participation in the Pedal to the Picnic and Bike Week Cycle Festival in Kelvingrove Park

Following these filming sessions, the group worked with Geraldine to edit the film – choosing the content and agreeing the music track etc. The editing process was largely completed by Geraldine however she consulted with the Wellhouse group prior to completing the final edit – and they had the final say on what went into the film. The final edit of the film is available to view via Vimeo – <http://vimeo.com/27938186>.

Young people and leaders from the following Bike Clubs were interviewed for the film:

- The Wellhouse Trust
- Urban Fox
- Deaf Connections
- Ed's Cycle Coop
- Free wheel North
- Cycling Belles
- Reidvale Youth 'n' Action

The first official viewing of the film took place on Tuesday 30 August at Bike Club Scotland 'one year on' event, held in Glasgow City Chambers. The event was attended by Bike Club groups from across the country as well as key partner organisations.

A second viewing was held on Saturday 17 September at the Glasgow East End Cycle Gala using a pedal powered projector. This was arranged by the Wellhouse Bike Club. The gala was organised by the Development Officer and was very well attended with over 300 people taking part in various cycle themed activities. The film was very popular and the young people who took part in the evaluation were clearly very proud of their achievement. All the Bike Clubs who featured in the film attended the gala and so have a chance to view the film on a large screen. The purpose of the event was to promote cycling in Glasgow, focusing on the east end and the film certainly contributed to this, promoting the Bike Club groups who participated in the production.

Overall, the process of peer evaluation through making a film resulted in a well received product that clearly brought out the difference that Bike Club has made to young people in Glasgow. It also enabled the group of young people from Wellhouse Bike Club to gain skills in interviewing and filming and develop their confidence. The Bike Club leader has more understanding of evaluation and the young people can see how capturing the achievements of Bike Club and the difference it makes to them and their peers can influence others to get involved.

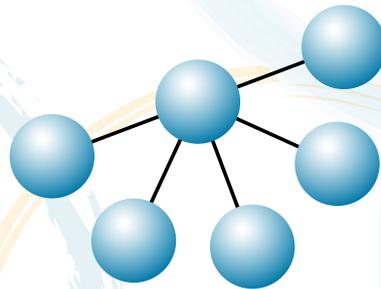
The process required slightly more time than the Development Officer had originally anticipated due to various delays which were out of her control. Getting a new Bike Club leader on board took time, as did tying the young people down to specific dates and times for both filming and editing. The process clearly required the Development Officer's active input and organisation throughout the process – this was time consuming but brought its own rewards!

“It took slightly more time than I had anticipated...however, it was an enjoyable experience and allowed me to spend time getting to know the young people in the Wellhouse Bike Club and the club leaders” (Glasgow Bike Club Development Officer”.

Outcomes for peer evaluators: Increase in skills and confidence

This in itself is a product of the Bike Club experience. Slowly the group learned skills they previously didn't have and grew in confidence – this was evident in their willingness to act as both the person asking the questions and the person being interviewed. At the start of the peer evaluation/film making process they wouldn't do either!

“It was quite difficult [to interview] at first – but it became easier, you have to change the questions a bit to relate” (Wellhouse)



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