



Active Travel Final Project Report Jan 2012



Family cycling to school during 'Active Travel Week'



Cycle Challenge Winners with Tim Farron MP



Bicycle powered smoothies before school



Cycle maintenance training

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Background

SLACC *Towards Transition* were awarded £15,500 from the Lake District National Park Sustainable Development Fund, the National Lottery Awards for All and Cumbria County Council to run an Active Travel project during summer 2011.

The project, involving over thirty volunteers, ran between May and October and encompassed a range of activities including promoting active travel with health practitioners such as doctor surgeries, promoting cycling in schools, developing and marketing active travel materials to the public and promoting cycling to workplaces. Each of these elements of the project are reviewed below.

Schools

The project aimed to work with 5 primary schools promoting cycling through

running bicycle powered smoothie breakfasts, cycling/walking to school competitions during bike week, afterschool Dr bike sessions and the use of incentives.

A letter informing schools of the project and inviting them to take part was sent out early in the year to all primary schools in Kendal, Windermere and surrounding area. As a result 7 schools responded, and of these 4 were chosen to work with during the project (three of the schools later dropping out due to time constraints). Due to having one less school than we originally planned additional work was also undertaken with the Kendal Lads and Girls Club (25 young people) and the Kendal Family Drop in Centre (10 families).



The schools that responded were St Cuthberts (Windermere, 60 students), St Oswalds (Burneside, 100 students), Stramongate School (Kendal, 450 students) and Old Hutton (90 students). The results of working with the schools are evaluated below.

Assemblies

At a number of schools an introductory assembly about the project was given to brief students on what we were doing and to encourage them to get involved. In addition prize giving assemblies were also held after the bike week cycling competition. These proved extremely useful in being able to address the entire school. Feedback from Head Teachers was that they appreciated having a local representative come to address their pupils, something which does not happen with national initiatives schools are involved in. Assemblies also gave an opportunity for children to discuss with us why they thought cycling and walking is important.

Smoothies

A promotional stall was set up in each school during the morning. This comprised of a bicycle powered smoothie maker which was used to attract interest as well as give free healthy smoothies to the students. Stickers were also given out and leaflets were available to take away.

In total 700 students participated in the smoothie sessions. Extremely positive feedback was received from both the students, parents and staff.

“Many thanks to Sonny and yourself for the assembly this afternoon. Kids were excited by the event!” Matt Beresford, Deputy Head, Stramongate School



“Everyone cycled or walked to school at least once during the competition week. Local people commented that there was reduced traffic as a result. One family drove in and

parked at a friend's house so their child could cycle the rest of the way to school." Huw Davies, Headteacher, Old Hutton C of E Primary School

Dr Bike



A Dr bike session was also held at each school. This took place after school hours and saw students bringing their bikes for a free service. Over 50 students participated in the 4 Dr Bike sessions.

Like the smoothie sessions, these events proved extremely popular with everyone.

"We got her bike second hand but it didn't work well enough for her to use. Now she'll be able to cycle after school with her brother." - parent

"I feel happier letting him out on his bike knowing it is in good working order. I wouldn't have known what to look for" - parent

"Thankyou for fixing my bike!" - pupil

Bike Week Competition

A competition was held in all schools during 'Active Travel' week, varying slightly to suit each school. Students were encouraged to cycle or walk in and were given a raffle ticket by their form tutor if they did so. At the end of the week an assembly was held where raffle tickets were drawn out and prizes given. Those that had cycled or walked the most had the most raffle tickets and were thus more likely to receive prizes.

Incentives



A range of incentives were purchased and given out during the school events. This included a series of leaflets promoting cycling to students and parents (see appendix) as well as free bicycle bells, reflectors, stickers and snap bands. These proved extremely popular and low cost.

In addition prizes were given out in assemblies after the bike week competition to the winning students.

Lastly, a pack about the project was given to all students to take home. This included a letter about the project for parents, as well as leaflets on walking and cycling for both parents and students (see appendix)

Schools Evaluation

In total 700 students were involved in the Active Travel project. All students attended the smoothie sessions and all took part in the competitions so all were actively involved in the project.

To evaluate how effective the work with schools was, we asked schools to record the numbers of children walking and cycling during 'Active Travel' week and we measured that against the number still walking, cycling or scooting after the events. Up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of pupils in each school made the effort to walk or cycle to school at least once during their competition week. Evidence from Cycling demonstration towns suggests that once people have tried an alternative means of transport and realised how easier/quick/fun etc it is they are vastly more likely to continue. The biggest barrier to overcome in changing travel behaviour is to just get people to try something different. Building a sense of excitement with competitions and incentives proved very effective in encouraging people to get into the spirit of it and try incorporating walking or cycling into their routine.

Following the events, when we asked students how many were still walking or cycling, at least half of those who had walked or cycled during bike week were still doing so.

For example, on Monday of St Cuthberts competition week, 22 of the Key Stage 2 students walked, 2 cycled, 1 got the bus and only 4 came by car. On the day of the follow up assembly, there will still 20 students walking to school, 1 had cycled and only 9 had come by car.

Travel for Health

We worked with two surgeries during the project – Staveley Surgery and Station House Surgery (Kendal). In addition the Active Travel guide was promoted by Age UK village agents throughout South Lakes and in an Osteopathy practice in Kendal.

The aim of working with the surgeries was to see if we could provide a service whereby health practitioners could 'prescribe' active travel to suitable patients, which we would then pick and offer to help. The prescriptions were fairly loose and largely involved the practitioner handing the patient our active travel guide (produced for the project – see appendix). It was then left up to the patient whether or not they contacted us for help.

People are paying me for time spent doing osteopathy so it doesn't feel right to take up time talking to them about active travel options. But I will encourage people to get involved in the project. - Local Osteopath

The Active Travel Guides were also put on display in the surgeries for people to take away. In total 3,000 guides were produced and marketed (many guides also going to libraries, dentists, employers, gyms, schools etc in Kendal, Windermere and surrounding area).

'The display in the surgery was very popular and we needed to keep topping up the

leaflets. The doctors and nurses don't have a lot of time to talk to patients during appointments so it's useful for them to have information while they wait.' - Receptionist, St Mary's Surgery, Windermere

The guides promoted active travel and also promoted our events and incentives. These included the Cycle Challenge, free cycle hire, our 'buddy system' (whereby a walking or cycling buddy is on hand for advice and for cycle and walking trips), free cycle training and cycle maintenance sessions.

The free cycle training proved popular. See separate report

As an incentive to encourage people to feel more confident cycling, three introductory cycle maintenance training sessions were held (run by www.freewheelersbicycleworkshop.org.uk) and all were fully booked up, with 24 people attending in all.

"I had a puncture yesterday whilst out on a ride with Steve and I changed the inner tube MYSELF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

"I have a new bike and I am not confident with taking the wheels off, I don't think I could change a tire if I got a puncture!"



In addition two Dr Bike sessions were advertised through the surgeries, though only 5 people brought their bikes for a free service.

However, the buddy system (whereby a volunteer would become a walking or cycling buddy) and free cycle hire did not prove popular and there were no takers. In contrast, the 'bikeability' sessions with a professional trainer were over-subscribed.

Evaluation

The most successful aspect of this project was having the conversations with the practitioners (which we hope were repeated with patients/clients) and them putting up displays in their surgeries, which were popular, with a lot of leaflets being taken. We also plan to update and reprint our Active Travel Guide and continue to market this in Doctors surgeries.

Also worth noting, is that incentives were offered but the majority of people felt that they had received enough (in the way of free cycle training, cycle maintenance, etc) and felt uncomfortable receiving more.

Workplaces

The Workplace Challenge is covered in a separate report.

General Public

Windermere Cycle Map

A Windermere Cycling & Walking map was produced and delivered to every home in Windermere (approx. 5,000 homes). The map was generally well received, though it did contain an error where a private road was marked as public. This will be corrected and posted online.

"My working life has been transformed by the Windermere walking and cycling map. As a home carer who travels by bike, I am always looking for addresses and safe routes. So far I haven't been able to find a decent map of Windermere and Bowness, so when it arrived on the doorstep of one of my clients, it was great - suddenly I had all the names of the streets and the safest cycling routes".

Kendal Bus Map

A Kendal bus map was also produced (see appendix). Some 3,000 were printed and marketed on Stagecoach buses in Kendal, as well as in the Kendal Library. We have not had any feedback to date.

Staveley Bus and Train Timetable

A customised bus/train timetable card was produced for Staveley and hand delivered to 600 households.

Cycle Parade

We also took part in Kendal's annual Torchlight procession, holding a cycling parade. This is an excellent opportunity to market cycling and to boost the image of cycling to everyone in Kendal.



A workshop was held prior to the parade where people could come along and make decorations for their bikes. Some 15 people attended the workshop and approximately 40 people came on the parade, which was a great success and included fancy dress, weird and wacky bikes, and bicycle powered sound system



(<http://www.blazeonline.org.uk/project/boombike/>) .

Project Legacy

We are currently aiming at reproducing several aspects of this project again next year in Kendal. This includes updating and reprinting the Active Travel

Guide and marketing this in surgeries again, through Age UK village agents and also marketing it to every home in Kendal. We also plan to continue the cycle challenge and to continue our school events (to include more schools, including secondary schools). One school (Old Hutton) plan to continue running the bike week competition themselves, now they know how effective it can be.

We are currently hoping funds will be available from SLDC for this in 2012.

The project has also been disseminated on the Campaign for Better Transport website, the Transition Network and through the Lake District National Park Authority Low Carbon Lake District Project.

No groups have yet come forward asking to use our cycle challenge website, though we have interest from several groups, including Cycle Carlisle and Lancaster Cycling City.

It is worth noting that during this project Copeland launched an initiative whereby doctors prescribe active travel as part of their duties. This has been funded by the PCT and the council. It is felt that the prescribing of active travel will work best with the backing of both the PCT and the council as this gives the scheme more gravitas in the eyes of local doctors.

Appendices

School letter

Dear Sir/Madam

Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles

I am writing on behalf of South Lakes Action on Climate Change *Towards Transition* (www.slacc.org.uk), a local charity based in Kendal, and the organisation behind Transition Kendal.

As a sustainability charity much of our work in recent years has focused on promoting cycling, walking and active lifestyles. We have worked for the past two years with two primary schools in the area to develop a simple package of measures aimed at increasing the uptake amongst young people of more active and sustainable lifestyles.

With the increasing concern of obesity among younger people, the formation of healthy lifestyles and active travel habits can have a strong positive effect, influencing behaviour throughout adulthood.

This year we are able to extend our Active Travel project to six primary schools in South Lakeland. Our Active Travel project aims to use well tried and tested incentives to sustain and increase active travel and healthy lifestyles.

The project has 3 main themes:

- To run bicycle powered smoothie breakfasts in the school yard in the morning as children come to school.
- To run after school bicycle maintenance or Dr Bike sessions, to teach basic cycle maintenance or to ensure bicycles are road worthy and in safe working condition.
- To promote cycling and walking during a school week through an incentive led competition to encourage young people to walk or cycle to school.

The project will not involve any costs from your school other than staff time required for us to coordinate the various strands. From our past experience working with schools this is minimal.

We are looking for 5 schools to work with during the summer term of 2011. If your school is interested and you would like to discuss this further, or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Resources

For copies of the resources produced for this project, please visit our website www.slacc.org.uk

School Leaflets

Active Travel Guide

Windermere Map

Kendal Bus Map

Staveley bus and train timetable