

Professional Support Service

Cumbria County Council

Kendal CycleFest

Final

October 2009



Professional Support Service

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Introduction

In late December 2008 the Cycling England Professional Support Service received the following request from from Mark Brierley, Cycling Development Officer for Cumbria County Council:

“We would like to call on the Cycling England Professional Support Service team to help evaluate the success of a cycling festival to be held in Cumbria from 30th May – 7th June 2009. Specifically:

- *Assessing levels of participation in different activities;*
- *Determining who took part in which activities and what effect this is likely to have on their cycling activity in future;*
- *Identifying what aspects of the festival went well / didn't work and why.*

This will enable us to capture very useful information about the event that will be of value in fine-tuning future festivals both here and elsewhere”.

The request for support was passed to team member Jo Cleary, from Cleary Stevens Consulting, based in South Cumbria, who subsequently researched and prepared this report.

Background and study approach

The festival was organised by South Lakes Action on Climate Change (SLACC) and Transition South Lakes (TSL). SLACC are a campaign group launched in Kendal in March 2007, concerned with promoting awareness about, and lifestyles that do not contribute to, climate change (see www.slacc.org.uk/). The aim of TSL is to address the twin issues of Climate Change and Peak Oil within South Lakes by decreasing the dependence of the community on fossil fuels. SLACC and TSL were supported by Cumbria County Council's Cycling Development Officer, Mark Brierley, in their plans for the festival which comprised, in brief, of a Festival Day on Saturday 30th May, followed by a week of cycling promotional events and activities to suit a variety of tastes and abilities (see www.cyclefest.org.uk/).

During the run-up to the event, the Cycling England consultant met several times with Sonny Khan of SLACC, together with Mark Brierley, to discuss how best Cycling England could contribute, and the following actions were agreed:

- Preparation of a questionnaire for participants at the festival day in Kendal (See Appendix 1).
- Preparation of a questionnaire for participants at festival events on other days (See Appendix 2).
- Analysis of the results from the questionnaire responses.
- Drawing feedback, by means of semi-structured telephone interviews, from those involved in organising various events and activities held throughout the festival week.
- Collation of a report, summarising the findings from the research activities outlined above, with a view to distilling the key lessons from the festival.

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An overview of the CycleFest

The following provides, for context, a very brief resume of what was involved in the Kendal CycleFest.

Events

Below is a summary of activities that took place during the festival week:

| Day | Event | Organiser |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Saturday 30 th May | Cycle festival day | SLACC |
| Sunday 31 st May | Road ride | Kent Valley Road Club |
| Sunday 31 st May | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship |
| Sunday 31 st May | Leisure ride | Flora of the Fells Project |
| Sunday 31 st May | Family treasure hunt ride | Wheelbase |
| Sunday 31 st May | TrailQuest | Wheelbase |
| Monday 1 st June | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship |
| Monday 1 st June | Leisure ride | Country Lanes |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | Over 50's ride | University of the Third Age |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | LaneQuest | Mintcake MTB |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | Cycle maintenance class | Askews cycle shop |
| Wednesday 3 rd June | Leisure ride | Country Lanes |
| Wednesday 3 rd June | Adventure cycling talk and film night | SLACC |
| Thursday 4 th June | Road cycling talk and film night | SLACC |
| Friday 5 th June | Leisure ride | Country Lanes |
| Saturday 6 th June | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship |
| Sunday 7 th June | Leisure ride | Cumbria Wildlife Trust |

Funding

SLACC was successful in securing a range of resources to help support the CycleFest, including cash grants, in-kind help and contributions from sympathetic local businesses and organisations. The following provides a summary:

- Cost of staging the festival (including printing and publicity, venue and equipment hire, insurance, etc) was £7,529.08.
- Income from grant aid and sponsorship was £7,668.50.
- Value of in-kind contributions – including professional support (e.g. from Cycling England and Cumbria County Council), volunteer time, discounts,

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donated goods, website, filming, photography, etc – was estimated to be around £15,350.

- Income from the festival day, from competitions, food marquee, craft stalls, etc, was around £730.

Festival day

The main event of the Kendal CycleFest week was the festival day, held on Saturday 30th June in Abbot Hall Park, towards the southern end of Kendal town centre. The weather was warm and sunny, which drew out between 2,000 and 3,000 festival-goers. A significant proportion of these arrived in response to pre-event publicity, which was very good. Nevertheless, Abbot Hall Park is on a popular pedestrian route to / from the town centre, which resulted in quite a volume of impromptu festival visitors.

There were a wide range of contributors and activities available on the day, including:

- Stunt bike demonstrations
- Cycling films
- Adventure cycling talks
- Dr Bike
- Cycle jumble sale
- Displays and demonstrations by Cyclemagic (bikes for those with disabilities)
- Tandem rides for the visually impaired
- Have-a-go on a range of unusual cycles
- Cycle themed puppet-show
- Cycle-powered cinema
- Cycle skills competitions

A particular effort was made to make the festival accessible to disabled cyclists. This included site infrastructure eg. toilets and activities (Cyclemagic), with a proportion of funding was specifically designated for this part of the festival.

Appendix 3 contains illustrations, providing a sense of what the festival day was like.

Information gathering

The following is a summary of the methods employed to gather information and feedback about the Kendal CycleFest to inform this review by Cycling England:

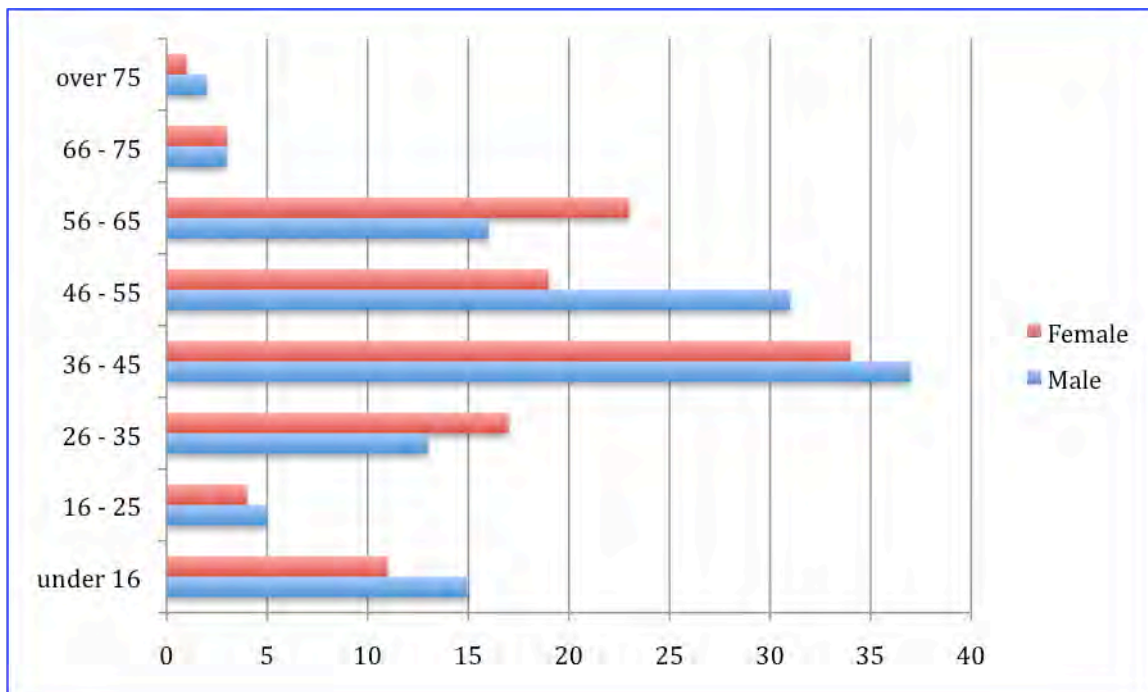
- The questionnaire for those visiting the festival day (see Appendix 1) was distributed by volunteers at the main access points to Abbot Hall Park, together with pens for respondents who didn't have them.
- The questionnaire for participants in the other CycleFest events held throughout the week (see Appendix 2) were given to the event organisers to distribute. This proved something of a 'hit and miss' affair, as will be seen in the reporting below.
- The Cycling England consultant contacted the various event organisers after the CycleFest, to determine how they felt things had gone. This process was facilitated by a semi-structured questionnaire, administered through telephone interviews.

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Survey of Festival Participants

The Respondents

A total of 236 people completed the questionnaire: 203 of these at the festival day in Abbot Hall Park, estimated to represent approximately 10 – 15% of the actual number attending. [Because of the open nature of the site, the majority of festival visitors slipped through the net of being asked to complete a questionnaire. Moreover, a single questionnaire respondent may well have represented a family of five people.] Two were shy about their age and sex. Of the remaining 234, 122 were male and 112 female. Their age ranges are shown in the chart below.



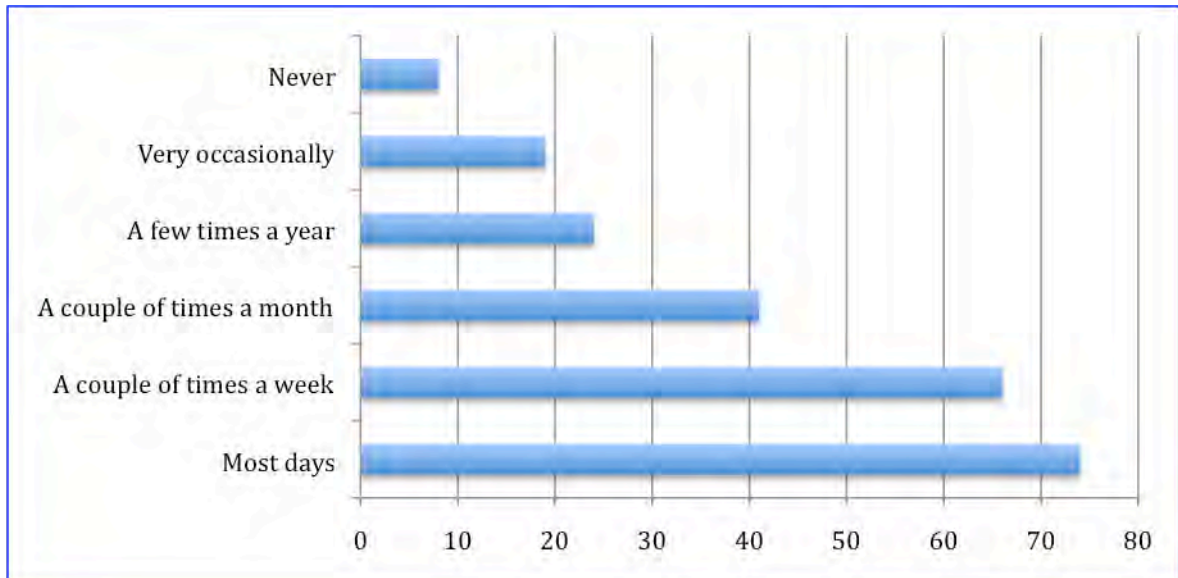
There was a disappointing response from 16 - 25 age group, probably reflecting their poor showing at this event, together with a typical reluctance to engage in consultation-type exercises.

Many of the 26 – 35 and 36 - 45 age groups were parents with children, no doubt attracted by the many family-orientated activities.

How often do you cycle?

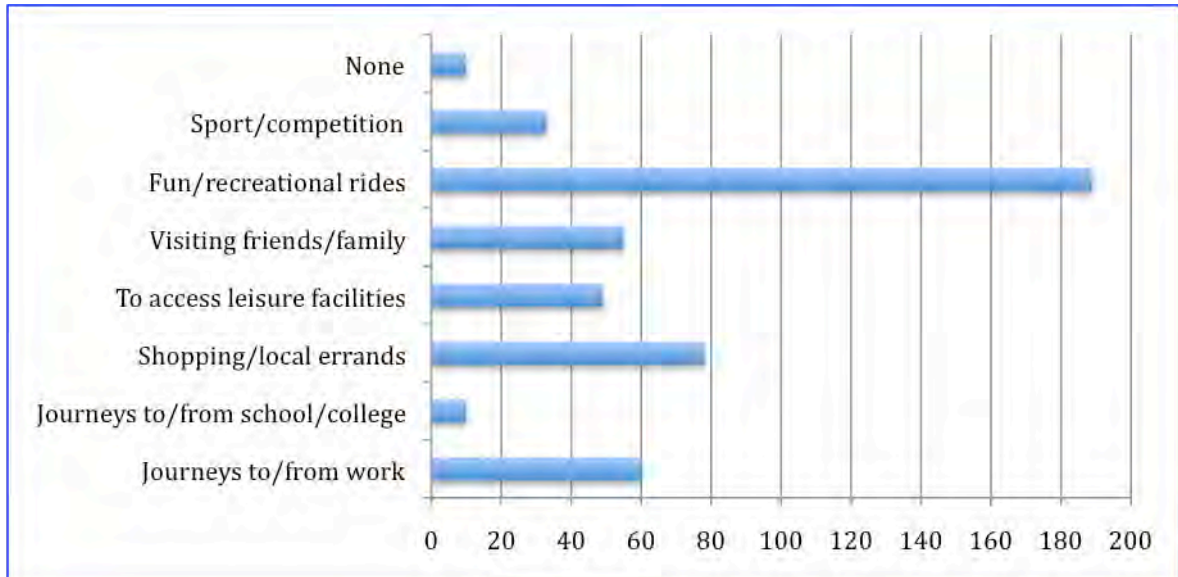
About a third of those completing the questionnaire cycle on most days, whilst nearly as many cycle a couple of times a week. It is not surprising that the festival appealed to those who already cycle to some degree. However, 40% of those attending cycle a couple of times a month or less, and these were the prime target audience!

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For what trip purposes do you cycle?

Respondents were asked to comment on the purposes of their current cycle trips. The most popular reason for cycling among all respondents is for fun/recreational rides, with 80% giving this response. Journeys to/from work was mentioned by around a third of those in the 16 – 65 age range. While journeys to/from school/college was cited by around a third of those under 16 and in the 16 – 25 age groups.

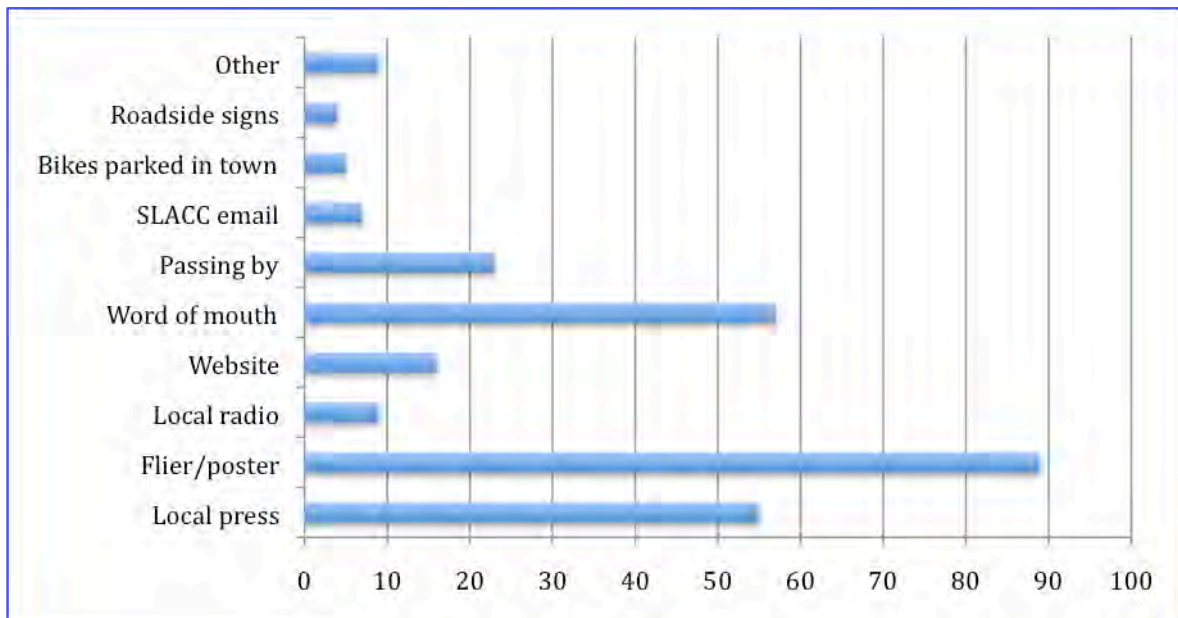


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Festival feedback

How did you learn about the festival?

Publicity about the festival was distributed through fliers and posters, the local press and radio, a dedicated website, as well as emails and word-of-mouth. The impressions from the day indicated that a good many visitors happened upon the CycleFest as they were passing by, confirming that the choice of location was particularly inspired.



Other means by which participants learnt about the festival, mentioned by individual respondent, were:

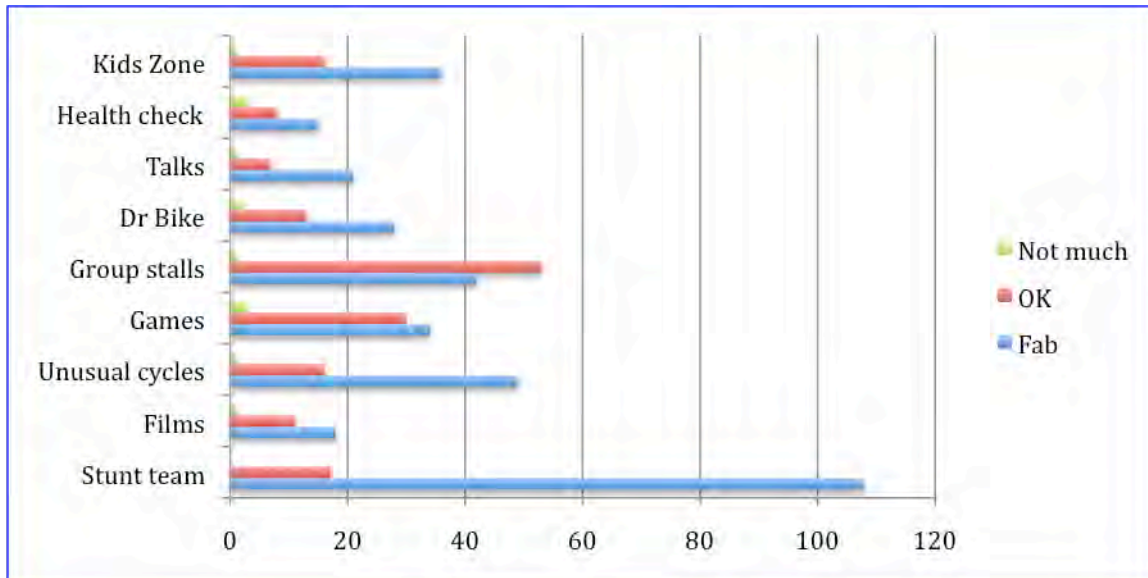
- Lakes Leisure
- Impact
- Transition South Lakes
- Helper
- Kent Valley Road Club
- Town Crier
- Primary Times
- Kendal and District Cycle Scene emails
- Windermere Tourist Information Centre

What festival activities have you enjoyed?

The stunt team proved most popular, appreciated by 125 respondents of the 203 who attended the event in the park. Of these, 108 rated the stunt team “Fab”.

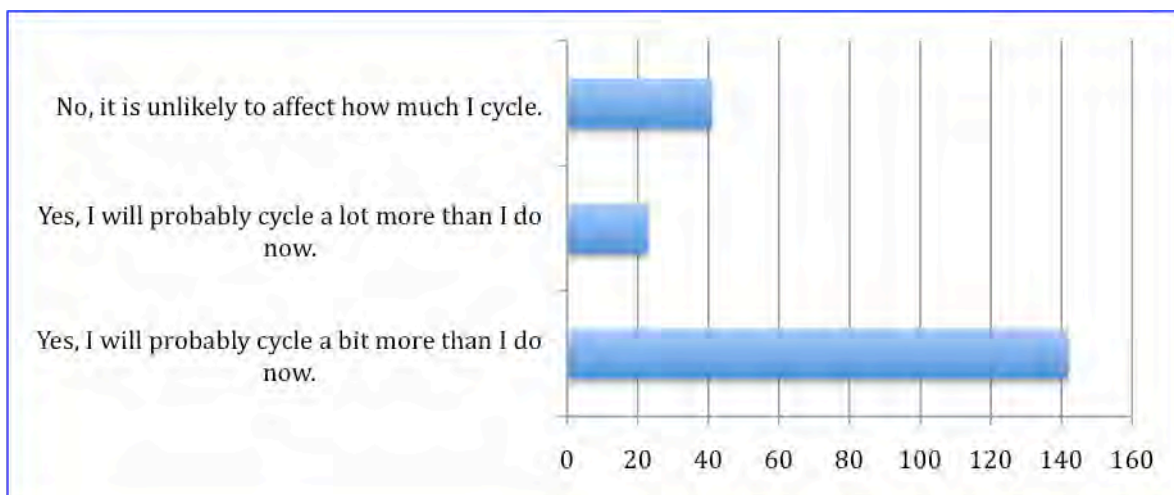
The cycling group stalls attracted 96 respondents. Not surprisingly these proved less exciting than the stunt team, however 42 rated them “Fab” and 54 “OK”.

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Will the festival inspire you to cycle more?

61% of respondents said that the festival would inspire them to cycle a bit more and 10% a lot more. Not surprisingly 11% of respondents who already cycle most days, said they were unlikely to cycle more, although 18% already cycling most days said they would cycle more. The chart below excludes those who already cycle most days and said they were unlikely to cycle more.



General comments or suggestions about the festival

The festival was very well received, with 31 respondents simply stating they thought it was: *“Brilliant”, “Excellent”, “Great”, or “Good”*.

Other comments and suggestions for future improvements are listed below.

“A bit small and pokey, but great.”

“A good thing. Why not organise a criterium race in the town centre on the festival day?”

“Advance flier did not offer much information about the festival.”

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"Appeared very well organised."

"Could do with a beer tent."

"Better stuff on sale."

"Bigger and better next year please."

"Brilliant event, something for everyone, thanks."

"Brilliant idea to motivate people to cycle."

"Cycle accessory sales, e.g. carriers, jackets, maintenance equipment. Great day, hope it will be repeated."

"Do it again." (Two respondents)

"Enjoyed it. Although more participation by shops required."

"Excellent, please repeat."

"Excellent and well organised."

"Excellent event, friendly, well-paced and varied."

"Excellent idea and one your stunt display team should feature at next year's Westmorland show."

"Excellent idea, and well organised. Very enjoyable and inspiring day, thank you."

"Fantastic idea. What a great way to encourage cycling."

"Fantastic. Great day, loads to do, fantastically well organised."

"Flora of the Fells ride excellent. Contact made with KDCS."

"Flora of the Fells ride was excellent."

"Good to do more often."

"Good to see it happen on a regular/annual basis."

"Great atmosphere."

Great day and location."

"Great day. Lots for everyone of all ages to do."

"Great event. Make it annual. Start in other towns."

"Great family event."

"Great fun with lots of events the following week."

"Great idea, enjoyed by whole family."

"Great idea, very well organised."

"Great ideas. Will visit others and tell husband, who is a keen cyclist."

"Great, do it again. Although the website was difficult to find."

"Great. Lets hope they get bigger and better."

"Great. Well-publicised, which made a difference."

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"Hold the festival in National Bike Week."

"I liked it."

"I went to three events, which were all very good. Flora of the Fells ride, Road Bike Night, and Cumbria Wildlife Trust ride."

"Inspiring, interesting and makes me want to go on a big cycle tour."

"Interesting and different."

"Interesting, informative, fun and clearly popular."

"Interesting."

"It was a great event with a good atmosphere. Super for families."

"Keep up the good work." (Three respondents).

"Look forward to next year."

"Maybe two a year."

"Met new friends and new people came to the KDCS ride."

"More cycle jumble/shops. Traders should support it too."

"More displays and bikes on sale."

"More food and drink."

"More local maps of cycle routes need to be available."

"More of the same."

"Naked bike ride round Kendal?"

"Put it on again next year."

"Really enjoyed Cyclefest at Abbot Hall Park."

"Really great idea, a fun day out."

"Roll on next year."

"Set up other stalls."

"😊."

"So far, so good. More publicity."

"Some more cycle stalls selling tools equipment, books etc."

"Some publicity on main road by Abbot Hall on the day."

"Thank you." (Two respondents)

"Very friendly and well-informed."

"Very impressed. Better than expected. Something for all."

"Very well organised. You've motivated me to get back on my bike."

"Was fab."

"Welcoming people, interesting event."

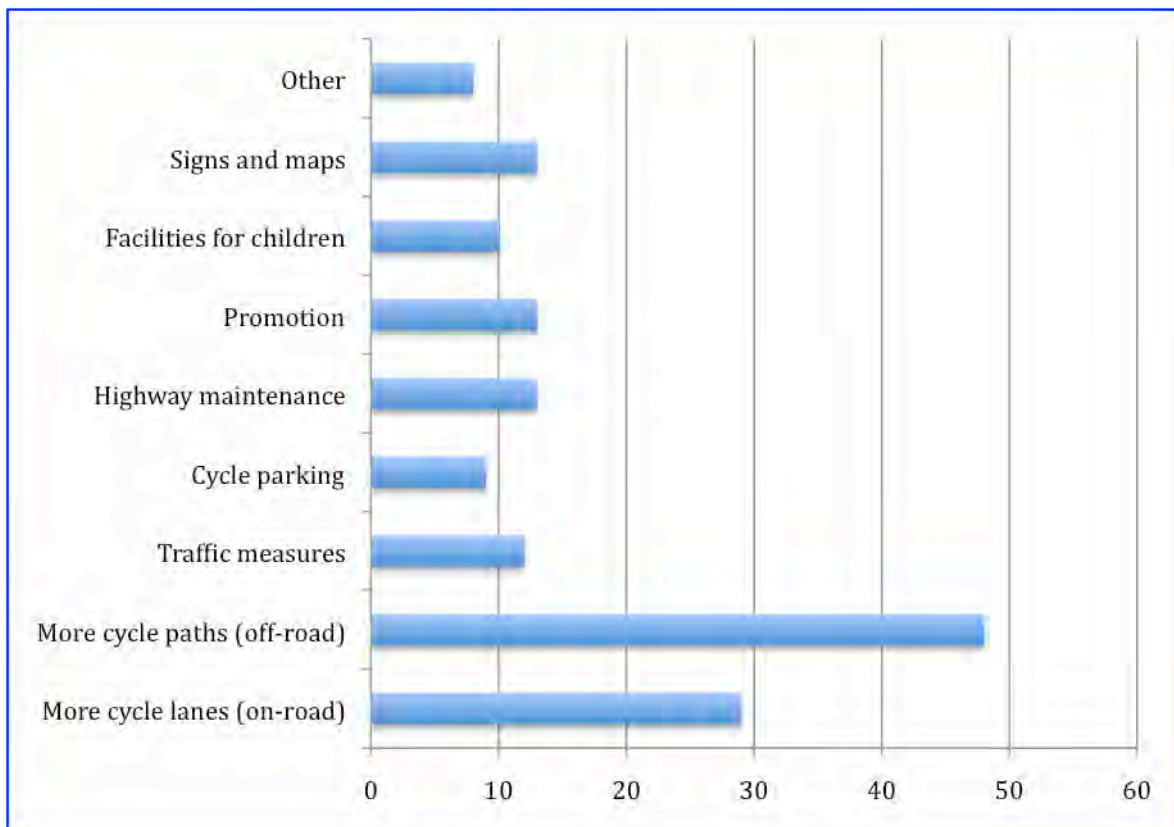
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“Well run, good event for all the family.”

“Wonderful day, hope it can be at least an annual event.”

Encouraging cycling in South Lakeland

The questionnaires asked: *“Cumbria County Council is currently looking at ways to encourage more cycling in South Lakeland, particularly in-and-around Kendal. Do you have any suggestions for measures / improvements that would help achieve this?”* Over half of respondents (119) offered suggestions. The chart below summarises the number of responses under each generic heading, while the following paragraphs provide a flavour of the suggestions in each category.



More cycle lanes (on-road)

On-road cycle lanes were mentioned by 29 of those who responded to this question. A number linked the need for cycle lanes to traffic volumes and speed, whilst the quality of provision – particularly continuity of routes – was mentioned by a number.

“Cycle lanes on busy roads.”

“Stop wasting money on cycle paths/pavements, when you could just put road markings down at lower cost.”

“The Kendal road system is in places too scary for cyclists. Traffic travels too fast and does not leave enough room for bikes. So, cycle lanes and lower speed limits please.”

“Better cycle lanes.”

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- "Joined-up cycle routes and cycle thinking, not unconnected bits."*
- "More routes for cyclists, which don't end at roundabouts."*
- "Have proper cycle lanes, rather than 50m start/stop confusion."*
- "Continue with cycle lane improvement and expansion of network."*
- "More cycle lanes on major roads."*
- "Cycleway along the A590."*

More cycle paths (off-road)

Off-road cycle paths were suggested by 48 who responded to this question, a number of whom added that they considered off-road routes would generally be safer and more attractive than on-road provision. Some mentioned the need for facilities at specific locations, e.g. New Road in Kendal, between Windermere and Ambleside, or Ulverston and Greenodd.

- "More cycle routes, which are traffic-free."*
- "More safe cycle paths."*
- "Off-road cycling, car-free for children."*
- "Investigate the opportunities offered by canal paths and railway tracks."*
- "Turn New Road car park into a bike-friendly zone and garden."*
- "Sort out the New Road section of the Riverside Route."*
- "Put the cycle track in New Road."*
- "New, wider bridge to replace footbridge to putting green."*
- "Better bike paths, especially Windermere to Ambleside."*
- "A protected cycle route between Windermere and Ambleside please."*
- "Creating cycleways along main road footpaths (such as alongside the A591 to Windermere)."*
- "Cycle track alongside the railway between Windermere and Ings, to avoid major hills." (This would link into the existing route through Staveley and Burneside to Kendal).*
- "Dedicated cycle route over Dunmail Raise."*
- "Off-road route from Ulverston to Greenodd (avoiding A590). More off-road routes."*
- "Cycleway across Arnside viaduct and cycle access to Grange promenade."*
- "Allow cycling along Grange promenade."*

However, a couple of respondents were not impressed with the design of some facilities that have been implemented:

- "Stop wasting money on building cycle pathways (Stramongate bridge). Should have been piloted with paint markings first. It doesn't work."*
- "Don't mix pedestrians and cyclists when putting in cycle paths."*

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Five respondents specifically mentioned the section of **NCN6 through Kendal**, where cyclists are (certainly under the impression that they are) required to dismount and walk for some distance.

“Allow cycling along the length of NCN6 through Kendal.”

“Open NCN route through Kendal to cyclists.”

“Remove the anomalies within the town – uncyclable cycle routes, e.g. Gooseholme, etc.”

Traffic measures

Various measures relating to traffic volume, speed and management were mentioned by 12 respondents.

“Reduce the number of motor vehicles on the road, or introduce well-designed cycle tracks.”

“Keep cars out of towns.”

“No traffic in the centre of town.”

“Give cycles more priority over cars on roads where possible.”

“No cars beyond Gillingate, northwards.”

“A 30 mph speed limit on key cycle routes, e.g. Milnthorpe – Hincaster – Kendal.”

“Quiet Lane' status on a few back roads to make a route up to the lakes for horses, cyclists and walkers (with a 15mph speed limit).”

“Reduced speed limits – with 20mph in some areas.”

“Keep speeding drivers off the roads.”

“Greater priority for cyclists at side road junctions and main road crossings.”

“Priority on the highway (none at present, except for traffic lights).”

“Reduce the one-way system. Bikes need two-way streets.”

Cycle parking

Secure cycle parking in the town centre and at key trip generators was mentioned by 9 respondents, with a flavour of the suggestions below.

“More secure bike parking areas.”

“More bike racks and lockers.”

“Coin operated cycle racks.”

“Secure cycle lockups in town.”

“Places to leave cycles locked near the main shopping centres.”

Maintenance issues

A good proportion of the 13 respondents who expressed concern about the condition of the roads were particularly concerned about potholes.

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"Fill in the potholes."

"Better maintenance of the roads in general."

"Improving roads. Fill in potholes."

"Repair the potholes."

"Repair the roads."

Promotion

The 13 respondents who suggested more promotional activity relating to cycling, focused on four areas:

Schools

"More advertising and promotion of cycling by SLDC/CCC, particularly putting some encouragement into schools."

"Visit schools to promote cycling."

Driver education

"Road traffic is a problem. Make motorists more aware of cyclists."

"Better driver education."

"Get drivers to use a bike instead of the car for short trips."

Promotion of cycle routes

"Publicise cycle routes, develop literature about them."

"Advertise the bike trails that exist round and about."

Events

"Fund more CycleFests."

"Keep doing things like this."

Facilities for children

Aside from promotion in schools, 10 respondents also suggested more opportunities to enable children to ride their bikes. These fell into two areas: safe off-road routes for children to get around by bicycle, e.g. safe routes to schools; and better opportunities for cycle-play, e.g. a BMX park or MTB circuit. The latter would be a good means of allowing children to develop bike-handling skills in a fun way. Encouraging children to cycle is important in that it develops skills and habits that are more likely to stay with them for life. It gives them a means of independent travel around their local area and if/when they do become car drivers, they are likely to be more considerate to non-motorised road users.

"Plan child-friendly routes – flat, paved, safe, traffic-free."

"Safer crossing of roads for children."

"Do more for kids."

"Bike/skate park."

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“More BMX parks.”

“More skater parks for bikes.”

“Make a good skate/bike park (and make it look kool).”

Signage & maps

Signage on cycle routes and maps showing where it is good to cycle were mentioned by 13 respondents. As well as signs on existing cycle lanes and paths, signing of routes using quiet roads extends the town’s ‘virtual’ cycle network. Similarly, a map showing not only specific facilities for cyclists but also cycle-friendly routes, where traffic volumes and speeds are low, can be a very useful tool in encouraging cycle use.

“Door drop map of local cycle routes.”

“More readily available maps of cycle routes.”

“Easy access to information about cycle tracks.”

“Free maps, similar to Sedburgh, Ulverston, etc. Also covering guided trails.”

“Information on cycle routes and trails in area.”

“More signage on cycle routes/lanes.”

“Clearly marked cycle paths.”

“Signposting routes would be useful.”

“More and varied routes, clearly signed.”

“Bike-friendly signs.”

Other

Several other suggestions were made and these are listed below.

“Green bike scheme.”

“Being able to hire bikes for people with disabilities.”

“Yellow taxi bikes. Free to borrow, once registered.”

“Better facilities for taking bikes on public transport.”

“Facility to take more bikes on trains and buses.”

“More support (funding) for local groups and projects that promote cycling. There's good stuff happening and more local activity should be encouraged by CCC.”

“Consult cyclists before making daft alterations to the traffic system.”

Feedback from the cycle event organisers

The following is a synopsis of the key messages that emerged from the telephone interviews with organizers of the other events that took place during the Cycle Festival week.

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- Rides with a theme and / or destination, which included a number of refreshment stops and plenty of opportunity to admire the scenery and socialise seemed particularly popular with couples and women.
- Rides with a fun, novel and / or competitive element, e.g. the cycle treasure hunt, were particularly popular among families with children.
- People like to know what to expect on a bike ride in advance, so they can make an assessment of whether it is suited to them, and prepare appropriately.
- Led rides needed at least two experienced leaders / helpers, with the knowledge and skills between them to fix minor bike problems, such as punctures.
- Group rides with an experienced leader were popular among novice riders, assuaging concerns about having a puncture or mechanical problem, getting lost, etc.
- Rides that started in and around Kendal helped ensure that people didn't drive out to the start, and thus minimised car use.
- Introducing people to the cycle-friendly routes, and attractive riding opportunities, on their doorstep is a revelation to many non-cyclists.
- Taking novice cyclists to local destinations by bike is a great way of introducing them to the potential of this mode as a quick, cheap and effective means of local transport.
- Events due to take place at some distance from the main festival centre / town were much less likely to attract participants.
- Good weather makes a significant contribution to participation in, and enjoyment of, 'drop-in' events. Poor weather contingency plans are useful.

Would like to receive updates about cycling activities and news in the S Lakes?

88 people responded positively to this question and their contact details have been passed to SLACC and the county's cycling development officer.

Conclusions and recommendations

The objectives of this review of Kendal CycleFest were to assess levels of participation in the festival; determine who took part and what effect this is likely to have on their cycling activity in future; and identify what aspects of the festival went well / didn't work and why.

Levels of participation in the CycleFest

Just over 200 people completed a questionnaire on the Cycle Festival day in Abbot Hall Park. The organisers estimate the real number of participants was somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000. Reasons for the relatively small proportion of questionnaire respondents include an open site, where people were very free to come and go via a number of access points; limits on the capacity of volunteers who were charged with administering the surveys (e.g. while they were talking to one visitor several others 'slipped passed'); and an obvious reluctance by some types of people to be engaged in the survey work – e.g. teenagers, and non-cyclists who had happened upon the event and possibly felt their views were irrelevant.

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An assessment of levels of participation in the other events that were staged during the festival week is rather patchy. Very few questionnaires were returned from these events, indeed all 33 responses came from a single event – the adventure cycling talk and film night, which was coordinated by SLACC volunteers. Although the organisers of the other events were briefed and encouraged to ensure their participants completed a survey, on the day this didn't happen. This suggests that it requires a representative of the parent body with an interest in feedback from the festival (in this case SLACC) to ensure the questionnaires are administered, and / or that this type of survey wasn't appropriate for the nature of some of the events.

Nevertheless, from the information gleaned from the questionnaires that were returned, and the telephone interviews with event organisers, the following assessment can be made:

| Date | Event | Organiser | Participants |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Sunday 31 st May | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship | 6 |
| Sunday 31 st May | Leisure ride | Flora of the Fells Project | 17 |
| Sunday 31 st May | Family treasure hunt ride | Wheelbase | 70 |
| Sunday 31 st May | Trailquest | Wheelbase | 30. |
| Sunday 31 st May | Road Ride | Kent Valley Road Club | Not known |
| Monday 1 st June | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship | 4 |
| Monday 1 st June, | Leisure ride | Country Lanes | 0 |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | Over 50's ride | University of the Third Age | 11 |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | Lanequest | Mintcake MTB | 171 |
| Tuesday 2 nd June | Cycle maintenance class | Askews cycle shop | Not known |
| Wednesday 3 rd June | Leisure ride | Country Lanes | 0 |
| Wednesday 3 rd June | Adventure cycling talk and film | SLACC | 50 |
| Thursday 4 th June | Road cycling talk and film night | SLACC | 20 |
| Friday 5 th June | Leisure ride | Country Lanes | 0 |
| Saturday 6 th June | Off-road ride | Rough Stuff Fellowship | Not known |
| Sunday 7 th June | Nature-themed leisure ride | Cumbria Wildlife Trust | 7 |

Several of the events, such as the Lanequest, the weekend Rough Stuff Fellowship rides and the U3A over-50's ride were happening anyway, while the others were organised specially to coincide with the South Lakes Cycling Festival week. A number of those organising events had a presence at the Cycle Festival day, and

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reflected that around a third of the participants in their ensuing events had joined as a result of this.

Who took part and how will it affect their cycling activity

The Cycle Festival day:

- There were comparable numbers of male and female visitors to the Festival day.
- The largest questionnaire respondent group by age were adults between 36-45, many of whom were accompanied by children (who did not complete a separate survey).
- Some 60% of survey respondents were already regular cyclists, particularly for leisure trips, using their bikes at least a couple of times a week. The remaining could be described as occasional or non-cyclists. However, these figures should be treated with some caution, as it was evident on the day that non-cyclists were more reluctant to complete a questionnaire, so they will be under-represented in the survey results.
- Over 70% of survey respondents indicated that the CycleFest would inspire them to cycle more, 61% 'a bit' and 10% 'a lot'. Given that 60% of the respondent group already cycle regularly, this is an encouraging result.

The other events:

- In the absence of comprehensive feedback from the questionnaire surveys a clear overall picture of who took part in the other events, and what effect this will have on their future cycling activity, is difficult to deduce.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that those who joined the events via CycleFest publicity were equally likely to be either male or female.
- Not surprisingly, events aimed at families, such as the treasure hunt, attracted parents with children (in good numbers), while adults were more likely to attend events that were more challenging and /or 'just' bike rides.
- Several events, but particularly the Lanequest, were part of an established series that already had a good level of participation.

What worked / didn't work well, and why?

Things that worked particularly well:

- The timing of the Cycling Festival in early June, with a good chance of fine weather (which was delivered more-or-less throughout the week) and light evenings, was good in that it encouraged people out on their bikes. One commentator did, however, make the reasonable point that it would have been better for the festival to have coincided with National Bike Week, which took place from 13th – 21st June 2009.
- The choice of venue – Abbot Hall Park – for the Cycle Festival day was very good: accessible, attractive, inexpensive, on a popular pedestrian and cycle desire line south of Kendal town centre, with toilets and facilities to run a couple of attractions (e.g. film shows) inside.
- The festival offered a variety of activities that parents with children could get involved in, e.g. the games and stunt demonstrations at Abbot Hall Park, the cycling treasure hunt, the adventure slide show / talk involving a cycling family.

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This drew a significant number of families into the festival, reminding them of the potential of cycling as a fun activity that adults can enjoy with their children.

- The cycle stunt display team was especially well received.
- The cycling treasure hunt and Lanequest attracted very good levels of participation, albeit the latter was part of established successful series of such events. Again, both events were attractive to families.
- The 'Adventure Night', which featured the story of a family on an epic cycling trip, pulled in a very good audience.
- The Cumbria Wildlife Trust guided cycle ride from Kendal visiting local nature reserves combined two naturally sympathetic activities, and introduced the concept of travelling to local amenities and attractions by bike, rather than just going out for a bike ride.

Things that didn't work particularly well:

- None of the three rides offered by Country Lanes attracted any participants. On reflection, it was felt that this could be attributed to two factors. First, the rides all started from Windermere at 6pm, which was probably considered too far to travel for an evening ride from the heart of the CycleFest town – a hilly eight miles away in Kendal. Secondly, the ride descriptions were quite vague, stating that “...*this leisure ride will be tailored to the participants' abilities*”. This would have been off-putting to people who prefer to know what to expect in advance, not wanting to be bored by too tame a ride, or stretched by anything too demanding.
- The Road Bike Night, while reasonably well attended, was not as popular as the Adventure Night. In retrospect the former was deemed to have appeal to a much narrower potential audience.
- A number of visitors to the Cycle Festival day commented that they had expected to see more in the way of cycle equipment and accessories on display / being demonstrated. There were a couple of disparaging comments about the quality of the cycle jumble on offer.
- There was feedback from a few Festival day visitors re the limited variety of refreshment opportunities, and lack of a beer tent! Given the close proximity of Kendal town centre to the event, with its myriad food and drink outlets, such criticism could be deemed unfair. However, a wider range of such facilities might help to retain visitors for longer at the festival site.

Recommendations for the future

In summary, the CycleFest that took place in Kendal at the beginning of June 2009, organized by SLACC and TSL, appears to have been a significant success. It attracted sufficient sponsorship to cover its costs, and generated a good deal of contributions in kind, galvanizing a tremendous volume of community spirit and volunteer activity, to encourage an activity that many public bodies have a remit to promote for health and environmental reasons. Based on the experience of this event, it would seem appropriate to recommend a similar model in other areas of the County and, indeed, to suggest a repeat in South Lakeland in future years. To this end the following are a few considerations to bear in mind:

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- The vast majority of people who provided feedback about the Kendal CycleFest, whether participants or involved in the organisation, expressed the view that they considered it a very successful initiative, and they would like to see a repeat in future years. A number commented specifically that it should be an annual event in South Lakeland, learning from early experience to provide an increasingly polished performance that builds in momentum.
- The success of the Kendal event relied, to a large extent, on the tenacity and willingness of SLACC members to invest a considerable amount of their volunteer time and effort in organizing the event. Similar events elsewhere, or in Kendal, in future, would need to assess, at the outset, the level of resources required, and determine whether they have the human and financial reserves to meet these. Once they have established the level of resources and participation needed organisers should approach local businesses, cycle groups etc to galvanise support for the event.
- Whilst the event in Kendal had the enthusiastic support of Cumbria County Council's cycling development officer, neither district nor county council supported the event financially, or materially. Perhaps a future event could specifically invite sceptical councillors to attend, in the hope of winning some influential hearts and minds. Clearly work needs to be done in persuading councillors that promoting cycling can be of benefit in helping the council fulfil some of its objectives, such as reducing congestion. Also that community groups, such as SLACC can greatly assist them in this promotion and are worthy of the council's support.
- Kendal CycleFest was approximately six months in gestation. Relying on largely volunteer effort, this is not an unreasonable lead-in time for a similar event.
- Consider timing cycling festivals to coincide with National Bike Week.
- Ensure that the venue for a cycling festival day is chosen to be easily accessible to those who make a prior decision to attend, but also to attract 'passing trade'. It should also offer toilets, as well as sufficient space for the nature of activities and volume and visitors anticipated.
- Consider providing secure cycle parking at any events associated with a cycling festival.
- The underlying theme of any cycling festival should be fun. Campaigning messages do have their place, but these can be delivered in a light-hearted and amusing way that won't alienate the very groups of people such events are intended to influence.
- Ensure the festivals include a good range of hands-on activities to enable a wide variety of people, particularly those not traditionally given to cycling and those with disabilities, to get involved.
- Try and encourage good involvement from local cycle dealers, particularly presence at any fair / festival day. Suggest they use such an event to show off a range of equipment and accessories to suit those just starting out in cycling, as well as cycling for transport, and cycling with children. It is these potential markets, rather than the existing, committed, knowledgeable rider, that such events are designed to influence. (The organisers comment that all the local cycling outlets were invited to provide such stalls but were not interested or didn't respond. However, smaller shops may struggle to staff their shop and a

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stall at the festival on a summer Saturday). That said, the two largest cycle retailers in the area did support the festival with bike maintenance and event organisation.

- In addition to the previous recommendation, to cater for a slightly different market and in line with the principles of sustainability, consider organising a cycle recycling scheme as part of the festival, involving both entire bikes and associated accessories. This will require some management to ensure adequate quality, and serviceability of the equipment on offer.
- Disabled access to site and cycling facilities for disabled people was an important part of this festival and this element should be part of future plans. Cycling can provide mobility for those who find it difficult to walk very far.
- Consider catering arrangements that provide a reasonable choice for a variety of tastes, while generally being aligned to the principles of healthy eating, utilising local products and services as far as reasonable.
- Challenging events for experienced cyclists, e.g. time trial and fast-paced road rides, have limited relevance to a cycling festival designed to attract new and novice riders. However, many people – including inexperienced and non-cyclist – do enjoy the spectacle of racing cyclists. Consider, therefore, criterium races around the streets of the town hosting a cycling festival.
- Cycle stunt display teams provide a great visual spectacle, can usually be drawn from local youth groups at a modest cost, and should be a feature of any cycling festival.
- Include in the festival programme a number of rides with a destination, e.g. a local nature reserve, open garden, swimming pool, or whatever. This will help familiarize participants with the role of the bicycle as a means of transport, and what can be accessed locally, as well as recreational activity in its own right.
- Try and keep the festival programme within cycling distance of the main hub, to facilitate good levels of participation and reduce car use among those accessing remoter events.
- Have poor weather contingency plans for all outside activities, even if this is only asking participants if they would like to proceed with the original plan, and responding to the majority view.
- Ensure ride leaders are sufficiently skilled and equipped to deal with minor roadside cycle repairs, and have the ability to draw in outside assistance if required.
- Offer National Standard Bikeability Cycle Training, for both adults and children, through the festival programme. This will almost certainly need to be organised as a planned discrete activity, facilitated by an information and 'sign-up' stand at a festival day to familiarize interested participants with what is involved. This was not mentioned by any of the questionnaire respondents, perhaps because there are few active, qualified trainers in the area, so awareness is low, especially for adult training. However, it is a very effective way of overcoming fears and perceptions about the safety of cycling and giving inexperienced riders confidence.
- Provide lots of information which signposts those touched by the festival to other local opportunities to participate in cycling activity, such as local groups, rides, maps, route ideas, places to visit by bike, cycle dealers, cycle hire outlets, training opportunities, etc.

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- As many established bike events organised by local cycling groups are aimed at reasonably competent riders, consider coordinating a series of less demanding rides aimed at novices in the weeks following a cycling festival, to enable them to build-up confidence and experience in using this mode of transport and recreation.
- Look for opportunities to mould existing local health-promoting, leisure and recreational programmes and activities to include a cycling element, to support the objectives a cycling festival. For example, 'Health Rides' to complement the 'Health Walks' series; nature watching trips by bike (run by the likes of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Friends of the Lake District, etc).

In addition to the conclusions and recommendations outlined above, the research surrounding Kendal CycleFest yielded some useful ideas about what cyclists, and potential cyclists, consider could be done to improve conditions for cycling in South Lakeland. This information will be fed into a separate report, being prepared by the same Cycling England consultant, on what could be done to capitalise on the vestiges of Cumbria County Council's unsuccessful bid for Kendal to become a designated Cycling Town.

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Appendix 1: South Lakes Cycle Festival Day Visitor Questionnaire

Please spend 5 minutes completing this questionnaire to help us plan for future cycling promotional events, and for the chance to win £50 worth of cycling accessories from Probikekit.

1. How did you learn of the Festival?

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local press | <input type="checkbox"/> | Website | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Flier / poster | <input type="checkbox"/> | Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local radio | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | |

.....

2. How often do you cycle?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Most days | <input type="checkbox"/> | A few times a year | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A couple of times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A couple of times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. For what trip purposes do you cycle (*Tick all that apply*)?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Journeys to / from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Visiting friends / family | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Journeys to / from school / college | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fun / recreational rides | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shopping / local errands | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sport / competition | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To access leisure facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | None | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. What Cycle Festival activities have you enjoyed (*Tick all that apply*)?

| | Fab | OK | Not much | Didn't do |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kendal Bike Trails Team stunt display | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Watching films in the bike-powered cinema | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trying out some of the unusual cycles | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Eating some bicycle powered food | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking part in some of the games / competitions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Doing some cycle skills training | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visiting the local cycling group stalls | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visiting the Dr Bike (cycle maintenance) Clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Listening to one of the talks about cycling | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Having a health check on a training bike | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visiting the Kids Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Will the Cycle Festival inspire and encourage you to start cycling, or cycle more?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Yes, a will probably cycle a bit more than I do now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, a will probably cycle a lot more than I do now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, it is unlikely to affect how much I cycle | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. Cumbria County Council is currently looking at ways to encourage more cycling in South Lakeland, particularly in-and-around Kendal. Do you have any suggestions for measures / improvements that would help achieve this?

.....

7. Are you male? or female?

8. How old are you?

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46 – 55 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 – 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 56 – 65 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26 – 35 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 66 – 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36 – 45 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. Any other comments, or suggestions, about the Cycle Festival?

.....

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10. If you would like to be included in the prize draw, please provide a name and contact phone number below.

.....

If you would like to receive information about initiatives to promote cycling in South Lakeland please provide an email address.

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If you would like to receive mailings from www.whatson.com, please tick this box

Appendix 2: South Lakes Cycle Festival Event Questionnaire

Please spend five minutes completing this questionnaire to help us plan for future cycling promotional events, and for the chance to win £50 worth of cycling accessories from Probikekit.

11. How did you learn of the Festival?

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local press | <input type="checkbox"/> | Website | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Flier / poster | <input type="checkbox"/> | Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local radio | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | |

.....

12. How often do you cycle?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Most days | <input type="checkbox"/> | A few times a year | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A couple of times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A couple of times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. For what trip purposes do you cycle (*Tick all that apply*)?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Journeys to / from work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Visiting friends / family | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Journeys to / from school / college | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fun / recreational rides | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shopping / local errands | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sport / competition | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To access leisure facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | None | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. At which Cycle Festival event did you complete this questionnaire?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Flora of the Fells Ride (Sunday 31 st May) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kentmere Konundrum Ride (Sunday 31 st May) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Old Shap Road Ride (Sunday 31 st May) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trailquest (Sunday 31 st May) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Winster Valley Ride (Monday 1 st June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Windermere Country Lanes Ride (1 st 3 rd or 5 th June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mountain Bike Night (Tuesday 2 nd June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| South Lakes U3A Ride (Tuesday 2 nd June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bicycle Maintenance Workshop (Tuesday 2 nd June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Family on a Bike talk (Wednesday 3 rd June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Windermere Country Lanes Ride (Wednesday 3 rd June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Road Biking Night (Thursday 4 th June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Askham Fell Ride (Saturday 6 th June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cumbria Wildlife Trust Ride (Sunday 7 th June) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. Will your participation in the Cycle Festival inspire and encourage you to start cycling, or cycle more?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Yes, I will probably cycle a bit more than I do now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, I will probably cycle a lot more than I do now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, it is unlikely to affect how much I cycle | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. Cumbria County Council is currently looking at ways to encourage more cycling in South Lakeland, particularly in-and-around Kendal. Do you have any suggestions for measures / improvements that would help achieve this?

.....

17. Are you male? or female?

18. How old are you?

- | | | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 – 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26 – 35 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36 – 45 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46 – 55 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 56 – 65 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 66 – 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

19. Any comments, or suggestions, about the Cycle Festival event you took part in?

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.....
20. If you would like to be included in the prize draw, please provide a name and contact phone number below.

.....
If you would like to receive information about initiatives to promote cycling in South Lakeland please provide an email address.

.....
If you would like to receive mailings from www.whatson.com, please tick this box

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Appendix 3: Images from the Cycle Festival day



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