



# Bikes for All evaluation:

Phase one report 2018/2019

Gregor Yates

Bruce Whyte

Glasgow Centre for Population Health

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### **Steering group organisations and members:**

**CoMoUK:** Chris Slade (Chair), Harriet Cross

**Bike for Good:** Nina Bocard, Victoria Leiper

**Cycling Scotland:** Kath Brough

**Glasgow Centre for Population Health:** Gregor Yates, Bruce Whyte

**nextbike:** Valentin Ken Niikado

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### **Report authors:**

Gregor Yates  
Public Health Research Specialist  
Glasgow Centre for Population Health  
Email: [Gregor.yates@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Gregor.yates@glasgow.ac.uk)

Bruce Whyte  
Public Health Programme Manager  
Glasgow Centre for Population Health  
Email: [bruce.whyte@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:bruce.whyte@glasgow.ac.uk)

Web: [www.gcph.co.uk](http://www.gcph.co.uk)

Twitter: [@theGCPH](https://twitter.com/theGCPH)

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## **Executive summary**

Bikes for All (BfA) is a Glasgow-based cycling inclusion project linked to nextbike Glasgow, the city's largest bike hire scheme. The project aims to reduce inequalities in access to cycling through the provision of low-cost bike hire, by building up cycling confidence and by reducing barriers to cycling for first-time or lapsed cyclists. BfA offers annual membership to nextbike Glasgow for £3 (no bank account required). Participants are recruited by Bike for Good staff through collaboration with a range of Glasgow-based community groups (see acknowledgements). Targeted recruitment has focused on people who face financial barriers, those not currently cycling or without access to a bike, or population groups that are less likely to cycle. Support to take up cycling is provided through cycle training, organised bike rides for different population groups, route finding advice and confidence-boosting road skill sessions. In the two years that the project has been operating to date (July 2017 - July 2019), 414 participants have been signed up and 10,253 bike rentals have been made. The research findings presented here are based on survey responses captured over a 13-month period from March 2018 to the end of March 2019.

Following recruitment to the programme, participants were invited to complete two surveys: a baseline survey issued at sign-up; and a follow-up survey after at least three months of participation. In total, 189 participants completed the baseline survey and 81 completed the follow-up survey. The baseline survey captured information on demography and socioeconomic status, cycling capability, barriers to cycling, transport use and health. The follow-up, meanwhile, captured this information at a later time point, but also included questions on the health, social and financial impacts of participation. An additional report based on focus group discussions and interviews with a sample of participants is published separately and is available on the Glasgow Centre for Population Health website<sup>1</sup>.

Our findings show that BfA is an effective approach for encouraging participation among under-represented groups in cycling and minority population groups. Almost half (49%) of the participants identified as Black and minority ethnicity (BME), 26% were seeking asylum, 10% were refugees, 28% were unemployed, 9% were homeless and 61% were from the most deprived 20% of communities in Scotland. Older adults (aged 65 and over) were the only under-represented population group that have not engaged as intended. Overall, however, the project demonstrated that with the right approach, a diverse population can be encouraged to take up or re-engage with cycling.

BfA touches on a range of policy areas, including transport, social and financial inclusion, health and sustainability, and the evidence from this evaluation suggests that it is a cost-

effective approach to addressing multiple societal challenges. Participants have benefited through increased physical activity, improved mental wellbeing, social interaction, financial savings and through gaining confidence in cycling. In the current climate emergency<sup>2,3</sup>, effective approaches to reducing harmful transport emissions are needed. Findings from this project reveal that BfA and the continued expansion of nextbike in Glasgow can be part of the solution to this challenge.

Despite positive engagement with the project, safety remains a key concern for many participants. Wider evidence suggests that to address barriers relating to safety or a lack of confidence, a range of complementary approaches will be needed. The requirement for cycle training and safe cycling infrastructure is not an either/or; both are needed. Reduced traffic speeds would also contribute to a safer road environment<sup>4</sup>.

The intensive work of Bike for Good staff and engagement with community groups has been crucial in enabling participation for many. This work has been comprehensive, from identifying and approaching local groups, providing cycle training, arranging events and resolving ongoing issues, to ensuring that participants have been able to complete the evaluation. This level of support will need to be maintained for the continued successful roll-out of the programme and would be important to have in place if replicated elsewhere.

Participants would like to see continued expansion of nextbike Glasgow through increasing the number of bikes at existing locations and by opening new stations. To ensure that any further expansion to peripheral parts of the city is taken up – in particular in areas where cycling rates are lower – further financial incentives, intensive support, route-finding information and cycle training will be needed, as well as improvements to safety already described.

## **1. Introduction and background**

### **1.1 About Bikes for All**

Bikes for All (BfA) is a Glasgow-based project which aims to increase the accessibility of cycling by breaking down barriers such as ability, confidence or income through the provision of shared bikes and one-to-one support. The project is delivered by Bike for Good and is managed and evaluated by a partnership of CoMoUK, Bike for Good, the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Cycling Scotland and nextbike. Participants are recruited by Bike for Good staff through their existing relationships with Glasgow-based community groups. Targeted recruitment has focused on people who face financial barriers, those not currently cycling or without access to a bike, and population groups that are less likely to cycle (e.g. ethnic minority groups and women).

BfA offers annual membership to the city-wide bike hire scheme, nextbike Glasgow, for £3. Participants can pay by cash and no bank account is required. The aim is to reduce inequalities in access to cycling by providing low-cost bike hire and by reducing barriers to first-time cyclists and people who wish to return to cycling. Additional support to take up cycling is provided through bike rides for different population groups, route-finding advice and confidence-boosting road skill sessions.

### **1.2 Cycling participation**

Glasgow has experienced steady growth in cycling in recent years. This has been facilitated by investment in cycling infrastructure, cycle training and education, improvements to the physical environment and the establishment of an extensive cycle hire scheme, provided by nextbike. However, despite continuing progress, cycling remains a minority form of transport compared with driving, public transport or walking, accounting for just 2% of journeys in Scotland<sup>5</sup>. For everyday journeys this figure is slightly higher, but still well below the target of 10% of everyday journeys being made by bike in Scotland by 2020<sup>6</sup> – a target which will not be met. A recent review of the impact of 84 active travel interventions across the world – including school-based interventions, city and town-wide interventions, improvements to routes and inter-personal interventions – found that over two-thirds resulted in increased levels of active travel, with the greatest impacts experienced when applied to a whole system or city<sup>7</sup>. This highlights the potential for further increases in cycling across Glasgow, with the further expansion of nextbike Glasgow potentially helping to facilitate this growth.

A further challenge to increasing cycling participation is to make it more universally appealing. Statistics on the demographic profile of cyclists in Glasgow demonstrate the need

to encourage increased participation from women, people from ethnic minority groups and residents of deprived areas. For example, the percentage of people cycling from the 20% least deprived areas in Scotland is much higher than the 20% most deprived areas (16% versus 6%)<sup>8</sup>. Bike ownership is also closely related to household income; 60% of Scottish households earning £40,000 or more have access to a bike compared with just 16% of households earning less than £10,000<sup>9</sup>. Glasgow's high rates of poverty therefore provide some explanation as to why bike ownership is lower than the Scottish population (25% versus 37% respectively)<sup>6</sup>. This demonstrates the value of providing accessible and affordable bikes for people who find them most difficult to access, alongside complementary measures to improve infrastructure, safety and cycling competency.

### **1.3 Evaluation of Bikes for All**

An evaluation of the programme's reach and impact has been led by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. The evaluation has included two main components: surveys of users and a qualitative follow-up through focus groups and one-to-one interviews. The qualitative research was commissioned to an external research company and is published as a separate report<sup>1</sup>. For the survey component, a baseline survey was issued at sign-up, and subsequently, a follow-up survey was issued after at least three months of participation. Both surveys have captured information on the socio-demographic characteristics of participants (i.e. gender, age, ethnicity, work status, living situation, resident status and home postcode), as well as information on each participant's current levels of physical activity, general health and perceived barriers to cycling. However, the follow-up included additional questions to assess the impact of participation. Data were captured over a 13-month period from March 2018 to the end of March 2019. In total, 189 participants completed the baseline survey and 81 completed the follow-up survey. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 224 new participants were recruited, although prior to this 71 people had already been recruited between July and October 2017; meaning that 295 BfA participants had been recruited overall by March 2019. Both surveys were issued to participants by Bike for Good staff. Where participants did not speak English as a first language, a staff member would read the questions or be on hand to answer any queries.

## 2. Profile of respondents

The demographic profile of respondents to both surveys is provided in Table 1, together with the Glasgow population<sup>6,10,11</sup>, cyclists in Glasgow<sup>12</sup> and respondents from Glasgow to a survey of bike scheme users across the UK<sup>12</sup>. This is intended to demonstrate the reach of BfA within the city's demographic context. The demographic profile of the follow-up survey is provided to show how representative it is of the baseline survey population<sup>a</sup>.

**Table 1. Demographic profile of participants and the wider population.**

	Baseline survey (n=189)	Follow-up survey (n=81)	Glasgow Population	Cyclists in Glasgow	nextbike survey respondents (n=532)
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	55%	52%	49%	68%	59%
Female	42%	47%	51%	32%	38%
Prefer not to say	3%	1%			
<b>Age<sup>b</sup></b>					
16-24	17%	12%	15%	25%	16%
25-44	58%	54%	40%	44%	61%
45-64	24%	29%	29%	26%	n/a
65+	1%	5%	15%	5%	n/a
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
BME	49%	40%	12%	8%	9%
<b>Work status<sup>c</sup></b>					
Full time	22%	19%	-	-	67%
Part time/temporary	14%	16%	-	-	9%
Unemployed	28%	23%	6%	-	1%
Retired	4%	7%	-	-	2%
Student	24%	32%	-	-	17%
Other	13%	9%	-	-	4%
<b>Living situation</b>					
Own property/mortgaged	24%	32%	45%	-	-
Rent (private/social)	35%	36%	55%	-	-
Homeless	9%	21%	<1%	-	-
Other	32%	11%	-	-	-
<b>Resident status</b>					
UK resident	61%	63%	-	-	-
Seeking asylum	26%	16%	<1%	-	-
Refugee status in UK	10%	15%	<1%	-	-
Prefer not to say	3%	6%	-	-	-
<b>SIMD</b>					
20% most deprived in Scotland	61%	-	47%	-	-
<b>Access to a bike at home</b>					
Yes	21%	-	25%	-	-

<sup>a</sup> Some percentages may amount to more of less than one hundred due to rounding.

<sup>b</sup> These figures only include the percentage of the population aged 16 and over who are cycling.

<sup>c</sup> This question allowed multiple responses

## **Gender**

Data from the baseline survey shows that men were more likely to take part than women (55% versus 42%). The remainder chose not to reveal their gender, selecting 'prefer not to say'. The percentage of women involved in the BfA project is higher than the percentage split of cyclists in Glasgow, where 32% are women and 68% are men<sup>13</sup>. Meanwhile, information captured on nextbike use between 2014 and 2016 in Glasgow showed that 55% of users were men and 36% were women (the remainder did not provide their gender)<sup>14</sup>, while a survey of nextbike Glasgow users in 2019 found a similar gender split (59% men; 38% women)<sup>12</sup>.

## **Age**

Comparing the baseline sample with the population of cyclists in Glasgow shows that there was a smaller proportion of participants aged 16-24 (17% versus 25%), a greater proportion aged 25-44 (58% versus 44%), and a lesser proportion aged 45-64 (24% versus 29%) or 65+ (1% versus 5%). Clearly efforts are required to increase cycling among older people, particularly as the population continues to age. For nextbike users in Glasgow, the age categories used were different and therefore a direct comparison is not possible. However, a comparison of users by age from Glasgow and the rest of the UK shows that a higher percentage of Glasgow-based users were under 35<sup>12</sup>.

## **Ethnicity**

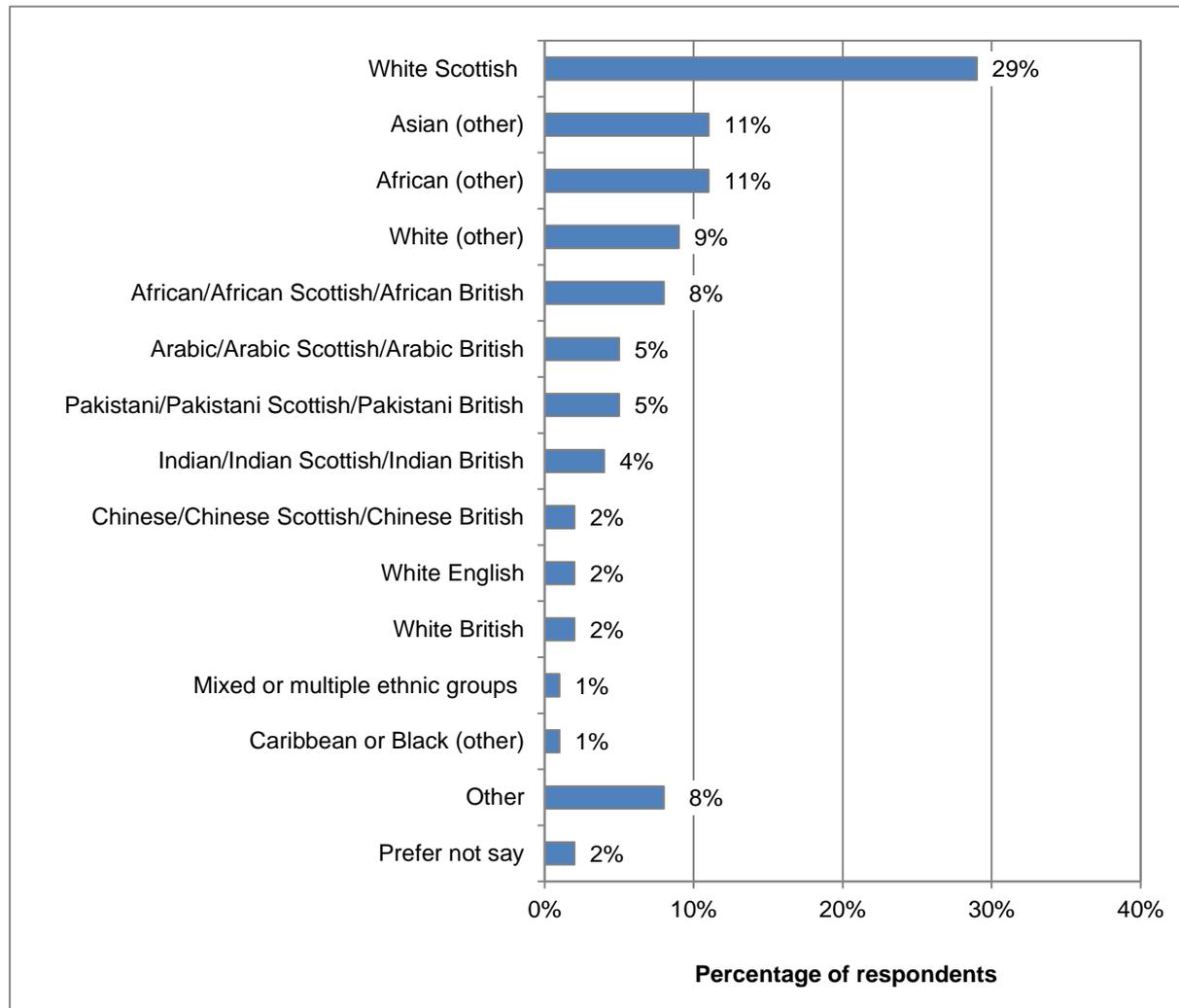
Figure 1 shows the ethnicity of participants (baseline survey) in detail. Further ethnicity categories were included in the question, but only those which received a response are included here. Overall, almost half of the baseline participants (49%) identified as being Black and minority ethnicity (BME). This is considerably higher than in the Glasgow population (12%), the percentage of BME cyclists in Glasgow (8%) or the percentage of nextbike Glasgow survey respondents (9%). The spread of ethnic groups participating in BfA demonstrates its positive reach and overarching appeal.

## **Work status, living situation and resident status**

The percentage of unemployed respondents (baseline survey) is considerably higher than the percentage of unemployed people in Glasgow (28% versus 6%). A lower percentage of participants owned a property than the Glasgow population (24% versus 45%) and 9% of baseline respondents were homeless. In addition, a number of participants stated 'other' in relation to their living situation, with many stating that they were living in temporary accommodation. Over a quarter of baseline survey respondents (26%) were seeking asylum

and 10% had refugee status in the UK. Although Glasgow has the highest number of asylum seekers of any UK city, this proportion is below 1% of the population.

**Figure 1: Ethnicity of participants (baseline survey; n=189).**



## 2.1 Distribution of participants

Figure 2 shows the distribution of participants (baseline survey) across Greater Glasgow alongside the location of nextbike stations. The largest clusters of participants are in Govan, Govanhill, Bridgeton, Dalmarnock and Dennistoun, which include some of the most socioeconomically deprived areas in the city<sup>15</sup>. Figure 3 is a map of participants with a Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintile overlay. The areas in dark blue represent 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland, while the areas in the lightest blue are the least deprived. Overall, 61% of participants came from a 20% most deprived area in Scotland and 5% were from a 20% least deprived area.

Figure 2: Distribution of participants (baseline survey; n=189).

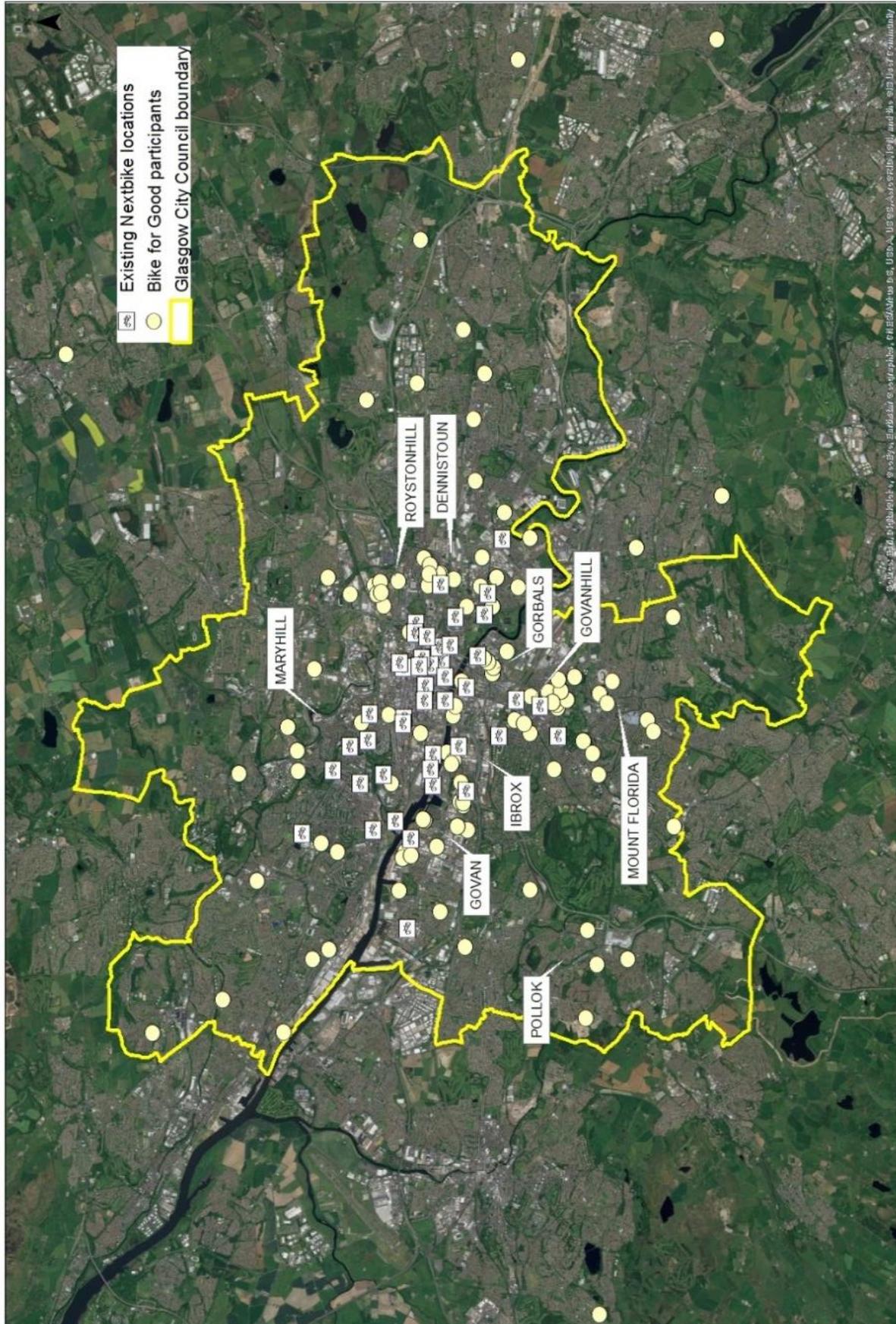
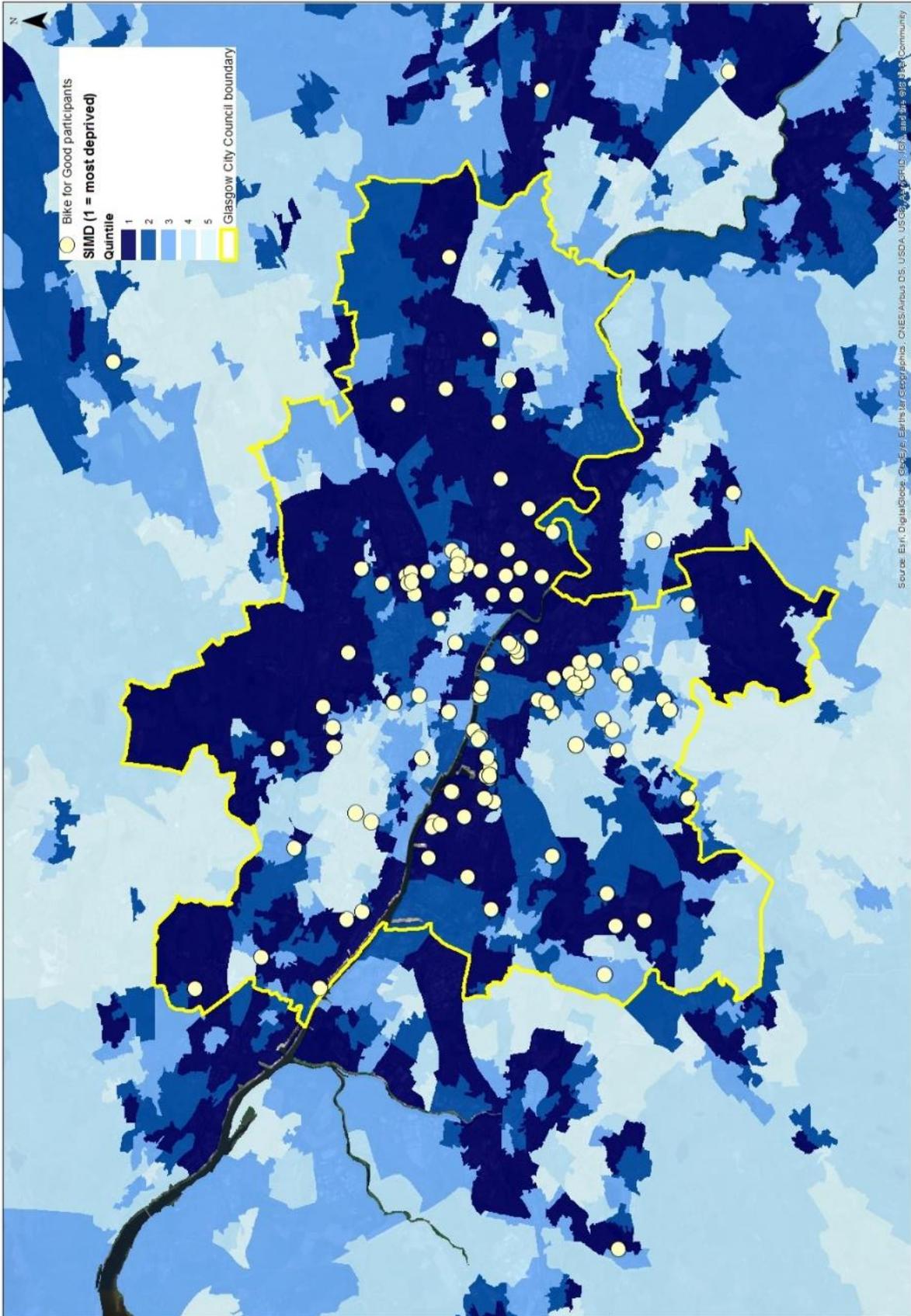


Figure 3: Distribution of participants across SIMD quintiles (baseline survey; n=189).



### 3. Results

Findings presented here are based on the results of the baseline (n=189) and follow-up (n=81) surveys, as well as data obtained from nextbike Glasgow. A combination of closed and open-ended questions were included (see appendix for full question set). Some repeat questions were included in both surveys to allow the results to be compared at sign-up and after participation. Table 2 shows which sources of information have been used for each section.

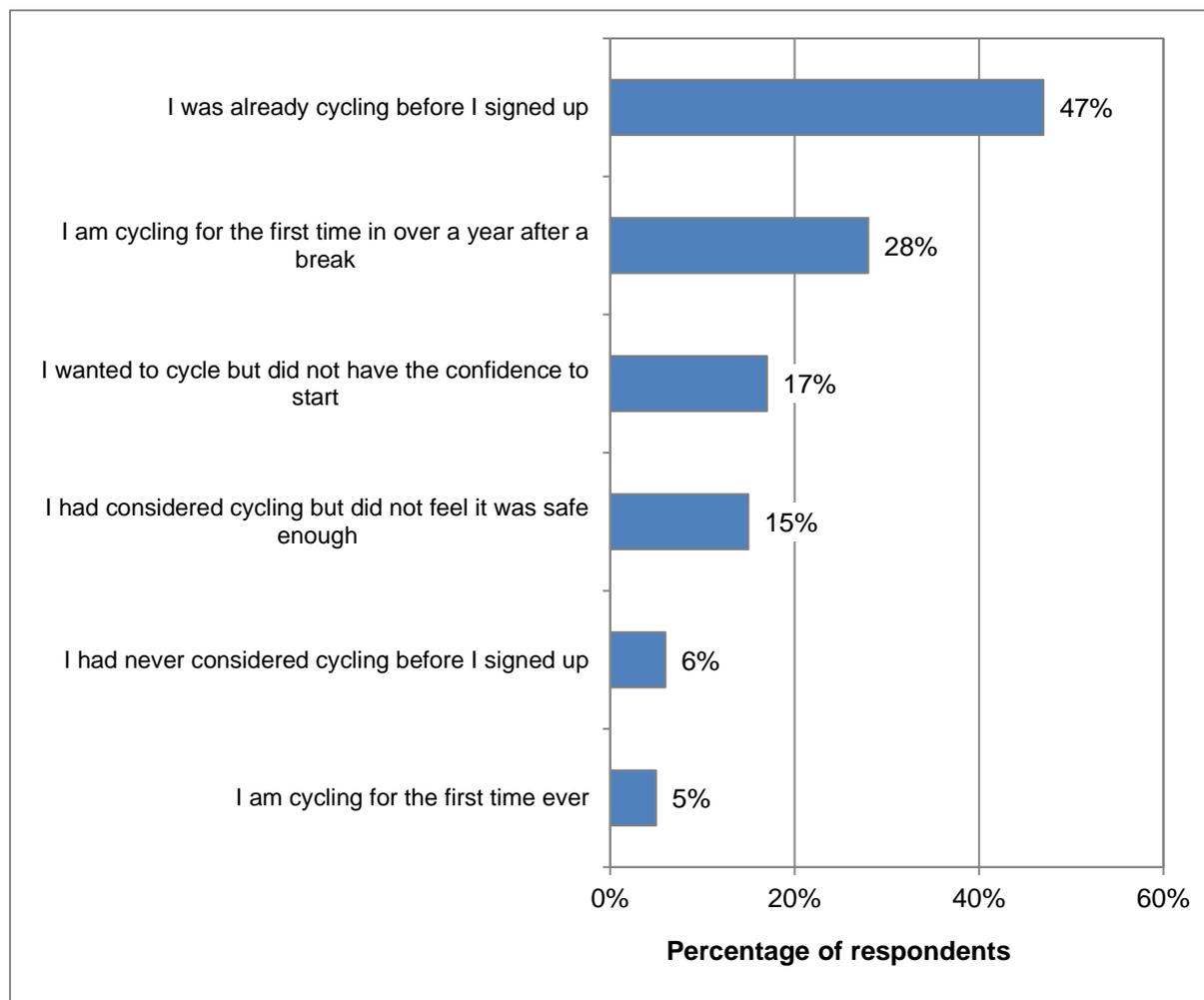
**Table 2. Results sections by source of data.**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Source (s)</b>
3.1. Cycling behaviour	Baseline survey
3.2. Health, physical activity and journey modes	Baseline and follow-up surveys
3.3. Use of nextbikes	nextbike data
3.4. Barriers to cycling	Baseline and follow-up surveys
3.5. Purpose of nextbike use	Follow-up survey
3.6. Usefulness of Bikes for All activities	Follow-up survey
3.7. Barriers to nextbike use	Follow-up survey
3.8. Impact of participation on different aspects of life	Follow-up survey
3.9 Suggested improvements	Follow-up survey

#### 3.1 Cycling behaviour

Figure 4 shows cycling behaviour and intentions at sign-up. Participants were asked to select all responses that applied. Almost half (47%) were cycling at sign-up and just 5% were cycling for the first time. Confidence and safety were barriers to a number of participants and many were cycling for the first time after a break (28%). This shows that BfA predominantly appealed to people who had some past experience of cycling.

**Figure 4: Cycling behaviour of participants at sign-up (baseline survey; n=189).**



### **3.2 Health, physical activity and journey modes**

Table 3 shows changes in participant responses to repeat questions across the two surveys. These questions were included to show the impact of participation on feelings and behaviours relating to general health, physical activity, community life and journeys. From an already high baseline, the percentage of participants who rated their health as 'good' or 'very good' increased at follow-up. A similar percentage increase was found for undertaking 60 minutes or more of physical activity, although there was little change in the percentage of people doing no activity (8% versus 7%). 'Feelings of belonging to a community' reduced, but these results should be treated with caution given the small sample size. In terms of travel modes used for journeys, as expected, there was a large increase in the percentage of participants cycling, while for other modes of travel there was little change. This suggests that cycling did not displace other journeys, but cycling trips were for a separate purpose or used to connect journeys.

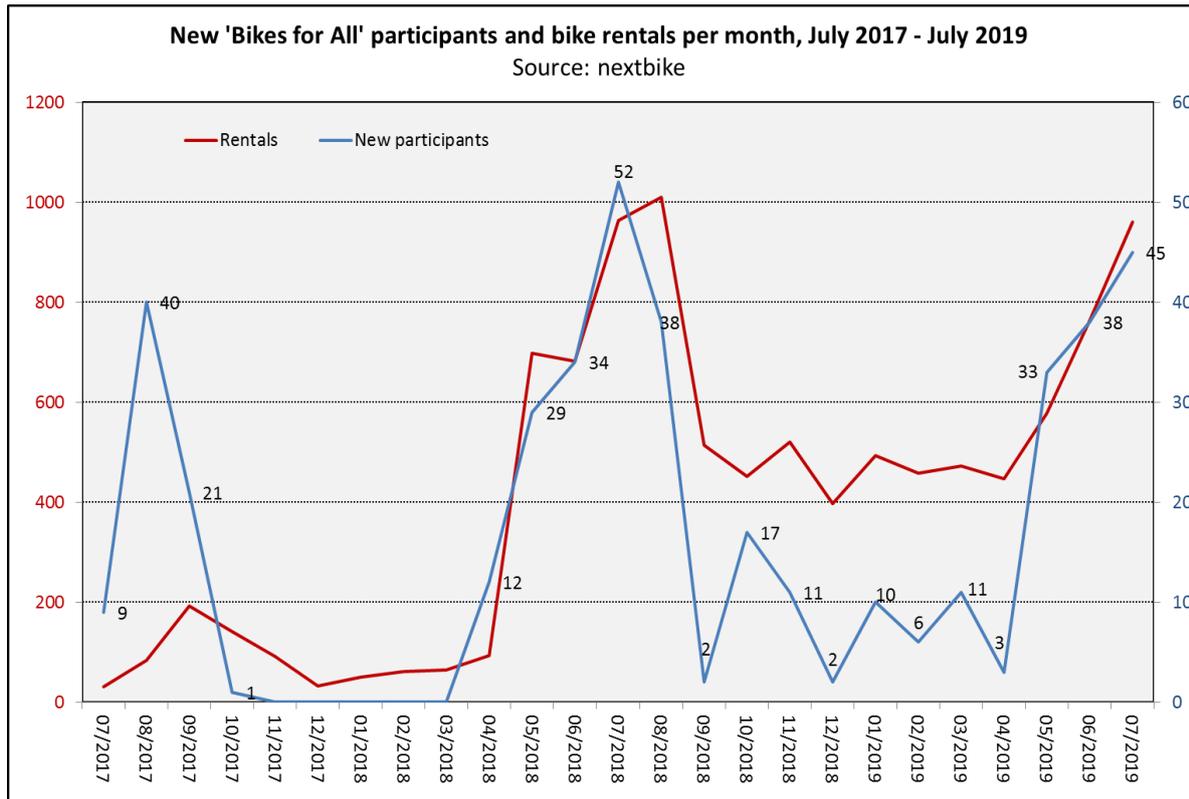
**Table 3. Comparable results.**

	<b>Baseline survey (n=189)</b>	<b>Follow-up survey (n=81)</b>
<b>Feelings and behaviour</b>		
Rate general health as good or very good	75%	83%
Undertaken more than 60 minutes of physical activity in last week	58%	66%
Feel that they belong to their community	77%	69%
<b>Journeys (once per week or more)</b>		
Cycle	24%	54%
Drive	32%	43%
Walk	85%	88%
Private transport	12%	12%
Public transport	61%	63%
<b>Journeys (never use this mode of transport)</b>		
Cycle	52%	19%
Drive	50%	47%
Walk	8%	5%
Private transport	53%	48%
Public transport	12%	6%

### 3.3. Participant recruitment and rentals

Data on new BfA recruits and bike rentals by participants were provided by nextbike for the whole period of the scheme (from July 2017 to July 2019). Figure 5 illustrates that there have been three main phases of recruitment to BfA. An initial phase (July - October 2017), a second phase (April - November 2018) and a third phase (from approximately May 2019 onwards). The trend in use of the nextbikes by participants tends to follow the recruitment pattern, with usage rising as recruitment rises, particularly in the summer months. Over the whole period since the start of the project (July 2017 - July 2019), 414 participants have been signed up. This represents 8% of all new annual members of the nextbike scheme in Glasgow in this period. Over this period 10,253 nextbike hires have been made by BfA participants, representing 2.3% of all nextbike hires in Glasgow.

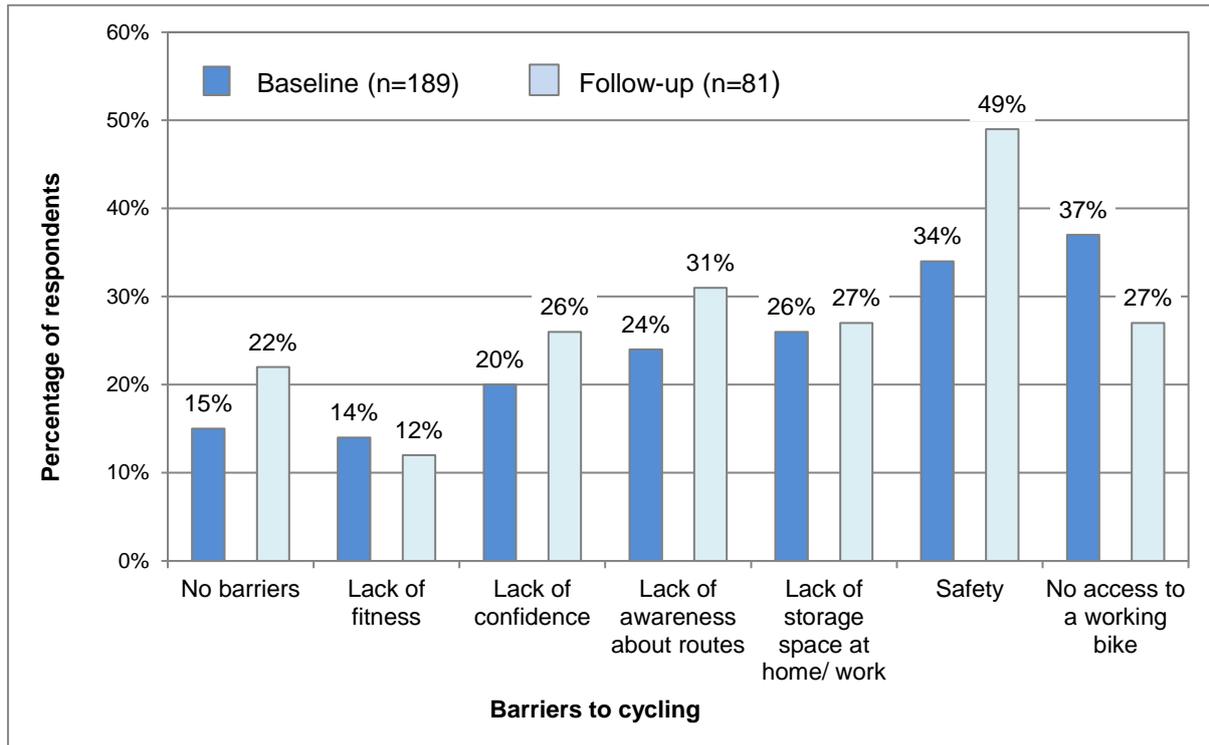
**Figure 5: New BfA participants and bike rentals per month, July 2017 - July 2019.**



### 3.4 Barriers to cycling

Participants were asked whether a number of factors were a barrier to cycling for them (Figure 6). As could be expected, having access to a bike was less of a barrier at follow-up, while more people felt there were 'no barriers' at follow-up. However, for many factors the potential barrier was perceived to be greater at follow-up. For example, safety, a lack of confidence and awareness of routes were noted as barriers by a greater percentage of respondents following participation.

**Figure 6: Barriers to cycling (baseline survey; n=189, follow-up survey; n=81).**



For the follow-up survey, an option was included to provide an open-ended comment for each barrier. Comments are provided here from the most common barrier to the least. ‘Safety’ received the most comments (n=9), with these generally covering the dangers of cycling in traffic.

*“Most roads in Glasgow are very dangerous because there’s too many cars and not cycling friendly – I have to cycle on the pavement where cycle lanes aren’t provided.”*

*“Worry about busy roads and cycling in traffic.”*

Not having ‘access to a working bike’ was the next most important barrier to participants (n=8).

*“My bike is broken and at the moment I can’t afford to fix it.”*

*“My bike is recently broken.”*

Comments about a ‘lack of confidence’ (n=4) were mainly conflated with traffic and being uncomfortable on the road or a ‘lack of awareness about routes’ (n=4)

*“Still feel unconfident on roads & balance.”*

*“Worried about traffic and falling.”*

*“Unsure of safe way of leaving city centre at times.”*

Feedback relating to a ‘lack of space to store a bike at home or at work’ highlighted the challenges of living in a flat (n=4).

*“Live on top floor of a tenement.”*

*“Stay in an upstairs flat with no storage space.”*

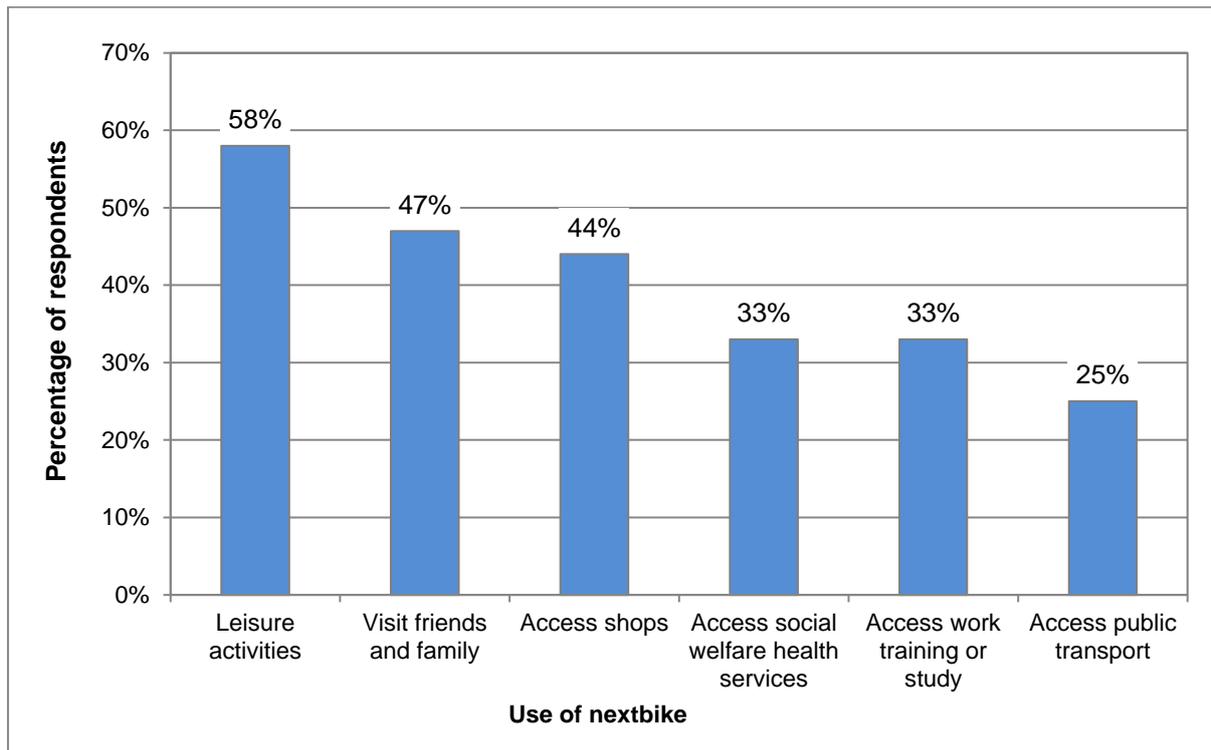
Two responses relating to a ‘lack of fitness’ were also offered, with the remainder provided under the ‘other’ option (n=8). Most of the responses here described the difficulty of cycling in bad weather.

These findings could perhaps be explained by participants not being aware of, or exposed to, the various barriers beforehand, with more regular experience of cycling increasing awareness. Overall it suggests that more intensive work is required to build up confidence in people who are new to cycling, alongside measures that can make it feel safer, more accessible and easier to navigate around the city.

### **3.5 Purpose of nextbike use**

This section covers how involvement in BfA had impacted on various aspects of participants’ lives. Figure 7 shows that nextbikes were used for a variety of purposes, with the most common being for leisure (e.g. going to the gym, a park or play facilities). Access to transport was the least common reason for use (25%). This should be considered in relation to journeys by other modes, which showed that there was no decrease in journey types other than cycling.

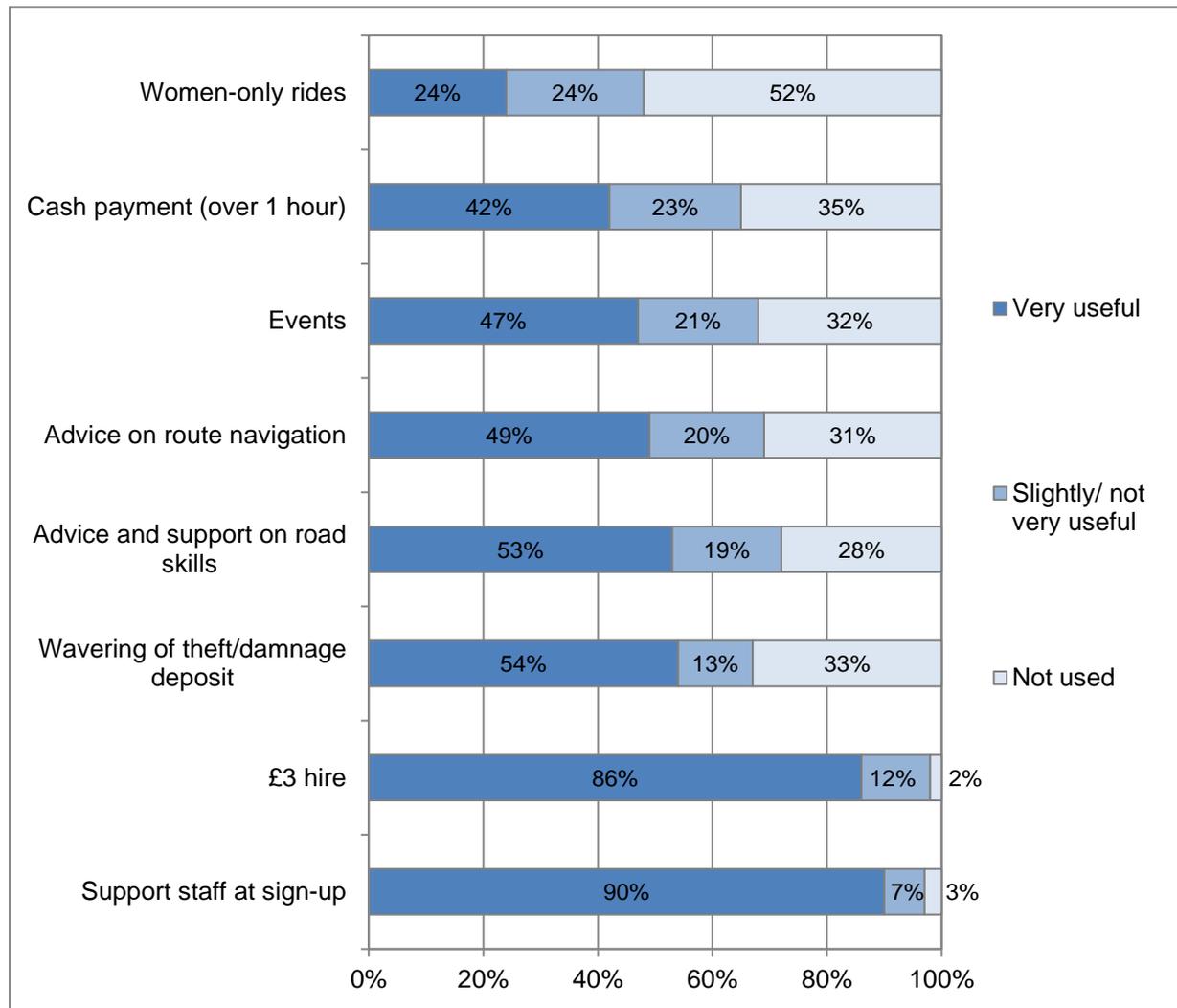
**Figure 7: Reason for nextbike use (follow-up survey; n=81).**



### **3.6. Usefulness of Bikes for All activities**

How useful different aspects of BfA were to participants are outlined in Figure 8. It is important to note that many aspects of the experience were not used by all participants. The most useful aspects of the programme were the 'support from staff at sign-up' and the '£3 hire', and these were also used by the most respondents. Indeed, these aspects of the programme were fundamental to its delivery, while others could be taken advantage of when needed. The majority of activities or offers in relation to the programme were seen to have been useful to those who accessed them. It is worth noting that only approximately half of participants were eligible for the 'women-only rides', but half of the women who did use them found them 'very useful'.

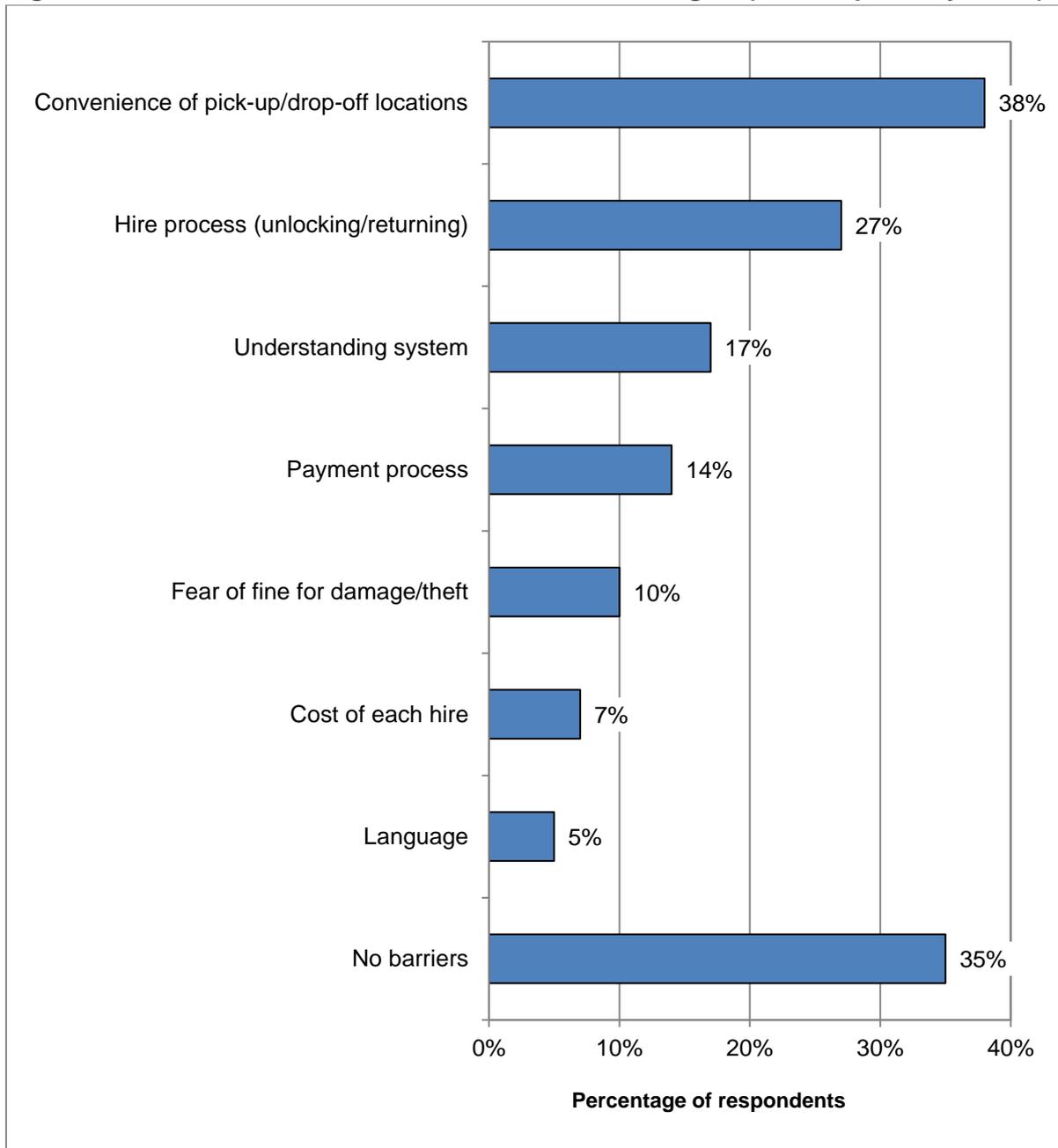
**Figure 8: Usefulness of different aspects of Bikes for All (follow-up survey; n=81).**



### 3.7. Barriers to nextbike use

As part of the follow-up survey, respondents were asked if there were any barriers to the use of nextbikes (Figure 9). While over a third (35%) felt that there were no barriers, the convenience (or otherwise) of drop-off locations and aspects of the hire process (including understanding the system and payment process) were the most common barriers.

**Figure 9: Perceived barriers to the use of nextbike Glasgow (follow-up survey; n=81)**



Participants were also able to provide open-ended comments on each listed barrier. In relation to the pick-up/drop-off locations, comments highlighted a wish to see more stations introduced in other parts of the city.

*“nextbike barely serves the East End.”*

*“Be great if further afield e.g. Possil or Anniesland.”*

*“Could do with more stations.”*

Meanwhile the hire process was not always straightforward or functioning very well.

*“I had some problems with the locking device sometimes...”*

*“This is often tedious / bikes can be unresponsive.”*

*“Often there’s technical problems regarding returning the bike. While the bike says ‘returned’ in the app the time keeps running, then you get charged.”*

Finally, comments were made on the payment process and how the system works.

*“Little bit confusing at first.”*

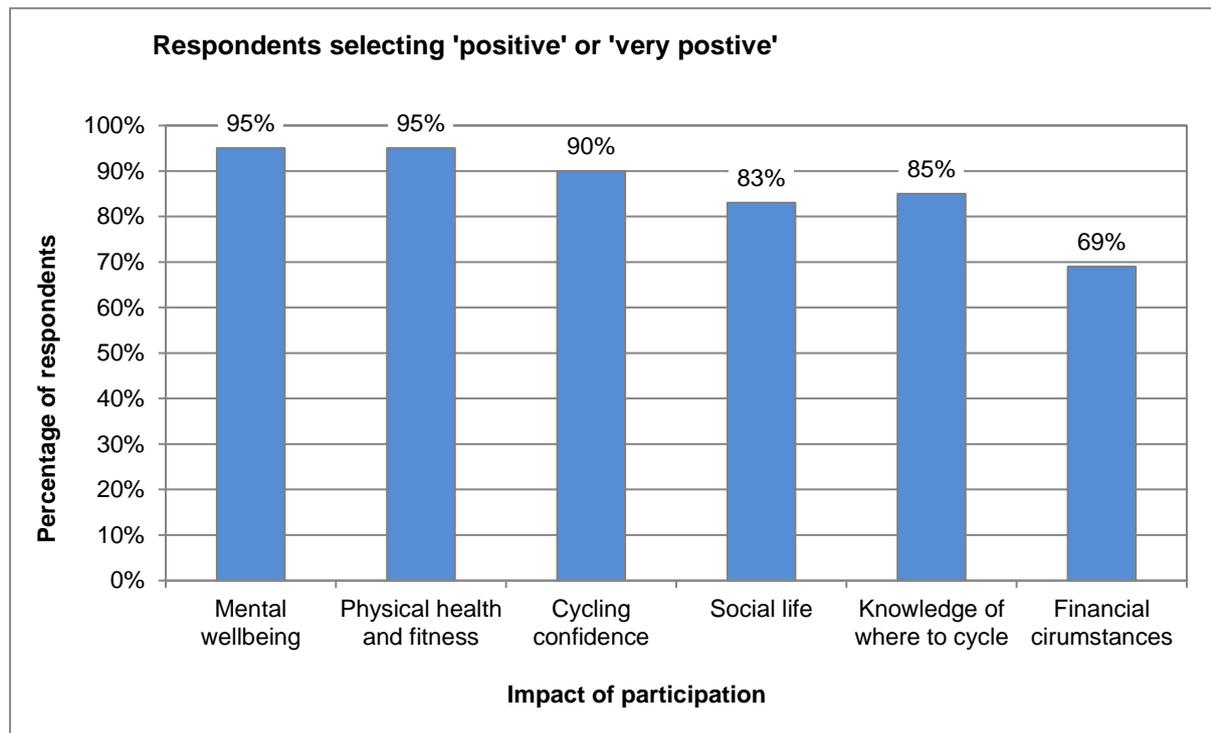
*“Took a while to fully understand.”*

*“Don’t understand it and no one was on hand to advise me.”*

### **3.8. Impact of participation on different aspects of life**

Figure 10 shows the impact of participation on a range of factors, illustrating that these impacts were positive or very positive for the majority of participants across all factors, but were most positive for mental wellbeing and physical health and fitness. Although Figure 5 showed that a lack of confidence was cited as a barrier for many, 90% felt that the impact of participation had been positive on their cycling confidence. Similarly positive impacts were found in terms of knowledge of where to cycle, despite it also being reported as still being a barrier for many. The impact on financial circumstances was positive for a lower percentage of participants, although this impact was felt by more than two thirds of participants.

**Figure 10: Impact of participation (follow-up survey; n=81).**



Further feedback on the financial impact of participation was sought through the following open-ended question: *Please comment on how your involvement in Bikes for All has impacted on you financially.*

A reduction in public or private transport fares were reported on as the main benefit. Some participants also reported saving money through not driving.

*“It has saved me immensely on bus and train fares.”*

*“It has prevented me from having to get taxis and buses home. It is a great system to mix with other forms of transport.”*

*“Saved money on public transport.”*

For some, a nextbike was only used during periods of good weather, meaning that savings were not always realised.

*“When the weather is nice, I spend zero on my transport as I use the bike and walk to places. It’s been a great help to have this scheme.”*

*“In summer and spring I definitely don’t use the bus as much so can save there.”*

*“No impact yet, although I’m practicing to use the bikes fully in summer time to save costs.”*

A number of participants also described the challenges of their financial circumstances or how they saved money to reach employment.

*“I’ve saved £17 a week on travel costs. Sometimes I work far away from a nextbike station so I spend 1-2 pounds on parking the bike next to the place where I’m working, but my savings are still significant. I have also been able to attend interviews for other jobs, without spending any money.”*

*“My work is dependent on funding and I’m always nervous in case it doesn’t continue so any savings I can make are important and help me to feel less worried.”*

*“Being able to cycle to work has cut my spending on public transport, and has especially saved me money when working shifts which finish very late at night or early in the morning when trains and buses are sparse.”*

For those reporting no financial impact, the main reasons were because they had not used a nextbike regularly or because their public travel costs were already paid.

### **3.9 Suggested improvements**

Open-ended suggestions on how to improve to the experience of BfA were most commonly offered in relation to ‘extending the reach of nextbike stations’.

*“More stations would be great. There are a lot of them in city centre, but nothing in suburban areas.”*

*“Increasing the number of stations, as well as the bicycles available (the station at Queen’s Park recently often had no bicycles available).”*

*“Increase the quantity of bikes and stations.”*

The next most common responses were about expectations being met/improvements not being needed.

*“Thank you very much, what you are doing is enough.”*

*“I can’t think of an improvement, I feel well informed and signing up was very easy.”*

*“Nothing, the experience was great!”*

On a less positive note, some participants commented that they wanted the bikes to be better maintained.

*“The bikes need to be improved for reliability.”*

*“Sometimes bikes are vandalised and not able to be used.”*

*“Improve technical issues with bikes which are often unavailable/broken.”*

Others, meanwhile, reported on issues relating to the return or pick-up of bikes, with some suggesting that it would be helpful to get information on this in advance.

*“Tips on how to resolve issues of returning hiring etc. It is a bit stressful at first.”*

*“Improve the operation of the system to take and return the bicycle.”*

*“Maybe give out detailed but basic instructions on what the rules are specific to this scheme, on a bit of paper that people can take away and read later when they are trying to hire a bike and have forgotten what they were told when they signed up.”*

Further suggestions were made on the design or comfort of the bikes.

*“You should change your bikes to be convenient for use because it doesn’t have a convenient seat and there aren’t bikes for women who are shorter than men.”*

*“Make the saddles softer.”*

Other suggested improvements were increasing the amount of free time from one to two hours, creating a nextbike central office, having more social rides and providing bike maintenance courses.

#### 4. Discussion

The profile of participants shows that BfA has successfully involved people who have previously faced barriers to cycling. This includes participants who did not previously cycle or did not have access to a bike, were financially constrained or were from a population group that was under-represented in cycling. Demographically this includes good representation of people from Black or minority ethnic backgrounds, as well as people who were homeless or living in temporary accommodation. It is also notable that over a third (36%) were refugees or asylum seekers, while there was also good representation from the most deprived areas (defined by SIMD). One population group that has not engaged to the same extent are people aged over 65. This is, however, in keeping with national statistics on cycling, where rates do tend to drop off considerably over the age of 60<sup>2</sup>. Encouraging greater involvement among this group could help to normalise cycling across all age groups.

Findings show that just 6% had never considered cycling before signing up. Although increasing participation in cycling across different population groups could help to normalise the activity, further preparatory work may be needed for some people to even contemplate cycling. One opportunity that may be considered here is social prescribing, an approach which enables GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer patients to non-clinical services<sup>16</sup> (i.e. interventions that can promote good health such as physical activity programmes). BfA fits well with this approach by supporting better physical and mental health through physical activity, but also incorporates elements of inclusion and socialising, which are important for people facing exclusion. The project has clear social inclusion aims and participation has been enabled through links to existing community groups. Indeed, building relationships with community groups that have an existing connection with a target demographic group (e.g. organisations that support refugees, asylum seekers or people living in temporary accommodation) is crucial.

It is a notable success of the project that 414 participants (July 2017 - July 2019) have been recruited to date, the majority from vulnerable communities and families that would face great challenges in accessing a bike and cycling without the project's support. For example, women and people from the most deprived parts of the city have engaged with the programme. Thus, the physical, social, financial and leisure benefits of the scheme are being shared across groups that are often under-represented in cycling and have the most to gain.

Participants have made over 10,250 bike trips on the nextbikes in the period July 2017 - July 2019, 2.3% of all nextbike hires in Glasgow. The 414 new members of the scheme have

signed up through BfA since the start of the project, representing 8% of all new annual members of the nextbike scheme in Glasgow in this period.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the project impacts appear to include improvements in self-assessed health, increased levels of cycling and associated increases in physical activity. Being physically inactive is linked to increased body fat and obesity which contributes to type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, and some types of cancer<sup>17</sup>. Modest increases in physical activity, such as a brisk 20-minute walk or cycle each day, particularly for those who are the least physically active, bring significant physical health benefits and reduce all-cause mortality even after adjustment for other forms of physical activity<sup>18</sup>. Across Greater Glasgow and Clyde, 63% of adults achieve the weekly physical activity guidelines<sup>d</sup> but this is lower among women (57%) and lower in the most deprived areas (53%)<sup>19</sup>.

Project aims and the findings presented in this report also match well with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's current strategic objectives, including: reducing the burden of disease through a shift to prevention; reducing health inequalities; and promoting good mental health and wellbeing at all ages<sup>20</sup>. The project is contributing to each of these objectives while also supporting increases in active travel and the increasing the number of people meeting physical activity guidelines, which are key outcomes in the strategy.

Positive reports about the impact of BfA on mental wellbeing and physical health demonstrate the significant role it is playing in shaping people's lives. Mental health in Scotland is a major public health challenge, with one-in-three people affected by mental illness per year<sup>21</sup>. Scotland's Mental Health Strategy 2017-2022<sup>22</sup> highlights the importance of access to services and opportunities that can enhance mental wellbeing, including physical activity, as well as the role of social exclusion and poverty in negatively shaping mental wellbeing. This can be a factor for minority population groups such as asylum seekers and refugees, who may face many challenges while settling in a new country. Asylum seekers are not allowed to work<sup>23</sup> or open a bank account, while trying to survive on a cash allowance equivalent to £5 a day<sup>24</sup>. Refugees have more rights – to open a bank account, work and claim benefits – but are still often faced with financial and cultural difficulties. Although not a panacea for these challenges, BfA can play a role in providing opportunities for socialising, integration and better access to the city through the provision of an affordable transport option.

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<sup>d</sup> Moderate/vigorous physical activity (MVPA) guidelines: at least 150 minutes of moderately intensive physical activity or 75 minutes vigorous activity per week or an equivalent combination of both.

The financial benefits of the scheme are particularly important in a time of austerity and welfare reform, when in-work poverty<sup>25</sup> and child poverty are rising in Scotland – with the latter forecast to rise further<sup>26</sup> – and in a city with already high levels of child poverty (37%, 2017/18)<sup>27</sup>. In 2018 the Fairer Scotland Duty came into force and places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland, including local authorities, to pay due regard to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome, caused by socioeconomic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions<sup>28</sup>. Arguably, the BfA project is a very pertinent example of a project that it is tackling an inequality (access to affordable transport) affecting a range of communities – asylum seekers, refugees, homeless people, unemployed people – who already experience socioeconomic disadvantage.

The Scottish Government's vision of "10% of everyday journeys being made by bike, by 2020" will not be achieved on time and is unlikely to be achieved any time soon in Glasgow<sup>29</sup>, particularly given the low rates of bike ownership in the city and high rates of poverty. Nevertheless, bike hire schemes can play an important role in increasing the proportion of transport journeys that are undertaken by bike. Additionally, a programme such as BfA goes further by focusing on equity of access and attempting to ensure that the uptake of cycling is fairly distributed across population groups. It also ensures that people who want to cycle but can't afford a bike are not prevented from doing so.

BfA demonstrates a clear need for cycle training as a way into cycling for people who have never cycled or are returning to it, for people unfamiliar with the city and for those lacking cycling confidence. The BfA project is akin to a school-based intervention but with the focus on an adult population. The intensive work of staff and engagement with community groups has been crucial in enabling participation for many. Additionally, the approach taken has been comprehensive; from identifying and approaching local groups, providing cycle training, arranging events and resolving ongoing issues, to ensuring that participants have been able to complete the evaluation.

The findings that participants have greater safety concerns and less confidence at follow-up, despite the positive feedback on the support given for on-road skills and route finding, can be plausibly explained as a reaction to the experience of cycling on Glasgow's roads. Unfortunately the majority of Glasgow does not benefit from segregated cycle lanes – although these are now being built in some areas<sup>30</sup> – road speeds are generally 30mph outside the city centre, and sometimes higher, and many on-road cycle lanes are shared with buses and taxis (of the more than 90km of designated cycling infrastructure, one-third of the total, is on-road and shared with road vehicles)<sup>31</sup>.

It is clear that there is a wish to see an increase in the quantity of bikes and stations and for the scheme to expand into suburban parts of the city that are not currently provided for. This is happening at the rate of approximately seven new stations a year and as the scheme expands it will be important to increase the availability of bike hire stations in more deprived parts of the city in order to address the current imbalance<sup>14</sup>. Clearly the success of further expansion in attracting new cyclists and from communities that are less likely to cycle would be aided by the type of support, training and partnership approach that has been delivered through BfA.

Although not a key focus, this evaluation has highlighted some challenges relating to the use of nextbikes. These comments highlight vandalism, broken bikes and difficulties relating to their pick-up and drop-off. Suggestions from users have included improving the process for unlocking and returning the bikes, better reliability and providing more comfortable saddles. This suggests the need for ongoing maintenance of bikes and continued efforts to ensure that the process is user-friendly for all.

## **5. Conclusions and recommendations**

The findings from this evaluation indicate that BfA is an effective approach for encouraging cycling participation among minority population groups and those who are less likely to cycle. Notably, asylum seekers, refugees and people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds have engaged well with the programme, despite being under-represented in cycling in general. The intensive work of the staff from Bike for Good has been crucial in enabling participation through delivering the programme's various activities and by liaising with community groups, being adaptable to different needs, resolving ongoing issues and contributing to the evaluation.

BfA cuts across a number of policy areas such as transport, social and financial inclusion, health and sustainability. This makes it a cost-effective approach for addressing multiple societal challenges. In the current climate emergency, effective approaches to decarbonising the transport system are needed and this project demonstrates that with the right support, people from a range of socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds can be encouraged to take up or re-engage with cycling.

Expansion of the nextbike scheme across the city, particularly with greater emphasis given to more deprived areas, has the potential to benefit a wider range of Glasgow communities. If such further expansion is to widen access to cycling – attracting new cyclists and those from communities less likely to cycle – then the type of intensive support and cycle training provided by Bike for Good will be needed. Further to this, extensive measures will be needed to allay fears around safety for cycling to become a truly inclusive and viable option for everyone, including actions beyond the scope of this programme such as more segregated cycling routes, reducing traffic speeds and integrating cycling considerations more comprehensively into planning.

Findings from this report have implications for a range of organisations, including the providers of the bike hire scheme (nextbike and Glasgow City Council), BfA project partners, for organisations wishing to implement a similar approach elsewhere and for organisations that are able to support active travel improvements, either through funding for similar projects or through implementing supportive policies. These recommendations and lessons are outlined below.

### **Recommendations for nextbike and Glasgow City Council**

- Continue to expand the provision of nextbike cycles and stations with a priority given to expansion into more deprived areas.
- Promote the opening of new stations and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to enable local residents to take advantage of them.
- Ensure that bikes are regularly maintained and people are adequately supported to use them (e.g. consider cultural or language barriers that can prevent or deter use).

### **Recommendations for Bikes for All partners**

- Continue to deliver BfA through current approaches (i.e. with an emphasis on one-to-one support).
- Expand the reach of the programme with sufficient financial and human resources to meet the needs of additional participants.
- Ensure that people who have signed up and used nextbikes regularly are given the opportunity to do so for another year.
- Ensure that learning from phase one informs the future delivery of the programme (e.g. providing support/resources for users when operating for the first time).
- Continue to support women and encourage further sign-up from over-65s and people not in employment. Seek out local organisations that can support the recruitment of people from these groups.
- Continue to evaluate the impact of the programme and use learning to shape how it is delivered and who is targeted for recruitment.

### **Applying the approach elsewhere**

- Establish relationships with community organisations across the bike-share area for the purpose of recruiting participants.
- Set targets for the recruitment of participants based on particular demographic or socioeconomic characteristics and monitor this for the duration of the project.
- Ensure that the programme is affordable and offers participants one-to-one support based on the particular needs of users.

### **Supportive organisations**

- Support other cities to adopt similar approaches based on learning from this evaluation.
- Continue to invest in cycling infrastructure, education and other measures to promote and enable cycling, particularly in areas of low participation.

- Continue to evaluate the impact of cycling measures in terms of demographic use and socioeconomic impacts.
- Provide routes to BfA (or similar inclusion-focused bike sharing projects) through social prescribing.
- Ensure co-ordination of activities to maximise impact of access to bike initiatives

## **Appendix**

### **Survey questions**

#### **THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE INCLUDED IN BOTH THE BASELINE AND FOLLOW-UP SURVEYS**

##### **Please provide the following information**

First name:

Last name:

Telephone:

Email:

##### **Please state your gender**

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

##### **Please state your age?**

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

##### **What is your ethnic group?**

- White Scottish
- White English
- White Welsh
- White Northern Irish
- White British
- White Irish
- White gypsy/traveller
- White Polish
- White (other)
- European Roma
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Pakistan/Pakistani Scottish/Pakistani British
- Indian/Indian Scottish/Indian British
- Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi Scottish/Bangladeshi British
- Chinese/Chinese Scottish/Chinese British
- Asian (other)
- African/African Scottish/African British

- African (other)
- Caribbean/Caribbean Scottish/Caribbean British
- Black/Black Scottish/Black British
- Other (Caribbean or Black)
- Arabic/Arabic Scottish/Arabic English
- Other (any)

**What is your current work status? (select all that apply)**

- Full time
- Part time
- Self-employed/temporary contract
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Student

**What is your current living situation?**

- Own property
- Rent property
- Homeless (e.g. living in temporary accommodation, with a friend or relative or roofless)
- Other (please give details)

**Which of the following statements best describes your current position?**

- I am a UK Resident
- I am currently seeking asylum in the UK
- I have refugee status in the UK
- Prefer not to say

**Please provide your full home postcode (e.g. G40 2QH).**

**Do you have access to a working bike at home?**

- Yes
- No

**Which of the following statements describe you? (Select all that apply)**

- I had never considered cycling before I signed up
- I wanted to cycle but I did not have the confidence to start on my own
- I had considered cycling but did not feel it was safe enough to do so
- I am cycling for the first time ever
- I am cycling for the first time in a while after a break
- I was already cycling before I signed up

**Which of the following to you consider to be a barrier to cycling? (select all that apply)**

- Safety
- Lack of awareness about routes
- No access to a working bike
- Lack of fitness
- Lack of confidence
- Other (please state)
- I do not feel there are any barriers

**How often do you use the following modes of transport to complete short journeys (i.e. 3 miles/5km or less)**

- Personal car (driver or passenger)
- Public transport (e.g. bus, train, underground)
- Private transport (e.g. taxi/private hire)
- Cycling
- Walking

**Response categories:** Every day, once or more per week, once or more per month, never

**How would you rate your general health?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Bad
- Very bad

**In the past week, how many minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity have you undertaken**

- 150 minutes or more (2 hours and 30 minutes or more)
- 60 to 150 minutes (1 hour to 2 hours and 30 minutes)
- Up to 60 minutes (1 hour)
- No activity

**Moderate or vigorous** physical activity involves working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. Examples include fast walking, cycling, running, swimming or exercise classes.

**How strongly do you feel you belong to your community?**

- Very strongly
- Quite strongly
- Not very strongly
- Not at all strongly

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY**

**Please state how signing up for Bikes for All has impacted on you in relation to the following:**

- Mental wellbeing
- Physical fitness and health
- Confidence
- Social life
- Knowledge of where to cycle

**Response categories:** Very negatively, slightly negatively, No impact, improved a little, improved a lot.

**What has your participation in Bikes for All enabled you to do? (choose all that apply)**

- Access to work, training or study
- Access to social, welfare or health related services
- Access leisure activities (e.g. gym, parks, play facilities)
- Visit friends or family
- Access shops
- Access public transport
- Save money

**How useful did you find Bikes for All's offer in relation to the following?**

- £3 membership
- Cash payment (for hires over 30 minutes)
- Wavering of damage and theft deposit
- Supporting staff when I signed up

**Response categories:** Not very helpful, slightly helpful, very helpful, not relevant/used

**How helpful have the following activities been?**

- Events
- Road skills
- Advice on route navigation
- Women-only rides

**Response categories:** Not very helpful, slightly helpful, very helpful, not relevant/used

**What barriers remain regarding your use of nextbike in Glasgow (choose all that apply)?**

- The payment process
- The cost of each hire
- Understanding how the system works
- Concerns about fines for damage or theft of nextbikes
- Language barriers
- Locations of pick-up/drop-off points are not convenient
- Locations of pick-up/drop-off points are not convenient

**Is there any other support we could give you to keep you cycling?**

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## Appendix

### Survey questions

#### THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE INCLUDED IN BOTH THE BASELINE AND FOLLOW-UP SURVEYS

##### Please provide the following information

First name:

Last name:

Telephone:

Email:

##### Please state your gender

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

##### Please state your age?

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

##### What is your ethnic group?

- White Scottish
- White English
- White Welsh
- White Northern Irish
- White British
- White Irish
- White gypsy/traveller
- White Polish
- White (other)
- European Roma
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Pakistan/Pakistani Scottish/Pakistani British
- Indian/Indian Scottish/Indian British
- Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi Scottish/Bangladeshi British
- Chinese/Chinese Scottish/Chinese British
- Asian (other)
- African/African Scottish/African British

- 
- African (other)
  - Caribbean/Caribbean Scottish/Caribbean British
  - Black/Black Scottish/Black British
  - Other (Caribbean or Black)
  - Arabic/Arabic Scottish/Arabic English
  - Other (any)

**What is your current work status? (select all that apply)**

- Full time
- Part time
- Self-employed/temporary contract
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Student

**What is your current living situation?**

- Own property
- Rent property
- Homeless (e.g. living in temporary accommodation, with a friend or relative or roofless)
- Other (please give details)

**Which of the following statements best describes your current position?**

- I am a UK Resident
- I am currently seeking asylum in the UK
- I have refugee status in the UK
- Prefer not to say

**Please provide your full home postcode (e.g. G40 2QH).**

**Do you have access to a working bike at home?**

- Yes
- No

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- I wanted to cycle but I did not have the confidence to start on my own
- I had considered cycling but did not feel it was safe enough to do so
- I am cycling for the first time ever
- I am cycling for the first time in a while after a break
- I was already cycling before I signed up

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**Which of the following to you consider to be a barrier to cycling? (select all that apply)**

- Safety
- Lack of awareness about routes
- No access to a working bike
- Lack of fitness
- Lack of confidence
- Other (please state)
- I do not feel there are any barriers

**How often do you use the following modes of transport to complete short journeys (i.e. 3 miles/5km or less)**

- Personal car (driver or passenger)
- Public transport (e.g. bus, train, underground)
- Private transport (e.g. taxi/private hire)
- Cycling
- Walking

**Response categories:** Every day, once or more per week, once or more per month, never

**How would you rate your general health?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Bad
- Very bad

**In the past week, how many minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity have you undertaken**

- 150 minutes or more (2 hours and 30 minutes or more)
- 60 to 150 minutes (1 hour to 2 hours and 30 minutes)
- Up to 60 minutes (1 hour)
- No activity

**Moderate or vigorous** physical activity involves working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. Examples include fast walking, cycling, running, swimming or exercise classes.

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**How strongly do you feel you belong to your community?**

- Very strongly
- Quite strongly
- Not very strongly
- Not at all strongly

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY**

**Please state how signing up for Bikes for All has impacted on you in relation to the following:**

- Mental wellbeing
- Physical fitness and health
- Confidence
- Social life
- Knowledge of where to cycle

**Response categories:** Very negatively, slightly negatively, no impact, improved a little, improved a lot.

**What has your participation in Bikes for All enabled you to do? (choose all that apply)**

- Access to work, training or study
- Access to social, welfare or health related services
- Access leisure activities (e.g. gym, parks, play facilities)
- Visit friends or family
- Access shops
- Access public transport
- Save money

**How useful did you find Bikes for All's offer in relation to the following?**

- £3 membership
- Cash payment (for hires over 30 minutes)
- Wavering of damage and theft deposit
- Supporting staff when I signed up

**Response categories:** Not very helpful, slightly helpful, very helpful, not relevant/used

**How helpful have the following activities been?**

- Events
- Road skills
- Advice on route navigation
- Women-only rides

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**Response categories:** Not very helpful, slightly helpful, very helpful, not relevant/used

**What barriers remain regarding your use of nextbike in Glasgow (choose all that apply)?**

- The payment process
- The cost of each hire
- Understanding how the system works
- Concerns about fines for damage or theft of nextbikes
- Language barriers
- Locations of pick-up/drop-off points are not convenient
- Locations of pick-up/drop-off points are not convenient

**Is there any other support we could give you to keep you cycling?**