



MEDIA BRIEFING

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Glasgow-based social inclusion project widens access to cycling

New reports published today, demonstrate the success of the 'Bikes for All' cycling inclusion project in encouraging a range of population groups to cycle, including women, ethnic minority groups, asylum seekers and refugees.

Recruitment to the Bikes for All project was targeted at people on low incomes, those not currently cycling, those without access to a bike or those from populations less likely to cycle. Participants were recruited by Bike for Good staff through their links with community groups across the city.

Bikes for All aims to reduce inequalities in access to cycling through the provision of low-cost bike hire alongside focused support. A subsidised annual membership to the city's bike hire scheme, nextbike Glasgow, together with one-to-one advice, group rides, route-finding tips and road skills, have been successful at breaking down known barriers to cycling such as inexperience, lack of confidence and low income.

This inclusive approach was crucial at encouraging participation from under-represented and minority population groups. Almost half of those surveyed (49%) identified as Black or minority ethnicity, 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.

Overall, participants reported benefits from increased physical activity, improved mental wellbeing and becoming more confident cyclists. The project also enabled participants to meet new people, get to know the city better and provided a low-cost form of transport. The targeted approach to recruitment and bespoke training and support were important to the success of the project.

Despite the positive feedback on the support given for on-road skills and route finding, participants had greater safety concerns and less confidence after participating in the project. This is likely to reflect people's safety concerns when faced with cycling on roads in Glasgow, highlighting the need for continued investment in safer cycling infrastructure in the city. Further barriers included the current limited geographical range of the nextbike stations in Glasgow and difficulties in understanding the hire process.

Reflecting on the findings, Gregor Yates, Public Health Research Specialist at the GCPH and co-author of the evaluation commented: *"This research highlights the positive impact that a social inclusion project of this type can have on reducing barriers to cycling for a number of different population groups. It is evident that the project is encouraging cycling as a cheap and convenient option for short journeys within the city. With bike ownership in Glasgow being lower than in many other parts of Scotland, nextbike offers a convenient alternative to buying a bike, which when subsidised and offered with personal support, can help Glasgow to become a more diverse cycling city."*

Commenting on the wider relevance of findings, Bruce Whyte, Public Health Programme Manager and co-author of the evaluation at the GCPH added *"This project has demonstrated that there is demand for access to bikeshare schemes from a variety of population groups. The provision of nextbike stations should continue to be expanded across the city, with priority given to expansion into more deprived areas. Our findings demonstrate that this type of project, that provides personal support and training is crucial alongside continued investment in safe cycling infrastructure, if access to cycling is to be widened equitably across Glasgow. In the current climate emergency, effective approaches to reducing harmful transport emissions and increasing active travel are much needed. This type of project has an important role to play in the required shift to a more sustainable transport system."*

After working directly on the inclusion project, Bike for Good Development Officer Nina Borcard said: *"We believe the success of this project, and any social inclusion initiative, is connecting with existing community groups to ensure the message is being distributed to the people who are really in need of the help. At Bike for Good we rely on community groups as*

experts in their areas, and couldn't provide our support without their knowledge and access."

Reflecting on the project, Lorna Finlayson CoMoUK Scotland Director had this to say:
"CoMoUK is delighted to have taken the lead in setting up and co-ordinating the ground-breaking Bikes for All scheme in Glasgow over the last two years. This report shows the very real impact placing social inclusion at the heart of a bike share scheme can have by taking down normal barriers to cycling. We hope to see the Bikes for All programme continue to develop from strength to strength and for more schemes like this to be set up across Scotland and elsewhere."

Kath Brough, Head of Behaviour Change from Cycling Scotland said: *"We're delighted to have been part of Bikes for All and look forward to continuing our support so that everyone can have access to sustainable, affordable and active travel. This report captures the success the project has in engaging with people who may not previously have considered cycling and demonstrates how people can build the activity into their everyday life through appropriate training and one-to-one support. The project is a clear example of how strong partnerships between community groups, charities, researchers and private hire bike schemes is an effective approach to widening access to bikes, and is highly replicable across the country. Participants have benefited through increased physical activity, improved mental wellbeing and by building up their cycling confidence."*

Krysia Solheim, Managing Director of nextbike UK said: *"We're incredibly proud to be a part of Bikes for All. We're passionate about social inclusion at nextbike because we know the many benefits that cycling and bike share can bring to all sections of society – we also know that without initiatives such as Bikes for All, it would be difficult for some sections of society to access our bikes."*

"Breaking down barriers is the key to unlocking cycling for the masses. It's heartening to see the positive impact that the scheme has had on the people of Glasgow. We're committed to continuing to work closely with our partners to ensure even more people across the city can benefit from the scheme in the future."

Commenting on the report, Councillor Anna Richardson, City Convener for Sustainability and Carbon Reduction, said: *“Bikes for All is a fantastic project that has inclusion at its very core. I am very clear that we must do everything we can as a council to make cycling in Glasgow as safe and accessible for as many people as possible.*

“Substantial investment in active travel infrastructure is being made all across the city, including the £115m city centre Avenues Project, and that will transform how we get around the city.

“We also have the aim of having 1,000 nextbikes at 100 stations in Glasgow and that will help to ensure bikes are for hire in communities all across the city.”

Notes:

1. The Bikes for All project began in July 2017 and is delivered by Bike for Good. It is managed and evaluated by a partnership of [CoMoUK](#), [Bike for Good](#), [Glasgow Centre for Population Health](#), [Cycling Scotland](#) and [nextbike](#).
2. nextbike, Glasgow’s first public bike hire scheme was introduced in June 2014, to coincide with the Commonwealth Games. Initially comprising 400 bikes at 31 locations, it has since expanded and currently comprises 650 bikes at 68 locations. In addition, 63 e-bikes and 21 electric stations were launched on Wednesday 9th October 2019.
3. The evaluation consisted of two-parts. Firstly, participants were invited to complete two surveys: a baseline survey issued at sign-up and a follow-up survey issued at least three months after participation. In total, 189 participants completed the baseline survey and 81 completed the follow-up survey. This data was captured over a 13-month period from March 2018 to end-March 2019. This part of the evaluation was led by GCPH. The second part of the evaluation consisted of focus group discussions and interviews with 33 participants between April and July 2019. This part of the evaluation was commissioned to Research Resource.
4. We are grateful to the following community groups for their support in delivering the project: Migrant Help; Flourish House; Bridgeton Family Learning Centre; Thenue Housing Association; Central and West Integration Network; Govan Community Project; NHS Restart; NHS Esteem; Glasgow City Mission; Glasgow Clyde College ESOL;

Glasgow Kelvin College ESOL; SEAL community health (Gorbals); British Red Cross; Youth Community Support Agency; Night Shelter; Rosemount Lifelong Learning.

5. The project received funding from the European Social Fund in the first year, and from Paths for All through the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places fund in the second year.
6. Download: [*Bikes for All: widening access to cycling through social inclusion*](#)
7. Download: [*Bikes for All evaluation: Phase one report 2018/2019*](#)
8. Download: [*Qualitative research exploring the experiences and participation in Bikes for All*](#)
9. Two summary infographics are appended to this media release.

Issued by: Glasgow Centre for Population Health on behalf of the project partners: [Cycling Scotland](#); [CoMoUK](#), [Bike for Good](#) and [nextbike](#).

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Bikes for All: a cycling inclusion project

About the project



Bikes for All offered low cost membership of the nextbike Glasgow cycle hire scheme, as well as one-to-one advice, group rides, route-finding tips and road skills



The project targeted people on low incomes, not currently cycling, without access to a bike or from populations less likely to cycle



Participants were recruited by Bike for Good staff via community groups across the city

Impacts



A range of different participants were encouraged to cycle, including women, people from an ethnic minority, asylum seekers and refugees



Participants benefited through increased physical activity, improved mental wellbeing and confidence in cycling



Key benefits included the opportunity to meet new people, save on transport costs and discover new parts of the city

Key messages



Personal support and training **as well as** continued investment in safe cycling infrastructure is needed to widen access to cycling for all



An inclusive bike share scheme is crucial for anyone who does not cycle for practical or financial reasons



This type of project has an important role to play in the required shift to a more sustainable, inclusive transport system

Search 'Bikes for All' at www.gcph.co.uk



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Bikes for All: a cycling inclusion project

Participants were given low cost membership of the nextbike Glasgow cycle hire scheme and received one-to-one advice and a range of cycle training activities

“Two years ago, I had never ridden a bike. I learned to ride a bike for my health, mental health to help with depression.”

“It allowed me to meet new people and also to develop my skills so I can ride a bike better.”

“I got to experience Glasgow; there were a lot of places I never knew existed until I got on a bike and started cycling.”

“It’s really handy for me to get from my home to work, it’s faster than public transport and it’s practically free with the discount.”

“Not everyone can afford a bike either and this gives people the means to cycle.”



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