

The Bikeability Trust
**Bikeability
Strategy 2035**



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1. The Bikeability Trust mission

The Bikeability Trust aims to activate a nation of cyclists by ensuring everyone has the confidence to enjoy the life skill, independence and fun of cycling.

Giving everyone the competence and confidence to cycle is our core mission, making cycling the norm for short journeys.





2. Vision 2035

Bikeability endorsed cycle training is the nation's first choice for schools, communities, adults, employers and employees to enjoy and achieve cycling to the National Standards.

We will achieve this vision by activating our **Get Cycling** and **Go Cycling** vision for everyone who wants to cycle.



Get Cycling

Teaches fundamental skills that support a rider prior to riding on the road. This is linked to National Standard roles 1 and 2.

Modules: Balance, Learn to Ride, Level 1 (control skills)

Delivery method: Teachers, community group leaders, qualified instructors and online training



Go Cycling

Teaches riders how to ride on the road, including all activities that a rider is likely to require when riding on-road. This is linked to National Standard roles 3-5.

Modules: Level 2 (basic road), Level 3 (advanced road)

Delivery method: Qualified instructors and online training

3. Our purpose

The Bikeability Trust's purpose is to ensure that all cycle training is delivered to a gold standard, inspiring everyone to cycle with competence and confidence.

We are:

Expert:



The Trust has successfully administered the Bikeability programme on behalf of government since 2018, delivering high-quality delivery guides and instructor training, and our workforce has thousands of years combined experience teaching people to cycle.

Inspiring:



Every rider completes our training feeling able, confident and motivated to cycle safely on the roads for short journeys. Transforming the traditional image of cycling to an everyday, everyone activity.

Quality focussed:



Our instructors deliver high-quality, consistent and standardised cycle training. We aim to ensure that every rider achieves the same outcomes to the same standard, taking into account their individual capabilities, including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Inclusive:



We take action to reduce barriers to participation, support underrepresented groups and ensure that anyone who wishes to access Bikeability cycle training is able to do so, and cycling is seen as an activity for all.

Efficient:



Our delivery programme offers value for money and is delivered in an economic, proportional and efficient way.

Influential:



We share our evidence of the impact of cycle training across a variety of sectors (transport, education, environment, health, leisure, etc) and work collaboratively with stakeholders, partners and commercial organisations to achieve our vision and influence behaviour change.

4. The cycling landscape in England

By 2035, Bikeability will have celebrated its 25th anniversary, and we will be able to claim that we have empowered an entire generation of children with the knowledge and skills to cycle with confidence on the road. Knowledge and skills that they will take with them into young adult and parenthood.



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Cycling participation

In 2023, approximately 7.4 million people participated in cycling, either for sport, leisure or travel in England, while between 2017 and 2021 the number of cyclists plateaued at around 6 million. ([Statista, October 2023](#))

Cycle-sharing programmes are increasing in our towns and cities. In 2023, 156 million trips were taken on Lime's e-bikes and scooters in 2023, with more than 9.2 million new riders using the platform last year. By 2027, the revenue from the bike sharing sector in the UK is expected to reach 78 million euros (£65 million), a 50 percent increase compared to 2022. ([Statista, October 2023](#))

Cycling to school

Cycling to school has stagnated over a decade, with the National Travel Survey showing very little movement in increasing cycling to school among school age children, staying at 2%. Yet research shows 4 in 5 children want to travel actively to school (Sustrans).

We know that after Bikeability, parents and carers are much more likely to encourage or allow children to cycle. However, we also know that in the primary years it is harder to achieve large modal shift due to a range of reasons outside of our influence. These include parent working patterns, family affluence, parental attitudes to active travel, disability and long-term health conditions.

However, Bikeability is not solely a cycle to school programme and should not be measured as such. Bikeability prepares children post primary school for transport independence for health, leisure, education and commuting. Our monitoring and evaluation shows how Bikeability impacts cycling for health, social and leisure.



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Attitudes to cycling

COVID enabled a cycling boom, with lower traffic volumes encouraging families out to cycle. That boom was short-lived and at the time of writing we have experienced a period of hostility, with a culture war fuelling negative attitudes.

Welcome changes to the Highway Code have failed to be effectively communicated and hasn't translated into behaviour change of motorists towards cyclists. The perception remains that cycling is not safe, despite data showing cycling is safer than ever. Between 2004 and 2022, fatalities were down 32% from 134 to 91, serious injuries (adjusted) increased by 21% against a backdrop where pedal cycle traffic increased by 50% (DfT).

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Road safety

Bikeability is the largest road safety education program for children in the UK. We know from studies that after participating in Bikeability, children report an improvement in ability to judge risks and have significantly higher hazard perception and appropriate response (Ipsos 2015, NFER, 2015)

Research we conducted with TRL in 2024, shows that higher levels of Level 2 Bikeability cycle training could be associated with fewer cyclists Killed and Seriously Injured (KSIs) at the local authority level.

Empowering more people to cycle

Hostile mainstream and social media attitudes towards cyclists and active travel initiatives, combined with increasing traffic levels, make the idea of cycling scary for many new and inexperienced cyclists. It also worries parents, who are then less likely to allow their children to cycle.

Our research shows that only 14% of parents felt confident enough to teach their child to cycle themselves. This research also highlighted potential solutions that would make more parents comfortable with allowing their children to cycle on the road:

- Safe cycle routes (59%)
- Professional cycle training (36%)
- Time for parents to practice with their child (34%)
- Mandatory driver education on sharing the road with cyclists (30%)



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Investing in our future

We support Active Travel England's mission for half of trips in England's towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030. To achieve this, we need investment in high quality infrastructure at the scale required to inspire mass behaviour change, alongside funding for interventions like cycle training. Unfortunately, the ambitions of the Cycling and Walking Investment strategy have suffered cuts not only to funding, but also to vision.

Decades of investment is needed to reach the level of cycling seen in the Netherlands, and it is Bikeability leading the way in encouraging more active travel. We are already operating at the level needed to equip the next generation to cycle safely and with confidence, and we are ready to deliver more.

Bikeability training are cost-effective courses with societal benefits. It teaches life-long cycle skills while delivering immediately measurable impacts on safer road use, cycling frequency, and cycling-friendly attitudes. By collating demographic data for the inclusion work in our 2020-25 strategy, Bikeability has proven our courses can reach every child.



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Activating health and social benefits

By training even more people to cycle, we can activate significant and far-reaching economic, health and social benefits, and address some of our most pressing challenges. These include:

- Easing pressure on the NHS by tackling inactivity and obesity
- Offering support for increasing mental ill-health levels
- Improving road safety
- Taking effective action on the environment; swapping your car for a cycle saves about 150 grams of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per kilometre (that's about 240 grams of CO₂ per mile), according to the UN Environment Programme
- Empowering people to get around independently, no matter their level of mobility

Providing cycle training is not without its challenges. COVID has affected child development, with children less skilful in coordination and control skills, and lacking in confidence and independence.

Physical inactivity and obesity in children are heading to crisis levels, with the World Health Organisation ranking the UK among the lowest in the world for healthy eating and meeting the recommended daily physical activity levels.

Choosing cycling for life

Bikeability is the largest road safety education programme in the UK. It prepares riders to cycle on the road safely and confidently. Our training decreases the potential for accidents that lead to people being killed and seriously injured (KSI's) on the roads. It should be an essential part of Local Authorities active travel, education and health improvement strategies.

Bikeability has already reached more than 5 million children, and we estimate more than 500,000 adults with direct training. Our ambition is to grow this to activate a nation of cyclists and to continue to inspire people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to choose cycling and active travel.

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5. Our Theory of Change

It is essential that we can measure the outputs and outcomes from our work, to demonstrate outcomes and impact.

Our immediate outcomes are measured through our monitoring data which tracks confidence, satisfaction and propensity to cycle, but also shows:

- increased awareness and knowledge of cycling and cycle training
- greater uptake of cycle training by underrepresented groups
- While our longer-term outcomes include:
- increased positive perception of cycling
- increase in cycle ownership
- reduced safety concerns about cycling on the road
- reduction in car usage for short journeys
- And our longer-term impacts include:
- improved mental and physical wellbeing
- air quality and reduced emissions
- reduced public health costs
- increased cycling infrastructure usage
- economic benefits to local high streets
- reduced rates of collisions and near misses

We will continue to lobby the Government to ensure our impact is fed into the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and government objectives.



6. Our ten-year strategy objectives

The strategic objectives are focussed on how we can achieve the mission and vision, in addition to fulfilling our contractual agreements on the administration of the Bikeability grant programme, which are set out in our business plans. Our business plans will also show how we intend to achieve these objectives, income, and key metrics for impact.

Develop and implement the Get and Go cycling programme for children and adults to reach at least 1 million riders per year by 2035

Our ambition is that:

- we maximise our offering to prepare more children through Get Cycling to learn how to balance and control a cycle in an off-road environment, through instructors and Get Cycling Leads (300,000 annually by strategy end)
- children with SEND and those without access to a cycle will not face barriers to participate
- every child will be offered an on-road (Level 2) course in order to achieve the basic skills to cycle on the roads. (500,000 annually by strategy end)
- adults who want to learn to Get and Go Cycling will be offered courses, with a particular focus on grant funding for women, under-represented communities and adults with SEND
- self-funded courses for adults will also be available (100,000 annually by strategy end)

Cycle training is one important part in increasing active travel. Where good quality infrastructure exists, our Level 2 basic on-road courses will increase use and diversity of users.

Where infrastructure and safe routes to school do not yet exist, measurable increases in active travel are harder to achieve, but our courses give riders the knowledge and confidence to cycle in their local area, a skill they have for life.

Until we achieve a Dutch level of ambition and implementation of infrastructure, cycle training must be offered universally to ensure safety and confidence to cycle anywhere. We also know that for a generation to become regular habitual cyclists in all road environments and shared traffic spaces, our Level 3 advanced on-roads courses are vital.

The delivery model for Level 3 is under review and we will feed the learning into a renewed commitment to Level 3 training. Our ambition for Level 3 advanced cycle training is to:

- increase delivery year on year to reach a greater number of children and adults with advanced on-road skills (50,000 annually by strategy end)
- demonstrate the impact of advanced road skills on behaviour change converting to more active travel trips for school, commuting, leisure and health (50,000 annually by strategy end)

Develop Bikeability Trust cycle training products for both income generation and attitude change to cycling

The grant funded Bikeability programme has been successful in delivering record numbers of children trained. The income has enabled industry to grow and cover costs, but has not made a contribution to future development or communications projects. The expertise sits in the Trust to develop training, but we have not monetised this for the Trust's vision to grow.

We aim to grow cycle training products and consultancy services aimed at audiences including professional riders, employers and drivers. The commercialisation or licensing of cycle training products with income coming back to the Trust is a priority for the strategy period.

We believe a greater variety of accessible and effective training products reaching a larger, diverse audience will continue to change attitude to cycling and achieve our vision. The more people we reach with training, the greater the gain in seeing cycling as a normal mode of travel for road users.

Increase the number of children with access to a cycle

Under our last strategy we significantly reduced the barriers to participating in Bikeability. However, the ongoing opportunity to use those skills on their own cycle remains out of reach for some vulnerable children, especially those in low-income households, or children with SEND, due to the prohibitive cost of specialist adapted cycles.

We plan to deliver a public and partnership fundraising appeal to increase on access to cycles that will run across our strategy period. The appeal will raise funds so we can donate cycles to hundreds of children in need. An appeals board will be established to lead this work, bringing in a range of partners and supporters who can advise, advocate and secure fundraising opportunities.

We will also campaign with our partners at the Bicycle Association for VAT to be Zero rated on children's cycles. With declining children's cycles sales and the National Travel survey revealing 1 in 4 children aged 5-10 do not have access to a cycle, the Trust will ensure as part of our mission we increase children's ongoing access to a cycle.

Improve perception of cycling for all ages as a choice for short journeys

Our proven cycle training and new products increases confidence and likelihood to cycle, and decreases risk through improved hazard perception and avoidance. We believe that it is our experience of delivering more confident cyclists that can contribute to improving the perception of cycling, normalising it as a mode of choice for short journeys from a young age.

Our communications programme is critical in reaching people of all ages and abilities to see the benefits that cycle training can bring to confidence. Our Bikeability Club is central to supporting parents and carers to help their child cycle, and grow family cycling beyond our training. Our partners are key in providing opportunities for continuing cycling.

We will continue to work with our partners at Cycling UK and relevant active travel organisations to support communications to reach new cycling audiences and inspire them to cycle.

Support our schools to increase active travel modes to school

We continue to focus on the importance of embedding early habits of cycling, which starts with journeys to school. Through our experience of delivering directly into schools and supporting school staff to teach cycling, we know the importance of providing quality training and demonstrating impact. Our Get Cycling in Schools programme seeks to embed a culture of cycling at a young age, but also among school staff as role models for their pupils. Our Cycle to School week is a galvanising moment to encourage active travel.

We will campaign for cycle training to be on the curriculum across the key stages, and part of a statutory duty for schools to ensure no child leaves primary school without being offered our Level 2 course.

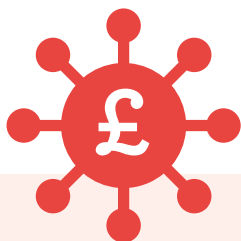
We will show our support for every school to have a safer school street and infrastructure to support active travel journeys from their homes to school. We will test some new approaches to integrating with other behaviour change partners working in secondary schools to meet our ambitions to deliver behaviour change at secondary school level.

We will continue to work with our partners Living Streets, promoting Walk to School outreach, and Modeshift STARS and Active Travel Ambassadors' across our communications with the school network.



6. How you can help

To achieve our five strategic objectives we need:



Long term funding settlements: to offer cycle training to everyone. This funding may come from a variety of sources including central and local government grants, public sector contracts and private investment.



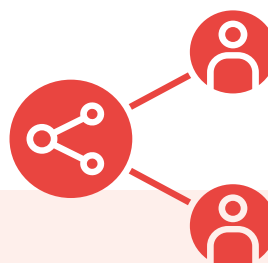
Partnerships: continue to build and develop long-term commercial and industry-led partners who align with the Trust's values and mission. Through these partnerships we will integrate new opportunities such as Bikeability Club to further engage both our partners and the audience it serves.



Fundraising: a diverse income strategy that can meet our level of ambition for everyone and provide unrestricted funding to achieve our vision.



A united Bikeability industry: we want everyone involved with Bikeability, whether grant or privately funded, to share and support our vision.



Share data and evidence of impact: we continue to invest in sharing the impact of cycle training across a range of policy areas and public interest.

Our commitment will be to use every opportunity to work together to achieve our vision.



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www.bikeability.org.uk

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