

# The Bikeability Trust Reaching more young riders



# Supporting you to deliver more

## The target: Reaching 80% of children in Year 6 with Bikeability training

We spoke to the industry and identified the following common barriers to reaching 80%:

- Instructor workforce capacity
- Children's cycling ability to access Level 2
- Schools take up of Level 2
- Provision of well-maintained cycles

We cover these, along with other issues that have come up during the process in this document.

We have put together some general pointers, suggestions for how you can approach the above barriers, and some case studies looking at what other providers have done.



# General pointers

## Strengthen your cancellation policy

Ensure you have a cancellation policy in place. This will make schools less likely to cancel at the last minute. You can find guidance on cancellations, including a [policy and letter to schools you can use here](#).

## Combine funding pots

You can use your scaling-up funding in conjunction with other funding – for example, Milton Keynes supplemented their scaling-up money with their capability fund. There is often considerable overlap between the aims of different funding, so as long as you are using it to work towards the goals for each pot, you can use them together.

## Work with local organisations and businesses

Local charities, grass-roots organisations and even businesses are often happy to be involved in joint projects. They will have the resources dedicated to reaching and working with local people, and working together can be beneficial for everyone involved.

## Tailor your plans so they work on a local level

You are the experts on what's going on in your area, and what does and doesn't work. This is why we made the scaling-up funding as flexible as we could – so it could be deployed where and when will be the most useful and successful for you.

## Talk to us about how you can access inclusion funding

Get in touch with the grants team to find out how you can access funding to support you to deliver more, email [grants@bikeabilitytrust.org](mailto:grants@bikeabilitytrust.org) for more information.



# Overcoming common barriers

Based on the work that has been undertaken by training providers who have received funding, we have put together some suggestions for overcoming the barriers to increasing delivery that have been identified.

We know this is not an exhaustive list of barriers, and there are some that neither The Bikeability Trust nor our grant recipients and training providers can affect. In this document we have therefore focused on the ways we can influence delivery numbers and reach our 80% goal.



# 1. Instructor workforce capacity

This is one that will need some time and planning to tackle. If you know you need to build up your instructor work force capacity to deliver next year, you need to start working out how you will do that as soon as possible. It's also vital to retain as many instructors as you can. Here are some suggestions.

## Manage instructor wellbeing

While many instructors find their work joyful and rewarding, it's still hard work! There are travel and cycle and equipment handling and maintenance requirement, and of course it's a job with a lot of responsibility to ensure that pupils not only learn to cycle, but they're safe and happy while doing so. Ensuring instructors feel supported is vital to retaining your skilled work force.

## Promoting instructor recruitment

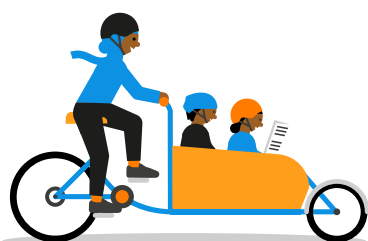
Targeted marketing for instructor recruitment can be very effective – ask your current instructors where they found out about the role and if they have anyone they could refer. Think about any organisations locally that may have members who would be interested in becoming an instructor, such as Scouts or other sport coaches. [We have a set of recruitment resources you can use for this.](#)

## Support your instructors

Offering your instructors professional development, such as mechanic course, along with competitive pay can ensure you retain as many qualified instructors as possible.

## Consider working with other organisations

Are there private training providers or other organisations locally with qualified instructors that you could outsource some of your work to?



## 2. Children's cycling ability

Children sometimes come to Level 2 courses not knowing how to cycle, which can mean time is taken teaching them the basics before they can take part in Level 2. Training providers and instructors have told us this can be a big problem in meeting their Level 2 targets. Here are some suggestions on tackling this.

### Assemblies prior to the course

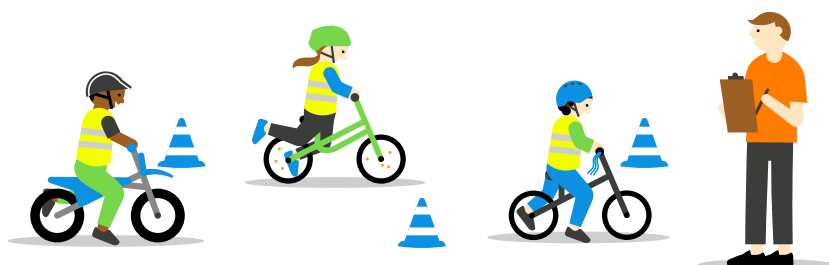
Ask the school if you can run an assembly to explain Bikeability to the pupils who will be taking part – most will be more than happy to let you do so. During the assembly, you can identify pupils who can't ride and arrange Learn to Ride sessions before the Level 2.

### Run Learn to Ride in the school holidays

You may be able to access additional HAF scheme funding to pay for these courses. [You can find out more about HAF funding here.](#) You may be able to speak to your local HAF co-ordinators to deliver Learn to Ride sessions and other modules as part of their HAF programme. You may be able to apply for additional funding to cover delivery into official HAF Programmes.

### Get Cycling in Schools

If running Learn to Ride courses is not an option, our Get Cycling in Schools programme could help. This fully-funded training course equips teaching staff with the skills to teach children the basics of cycling, including balancing and pedalling. They also receive a fleet of balance bikes and helmets to run the sessions. If there are schools in your area that would benefit, you can point them to our [Get Cycling in Schools website here](#) to find out more and register their interest.



## 3. Schools take up of Level 2

Building a good relationship with schools takes time – as you know! It can be especially challenging if cycling hasn't been on their radar. We have some suggestions for good ways to start increasing engagement with schools.

### Offer incentives

Giving pupils incentives such as cycle vouchers and entries into prize draws can be a good way to get schools on board – especially if they're on a tight budget. Norfolk used this, among other strategies, to attract 25 new schools.

### Get in touch and engage school leadership

Try emailing, sending out flyers or posters to schools to promote your Bikeability training. Making sure your talking to the right people – head teachers, school coordinators and other decision makers, is important. We have a suite of logos, photos and other marketing materials you can adapt, [which you can access here](#).

### Consider waiving any charges

If you charge schools to run Bikeability sessions, you could consider waiving the fee, which is useful for schools with limited funds. This can be linked to ensuring you get 80% or more attendance on the Level 2 sessions.

### Ensure you have the right equipment

Invest in equipment like fleets of balance and pedal cycles, tabards, and cones, can ensure you make it easy for schools to work with you. All they need to do is provide the space and the pupils. Anything that means less work for them makes it an easier decision.



## 4. Well-maintained cycles

Sometimes children turn up with cycles that aren't fit for purpose – they have been set up incorrectly or they haven't been well maintained. That can mean a child being unable to take part if their cycle is in a really bad way. Here are some suggestions for overcoming this barrier.

### Invest in fleet cycles

Having a fleet of good, well-maintained and reliable cycles you can take to schools means that no child will miss out because their cycle has rusted to the point of no return.

### Offer free Dr Bike maintenance sessions to schools

Encourage everyone – pupils, parents and even teachers, to bring their cycles in for a quick tune-up ahead of your Level 2 sessions. Not only does that help ensure pupils will be able to participate in the sessions, it also creates a buzz about cycling in the school.

### Upskill your instructors

Make sure your instructors have the skills to maintain cycles and fix any simple problems, as well as teaching children how to carry out the basics to look after their own cycles.





# Case study:

## Milton Keynes

### What they did

Like lots of other Bikeability providers, Milton Keynes have had to work hard to overcome lots of barriers to scaling-up their delivery. They tried a multi-pronged approach.

- Recruiting instructors
- Engaging with schools
- Incentives
- Fleet bikes
- Dr Bike sessions

We spoke to Hayley Roche from Milton Keynes City Council to find out how they used the scaling-up funding to help them with these initiatives.



# Recruiting instructors

Their first step was to approach the need for more resource within the team and go out and recruit more Bikeability instructors. There aren't many qualified bikeability instructors in the area so Milton Keynes put on a course last year before Christmas, promoting it beforehand and attracting six potential instructors.

All six completed the course, and four were recruited by the council and went on to complete the 72 hours working experience required, shadowing the existing instructors. This was where the funding came in very useful, as they used it to support some of those hours.

*“It's quite difficult to absorb that into your Bikeability grant funding. So that was really, really helpful.”*

Recruiting instructors can take time and needs to be balanced with the work that is coming in.



# Engaging with schools and pupils

Getting engagement from schools was a priority for Milton Keynes, and they put together a working group to come up with ideas. They decided to try more pro-active assemblies, which they found very useful, as well as incentives for schools and pupils.

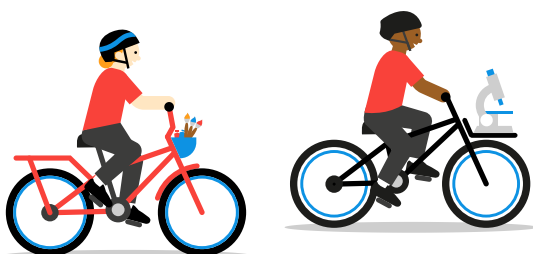
“There were times when instructors turned up at a school and the schools had sent out the consent letters with basic information about Bikeability for us. Parents signed the consent letters but the children who went on to the course didn't really know anything about Bikeability.”

Instead of leaving it to the schools to explain to the children what the sessions were about and to motivate them to sign up, the team recommended to schools that the Bikeability team come in and talk to the children about the sessions.

“We'd already always offered assemblies, but we made it more of a requirement that we go into the school and talk to the kids, let them know what Bikeability cycle training is all about. We didn't make it compulsory, but we highly recommend to schools that we should go in and do an assembly before we send information to parents / carers and guardians about the courses.”

Milton Keynes put together a presentation to explain what was involved, along with a couple of videos to get the pupils excited about taking part. [You can see their presentation here.](#)

They also ran a quick hands-up survey to find out which children could and couldn't cycle. They could then plan their approach – whether that meant coming in to do separate Learn to Ride sessions, or staggering the progress for the different pupils.



# Incentives

Another approach that turned out to work well was the use of incentives, both for the schools and for the pupils. For schools, they procured 62 bikes they could let schools use to help encourage and enable their pupils to cycle more and use during Bikeability.

“They can use them for whatever they want. They can use them in P/E lessons. Preschool clubs, after school clubs, anything that they want to use them for to get more kids cycling.”

Once the schools had run Bikeability sessions and shown they were working to get more students cycling, and if they achieved the minimum target of 80% of primary school children in either year 5 or 6 completing Bikeability level 2, they got to keep the bikes.

“If they can get every child cycling within the school and they can evidence that they're using the bikes regularly , we'll give the bikes to them at the end of the year so that they can continue the great work. We will work with schools to help them use the bikes to increase cycling, however, if they're not being used and they're just sat in the cupboard somewhere and there's no evidence that they're improving cycling and getting more kids cycling, then we'll take them back and reallocate the bikes to another school.”

One thing they really pushed for in Milton Keynes was getting as many pupils doing Bikeability as possible. They talked to the schools about what they thought would work to get their pupils motivated to take part.

“One of the teachers said to us whenever they've got an activity that they want every child to participate in they do a little prize draw and they'll give out a raffle ticket to each of the children and whoever completes the activity is put into the prize draw.”

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They allocated a small amount of money for a £25 voucher for each school, rolled out the prize draw, telling the children about it in the school assemblies and saw a significant increase in the number of pupils who wanted to get involved. Only schools who have the assembly and complete a hands up survey get to take part in the prize draw.



## Fleet bikes

As well as bikes as incentives for schools, Milton Keynes set up their own fleet of bikes they could take to schools to ensure all children could take part, even if they don't have access to a cycle.

“We've got a fleet of 18 bikes that we can take around to schools for our Bikeability training sessions, and again, that's having a huge impact on the number of children who are able to do the lessons.”

## Working with local companies

To help them move the bikes around, they are working with Dawsons, a local fleet management company that provides vehicles for hire. After conversations with the company, including some senior managers who remember their own cycle training fondly and want to support the local community and help more children learn to ride safely, the company offered Milton Keynes a van to use for free for 12 months to move their fleet between schools and they have offered to store the van and bikes on their secure premises.

The team are also looking at bringing cargo bikes into the fleet in the future to give them more options to move their fleets around.

Local company Madisons who they procured their fleet of bikes through, provided discounts on the bikes and equipment. They also built and delivered all of the bikes to the local schools for free and put together an inspirational promotional video, showing where the first learn to ride lessons can lead to.



## Dr Bike sessions

Milton Keynes have also teamed up with another local organisation, the social enterprise Cycle Saviours, to run maintenance courses and Dr Bike sessions at schools. When schools request it, they run the maintenance sessions prior to the Bikeability training.

“Everyone can bring their bikes in, not just the kids. We really encourage the schools to let parents bring their bikes in as well, and teachers. Anybody who's got a bike can bring it in and make the most of that two-hour session so we can get as many bikes as possible up and running.”

By working with local organisations and companies, Milton Keynes have been able to reach children and people who may not otherwise be able to access the life skill of cycling.

## A comprehensive approach

Hayley and the team at Milton Keynes have approached the challenges of scaling up from lots of different angles. From instructor recruitment, to school engagement, and tackling access to cycles/ They have thought about all the barriers that get in the way of them delivering cycle training.

“It's that holistic range of things that we're hoping are really going to make a difference and break down the barriers to participation so that more children can learn to ride safely.”



# Case study:

## Norfolk County Council

### What they did

Norfolk approached their scaling up challenges from all sides – with initiatives aimed at their training providers, schools and children and their parents.

- Incentives for training providers
- Prize draw for schools
- Promotional material and school resources
- Free safety equipment for children

We spoke to Laura Partridge and Roz Branchfield-Symonds from Norfolk County Council to find out how they used the scaling-up funding to help them with these initiatives.





# Incentives for training providers

Norfolk County Council offered their three training providers a financial incentive for hitting their target. So far, only one training provider has taken it up, but they have found it extremely useful.

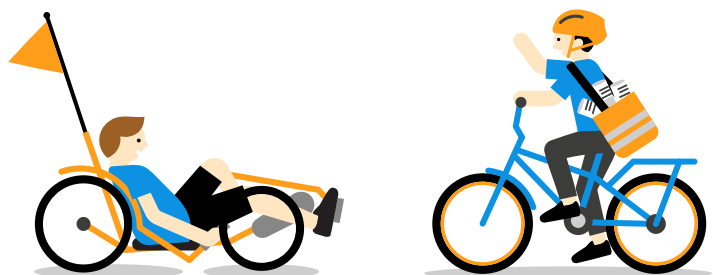
While it might not work for all training providers, depending on how they work and whether they want or have capacity to expand, it can be useful for those that do.

“£300 for the provider per term has enabled them to put more work into how they engage with schools.”

# Prize draw for schools

The team at Norfolk used some of their scaling up grant to provide an incentive for schools to take up Bikeability. They gave schools the chance to enter a prize draw to win a cycle or other equipment if they signed up to Bikeability. They made sure the offer was inclusive, so schools with SEN pupils would be able to take advantage if they won.

“That did garner a lot of interest. It was motivating for some schools that hadn't actually connected with Bikeability before, as the incentive to then do it. But then you also had the ones that did have the training that were then incentivised to promote it a little bit more within their school.”



# Making cycle training more accessible

Norfolk provide the winning school with £250 to spend in a way that will help them promote cycling among their students. The only requirement is the schools let them know how they're planning to spend the money. So far, one school has purchased balance bikes and another helmets.

“Another school actually purchased a trike for the school, to allow children to be able to ride, regardless of whether they could [on a bicycle]. So they bought a trike to enable all children to access that within the school.”

The incentive is already helping to embed cycling in those schools and making it easier for the Bikeability team to work with them in the future, as well as ensuring more children can access a cycle that works for them.



# Promotional materials and school resources

Norfolk also created a series of promotional materials to promote Bikeability, including a postcard which they have been ensuring appears in any relevant establishments and at key events in the area.

They've put together a presentation to support the postcard, if schools or other organisations want to find out more.

“It talks about the benefits of why schools should take on Bikeability, and we've had time to create presentations and deliver presentations to children's services.”

## Targeted resources

They also ensured they were targeting the right people with their resources.

“We were able to pull together a fantastic resource for teachers who deliver PSHE in their curriculums to say what the benefits are of delivering Bikeability across their school and the fact it's fully funded. We're trying to get messages out to those at the decision makers in a school environment.”

Rather than leaving the work to their training providers, Norfolk have begun making in-roads to ensure that when the training providers speak to schools, they know what Bikeability is and the benefits it can have.



# School engagement

Norfolk plan to use the remaining funding to engage with head teachers by sending a letter supported and signed by the director of Public Health. This will highlight the health and road safety benefits by engaging in Bikeability.

“We have developed a survey that will be sent to the schools currently not engaging in Bikeability. The responses will be reviewed to understand the barriers and potential motivation leavers schools need to engage in Bikeability. This feedback will be used to inform our plans and encourage future engagement with this intervention.”



# Free safety equipment for children

To help more children access cycling safely, Norfolk have provided free safety equipment, including helmets and lights.

The free helmets were provided to training providers, so when instructors go to a school if they have a pupil without a helmet, they can still take part in all of the Bikeability training. The pupil is allowed to keep the helmet to help encourage them to cycle more and safely in the future.

They didn't promote the scheme, to ensure the helmets were being used where there was a genuine need, and although they only had a small number – five per training provider – months later they gave away the last one.

“The investment is low, but it has enabled 15 children [to take part in Bikeability] who would not have been able to access it before.”

Any underspend in this scaling up fund will be put to purchase a further 15 helmets.



# Free cycle lights

Norfolk combined funding with great effect, using money secured from a different fund to purchase 2,000 sets of good quality cycle lights to give away to children who had completed Level 2 Bikeability training. They used some of the scaling up funding to help with the co-ordination of this campaign.

“This month alone we're sending out 647 lights.”

The need for lights is particularly important in the area, Norfolk's road safety team is placed in the County Council's public health service, and they work closely with their road safety partnership, establishing opportunities where initiatives and funding can help reduce injuries on rural and urban roads as well as promoting the physical and mental health benefits from cycling.

A survey also found that 84% of children didn't have sufficient lights for their cycles. By combining the light give-away with Level 2 training, Norfolk ensured the children have the skills and the equipment to cycle safely. This campaign also helped to push the message that using lights during the day and night can have a positive impact on safe cycling.



# Partnering with local organisations

Norfolk also worked with different local organisations to make the most of their scaling up funding and reach as many people as possible with the Bikeability message. They have had conversations and worked with the Youth Advisory Board, Active Norfolk and Bicycle Links, a social enterprise based in Norwich.

“They support a lot of charitable outcomes in encouraging cycling and supporting those that are in need of bikes.”

The council and Bicycle Links have worked together to identify children who need bikes, including refugees, to make sure they can access cycle training.

“It was really important to align with them, because it was helping to support in other parts of the community too.”

