

# Active Travel Case Study

**Project title:** Get Moving North Tyneside

**Initiative:** Get Moving - Cobalt Business Park

**Target group:** Employees at Cobalt Business Park, residents of surrounding communities

**Setting and area:** Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside

**Case study date:** May 08 – Dec 09



## Project overview

Get Moving North Tyneside developed the project with Cobalt Business Park as part of the Park's commitment to offering staff alternatives to single occupancy car travel.

Get Moving North Tyneside trained a group of cycle leaders to take staff on guided rides along the excellent network of refurbished Waggonways the borough has to offer. The Cobalt Bike User Group (BUG) was also formed, which has led to the upgrade of cycle facilities within one business, and a commitment from two others to offer better facilities.

Cobalt Business Park also worked with Get Moving North Tyneside to create new opportunities for staff to increase the amount of physical activity they undertook during work hours. Guided walks are held around the site and adjoining biodiversity park, and information provided to staff about walking routes they could try themselves.

Get Moving North Tyneside's work with Cobalt employees is founded on the principle that encouraging active commuting is in the direct interest of employers. This is backed up by a growing body of research from around the world, which indicates that people who are active in their daily lives are also more productive employees.

## Aims

- To increase the number of staff choosing to walk or cycle to work at the business park
- To create more opportunities for staff to engage in active travel and physical activity during their working day
- To improve overall workforce health through promotion of physical activity at work



## Contact us...

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## How people have benefited:

- 425 people registered to take part in Active Travel activities
- Over 80 staff now cycle regularly
- Regular walking group formed
- Volunteers trained in walk and cycle leadership
- Cycle Skills training provided

The Cobalt walk group now has over 40 members who join in to get fresh air during their lunch breaks, meet new people, and discover new walks around the area. One participant describes the benefits:

“I suffer from angina and thought that exercise would only make it worse. I was wrong - I now walk almost every day at work and if I can't walk during lunch then I'll walk home as it only takes me half an hour. I used to be a car addict and regularly complained about the lack of car parking and congestion here. Joining the walk group made me realise that I was being silly sitting in my car for 20 minutes when the walk only takes 30.”

One group of walkers from Job Centre Plus have created their own team walk every lunchtime, and hope to extend this to include members of the local community too.

## Activities

Get Moving North Tyneside provides a varied programme of activities and events to introduce staff to walking and cycling, and remove the barriers preventing employees from travelling actively to work. These include:

- Volunteer training in walk and cycle leadership
- Adult cycle skills training and free “bike MOT's”
- Weekly lunchtime walk group
- Evening guided cycle rides
- Cycle buddy system
- Bike User Group (BUG)
- Personalised route planning
- Active travel awareness events - e.g. Bike to Work days
- Information and advice sessions
- Pool bike loan

In addition to the regular activities, a number of high profile Active Travel events have been held. One of these - Beauty and the Bike - was aimed at women who would like to cycle to work, but are put off by lack of confidence. The event focused on ‘looking good’ and ‘feeling good’, and advice was provided on a range of topics from route planning and safety, to information on cycling clothing and how to combat helmet hair! Female Dr Bike mechanics were also on hand to offer bike MOTs.

## Sustainability

Get Moving North Tyneside aims to train volunteers within each business occupier to lead walks and rides. This will increase the number of opportunities for active travel and physical activity at work, and allow the benefits to continue after the project has ended.

Through activities such as personalised route planning, 80 people now cycle to work regularly, and it is hoped that many more will permanently change their commuting habits as the project progresses.

The Cobalt Bike User Group will also ensure sustainability of the project, by continuing to provide information to developers and occupiers at Cobalt, in order to maintain and improve cycle facilities as the site grows.

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## Local partnerships and support

Get Moving North Tyneside is delivered on a local level in partnership with North Tyneside Council and Cobalt Business Park, building on the success of the North Tyneside 'Getting Active' health walks and the refurbishment of the North Tyneside Waggonway network.

## National partnerships and support

Get Moving North Tyneside a Sustrans Active Travel local project. Sustrans forms part of a Consortium of leading walking, cycling and health organisations being funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Well-being programme, which provides funding to support the development of healthier lifestyles and to improve well-being.

The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004.

## What is Sustrans?

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity.

Our vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. Every day we are working on practical, innovative ways of dealing with the transport challenges that affect us all.

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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