

Safe Routes to schools

Scotland

Winter 2010 Issue 16

Scotland's plan sets 10% cycling target

An exciting new plan has been wheeled out to get 10% of all journeys in Scotland made by bike by 2020. How can schools support this ambition?



Sustrans

Does your school offer young people the cycle training they need to get them pedalling for life?

The Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) sets out how the Scottish Government intends to create 'real and lasting' change in the way people travel. It aims to see 10% of all journeys made by bicycle.

The plan quotes the Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary 2008 which shows that 1% of all journeys by Scottish residents are made by bicycle.

Sustrans' 2009 National Hands-Up Scotland survey showed that of the 415,000 pupils it surveyed, 49.9% travelled to school in an active way with 2.3% of all pupils cycling.

While the National Cycle Network saw a 19% increase in trips to 37 million in 2009: that's a 30% increase when taken with 2008's usage figures.

Plenty of good work is evident, but what can be done to raise these levels even higher? What extra actions could your school undertake?

Schools could take hints from the work of Sustrans' two I Bike officers who have set up pupil Bike Crews to organise promotional events like bike breakfasts. Or, they could enrol as a Cycle Friendly School,

encourage staff to set an example by cycling to work, or provide decent cycle storage.

Cycle training is a key action for CAPS (see right) and an additional £300,000 has been invested in it. Is your school travel plan kept up-to-date and does it include cycle training? Schools can choose from a wide programme including starting P1s off on two wheels as an after school activity. (Read how St Nicholas Primary did this on page 2.)

John Lauder, Scotland's National Director for Sustrans said: "CAPS is a genuine attempt by the Government to change how Scots get around for short trips. It is a good plan and is achievable and worthy of support. CAPS will herald other plans by cities and local authorities: the Active Travel Action Plan in Edinburgh and Glasgow's forthcoming strategy, which will begin to change Scotland for the better.

John added: "Schools and young people are at the heart of CAPS, and with training and high quality infrastructure a constant feature of the plan, this is a good opportunity for schools to take active travel forward."

• Find out more at www.cyclingactionplanforscotland.org/

Key CAPS actions:

These actions are most likely to impact on schools. Yours may already be engaged in such activities, but if not here are some ideas – and you can find others inside this newsletter:

Action 1: To increase on-road cycle training.

If your school is already delivering cycle training, why not do more? If your school is not already delivering cycle training, ask your local authority how to access it. Or see our article on what an after school cycling club can achieve on page 2 of this newsletter.

Action 4: To promote cycling to young people not only for leisure or travel, but also as a fun activity and a sport, by promoting cycling activities, led cycle rides and cycling as a PE activity choice.

Our article on page 6 of this newsletter looks at how Barrhead High and St Luke's Schools have added mountain biking into their curriculums. Is this something your school could do?



Welcome to the *Safe Routes to Schools Newsletter*

The new Designing Streets policy from the Scottish Government is a ground-breaking policy. I believe that it will really change how our urban environment looks and feels.

It comes at a time when we are beginning to realise how much the built environment can dissuade people from getting around by foot and bike. That's why Sustrans has launched its Quality Streets campaign to give people everywhere the opportunity to have their say on improving the quality of life on their street.

If you would like to see your street become a safer, more people-focused place to live, please join our campaign at www.quality-streets.org.uk. You can find out more about the campaign on the back page of this newsletter and please do tell your friends, neighbours and colleagues about it – it's likely they would like a quality street too.

Malcolm Shepherd
Chief Executive

Janitor's scooter storage solution

Faced with a tangle of about 30 scooters each day, Dunbar Primary janitor Ibbby Johnston came up with a simple solution that he's sharing with schools across the UK

Like many primary schools, Dunbar Primary has found scooting has become more than a passing craze amongst younger pupils. Encouraged by an active travel ethos and some Sustrans-funded paths, the school has seen levels of scooting and cycling triple in recent years.



Conventional cycle storage doesn't work for scooters, so janitor Ibbby came up a plan. "I made my own prototype rack. The kids really wanted to use it instead of leaving scooters lying around."

Ibbby didn't want to patent his plans but asked East Lothian Council Cycling Officer Iain Reid to share his idea with other schools.



Now, offenders on community service are using local timber to make and install racks for just £50 each.

"Considering it costs over £600 to buy and install a metal scooter rack," said Iain. "This is a no-brainer."

Racks for schools at Haddington, Cockenzie and Aberlady have been delivered and seven more have been ordered.

- To make your own scooter rack, email ireid@eastlothian.gov.uk for a copy of Ibbby's design and instructions.

Scooter Skills bucks the trend



To get young scooters more safety savvy and give their parents confidence in this popular form of school travel, some of the UK's first scooter training guidance has been published.

To answer a growing need for scooter skills – especially from the county's many rural primary schools – Transport for Buckinghamshire put together two training options.

Either option could be run during school or as an extra after school activity.

- **Brief Scooter Skills** is a one-hour session which rotates pupils around different workshops ending with a fun games session
- **Scooter Skills Levels** provides three hour-long sessions on scooter control, pavement etiquette and priorities at driveways.

- For more information go to www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/transport/Scooter_skills.page or call 01296 383432 or email travelchoice@buckscc.gov.uk

Primary school club boosts biking

Parents at a West Lothian primary school have recycled Cycling Scotland's Ready Steady Bike programme into a popular after school cycling club.

Training for Primary 6 and 7 by volunteer parents and a class teacher, has led to a rise in cycling and scooting to St Nicholas' Primary in Broxburn.

Having prepared almost 70 older children for the transition to secondary school and in response to requests, the volunteers decided to set up a regular after school cycling club for budding bikers in Primary 1.

The club bases its activities around Cycling Scotland's Ready Steady Bike scheme. Free resources and support materials – including a skills kit – were provided and used in many of the sessions.

The club kept things simple by identifying three key goals:

- to be fun
- to improve cycle control skills
- to help get the least experienced cyclists off stabilisers and to start cycling confidently.

Police officer and Cycling Scotland-trained instructor PC Arnott took part in the last session and commented on the children's good skills and levels of concentration. This was confirmed when nearly 20 children won their Ready Steady Bike award.

Depute Head Teacher Simon Kelly said: "It was amazing watching children of five years old develop their cycling skills over a 10-week period."

Acknowledging the hard work of the parent volunteers, he added: "The plan is to include this cycling club and the Primary 6 training into our yearly planning calendar and to look at ways to involve the whole school in cycling and safer routes to school."

- See page 4 of this newsletter for more details of cycle training.



Heather, Paige and Jonathon from St Nicholas' Primary 2 class practice pedalling in the playground

St Nicholas Primary School

Ziggy launches out of this world!

A story-based road safety scheme for under-sixes has been launched with a cute alien at the helm of 'Go Safe! Ziggy's Road Safety Mission'.

Funded by the Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland, this new approach has been put into orbit to target children from birth to six as well as their parents, carers and educational staff.

Each of Scotland's 106,000 pre-school children will be given a book to launch them into a lifelong habit of learning and to instil a strong sense of keeping safe on and around roads.

Ziggy also aims to inspire the adults in the youngsters' lives to be exemplary role models in the road environment.

These books will be complemented by a new website plus teaching packs, including a series of Ziggy stories and an interactive CD. Packs have been sent to all primary schools and pre-school education settings this autumn.

Road Safety Early Years Development Officer and illustrator of the new books Lynn Taylor, said: "The

approach is based on research that indicates the most effective form of early years education should centre on developing positive attitudes and behaviours.

"We know that young children are engaged by well-written stories, rhymes, games and activities," added Lynn. "So we wanted to create a multi-sensory approach to road safety education.

"Too many children are still being injured or killed on Scotland's roads each year. I hope that this will make a real difference in improving child safety on our roads," she said.

The resource has been developed in line with the Scottish Government's policy on early intervention and the Curriculum for Excellence for ages 0-3, pre-school and the transition into Primary 1.

- To find out more go to www.gosafewithziggy.com



Andy Buchanan

Shannon aged six and Joshua aged five from St Peter's Primary School in West Dunbartonshire agree the new Ziggy and the Lollipop book is out of this world

Teaching English through road safety

A teacher is using road safety lessons to help children in rural Mozambique learn English.

Louise Magill of EDen Mozambique is working to raise the profile of road safety through English lessons.

She's doing this at a new education centre in the country's coastal region of Barra where many children walk three or four kilometres to school.

"Road safety is a huge and often overlooked problem in Africa and there are no resources for it available

in Mozambique," said Louise.

To teach the lesson, she draws roads on the classroom floor to let the children practice crossing safely before trying it on the street outside.

When they've mastered the skills, the children are each given a reflective slapband donated by Sustrans. They're encouraged to wear them as a reminder to use their road safety skills.

- Find out more at <http://edenmozambique.googlepages.com>



Louise Magill

Wearing reflective slapbands remind EDen Mozambique pupils to practice road safety – and their English

Resources for all

What does your school need to do to pep up active travel?

Have a look at these resources and see what they could lead to...

Developing cyclists

Resources and training for instructors are available through Cycling Scotland. They are:

- **Level 1 – Ready Steady Bike.** This is aimed at P3-P5 pupils and teaches cycle skills such as balance, control and making turns in the playground. In our article on page 3, see how St Nicholas' Primary used it for P1/2 pupils and adapted it for P6s.
- **Level 2 – the Scottish Cycle Training Scheme.** It is tailored for P6/7 and teaches basic on-road skills including how to navigate junctions.
- **Level 3 – Go by Cycle.** this third level is aimed at P7-S2 pupils and teaches independent journeying including complex junction navigation and route planning.

The three tiers of skill levels plus accompanying resources can be tailored to fit schools' requirements.



Cycling Scotland

Route planning is among the independence skills taught by Go By Cycle for older primary pupils

- More on cycle training at www.cyclingscotland.org/our-projects/cycle-training/cycle-training-for-children/
- More on instructor training at www.cyclingscotland.org/our-projects/workforce-development/becoming-an-instructor/

Finding Funding for School Travel



Sustrans

Sustrans' factsheet aims to help efficient and profitable fundraising

It's a fact that many active travel projects need funding. Knowing that, Sustrans has an infosheet that takes schools through the whole process.

It has helpful tips on setting targets, how much time fundraising can take and correct targeting. There's also a useful list of grant-making bodies and a guide to their criteria for giving.

- Sustrans' Finding Funding infosheet can be found at <http://miniurl.com/56822>

Bike ride inspires schools to Glow

An annual bike ride has inspired a local authority to use Glow, Scotland's national intranet for schools, to connect pupils, teachers and the schools themselves.

September 2010's Auld Alliance Charity Cycle Ride included West Lothian Council's Chief Executive Alex Linkston.

Alex was among the riders to pedal nearly 600 land miles from Livingston to Paris to help raise funds for the education of girls in Malawi.

The council has been relaying the adventure to schools via Glow using blogs, Twitter, video conferencing and other ICT tools.

Teachers have been able to share planning for cross-curricular activities which included French, geography, history and health and wellbeing.

Alex Linkston's GPS phone allowed schools to map his progress and for him to Tweet every few hours, while Glow Meets allowed pupils to ask him questions ranging from road safety to the weather.

Woodmuir Primary in Breich and St Nicholas Primary in Broxburn used static bikes to match the mileage of the real racers and streamed video footage of their challenge into other classrooms via Glow.

In Livingston, Harrysmuir Primary measured the ride using trundle wheels and maps to support maths work around a virtual walk to Paris, which they also shared via Glow.

"The charity ride may be over, but we're still working with schools to help them realise and share in Glow's possibilities," said Laura Compton,

Teacher and Learning Development Officer at West Lothian Council.

"Pupils responded very well to this project and we will use this model in the future.

"I think Alex may have the cycling bug so we could be following his adventures for some time!"



West Lothian schools connect their work inspired by the charity race via Glow

Cycle parking for schools

Cycle parking is a major investment for schools and it's important to get it right.



The cycle parking infosheet gives ideas on proper use of the storage

Sustrans' new cycle parking infosheet is a step-by-step guide to help schools find the most appropriate cycle parking for their needs – and to avoid expensive mistakes.

The infosheet offers advice on finding funding, choosing the right size and style of storage, picking a suitable location and getting planning permission when necessary.

- Sustrans' range of School Travel infosheets, including Cycle Parking for schools is at <http://miniurl.com/56824>
- Check out our article on a low-cost but highly effective scooter storage solution on page 2 of this newsletter.

Lesson plans – for Cycle Friendly Schools

A set of eight cycle-themed lesson plans which support the Cycle Friendly Schools award are available.

They cover all eight curricular areas, and relate directly to specific experiences and outcomes. Each lesson is helpfully colour coded.

- The lesson plans are available at: http://cyclingscotland.msol.org.uk/Uploads/1286786192_Lesson_Plans_Web.pdf



Cycling Programmes – for School and Youth Groups



The co-operative work of the Cycling and Schools Group is outlined in a new leaflet covering three main themes: active travel, cycle sport, plus recreational cycling and mountain biking.

Each has its own set of activities, specialised qualifications and programmes which become more specialised as the cyclist develops.

- Sign up for a copy and download it from http://cyclingscotland.msol.org.uk/Uploads/1289903320_cycling_in_scotland_web.pdf

How to ride off-road

A new mountain bike proficiency scheme is being offered in Go Mountain Bike (Go MTB) Centres across the UK by over 100 instructors

The scheme helps young people develop their mountain biking skills and to make solo journeys by teaching riding skills, first aid and responsible access.

Techniques in navigation and trail-side repairs as well as what is appropriate clothing, food and hydration are taught, which tie in with the new Curriculum for Excellence.

Cycling Scotland Education and Training Manager Jim Riach said: "Go MTB has been developed as a comprehensive introduction to off-road riding. Participants can mix and match the themes and levels according to their interests.

Interest levels are growing, says Senior Tutor Richard Lawes at accredited Adventure Aberdeen: "We've registered 136 city primary school pupils in the scheme since February this year."

"Schools seem to like that the course is structured: children like to get something tangible at the end and there's no upper age limit so it can be part of lifelong learning."

- For more information email info@cyclingscotland.org go to www.cyclingscotland.org/our-projects/cycle-training/



Tullos Primary booked a four-week Go MTB after school activity in which all 16 pupils got riding skills level 1, and the three pictured made it to level 2

Aberdeen City Council

Cycle skills wheel into Barrhead's curriculum

Pupils in East Renfrewshire are among the first in the country to undertake mountain biking as part of their PE curriculum.

More than 500 S2 to S5 pupils at Barrhead High School began a course in practical cycling skills in May complemented by bike maintenance lessons.

The initiative is just one of a number of cycling education initiatives being trialed.

It uses funding from the Scottish Government's three-year £15 million Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) programme aimed at reducing car use in Scotland.

The course in practical cycling involved simple exercises around the school grounds and will lead on to bicycle maintenance sessions next year.

Once the students are confident riders, trips to Whitelee wind farm might become a possible cross-curricular link with geography.

Mike Russell, PT, Health and Fitness

teacher at Barrhead High said: "All S2 pupils participate in the programme block three times a week for four weeks.

"It's a choice for S3, S4 and S5 pupils and the uptake this year has been very good, especially in S3 and S4."

Among the activities are riding courses in a local park where pupils are given times to beat.

To ensure the sustainability of the work, staff have been trained in mountain bike instruction and maintenance while a cycle club is helping establish extra-curricular interest.

"The pupils thoroughly enjoy being involved in something a bit different from the norm in PE," said Mike who plans to organise some summer term events with nearby St Luke's High School.

St Luke's is buying 20 bikes with the help of local Active School Co-ordinator Kirsteen Torrance.

"We are working closely together with Barrhead to develop the initiative and learn from their practice ready for action early next year," she said.



Weaving mountain bike skills like these into the curriculum is engaging students at St Luke's and at Barrhead High Schools

Routes to careers in active travel

From world trip to making maps

Agreeing to cycle round the world was a bit of a gamble, admits Tom Bishop. But it paid off. He says he went into the trip blind, came out broke, but rich with new skills that helped him land a job with Sustrans

"We took about five months to plan our 24,000 mile trip. It took 22 months to complete and raised about £10,000 for Friends of the Earth and Mediciens sans Frontieres.

"John Mitchell and I set off from Amersham in March 2007 but our bikes were nicked two days later in Cambridge. The local media helped us obtain new ones and we were back on the road in a week.

The trip

"The trip took us up to Newcastle, across Scandinavia, Russia, Mongolia, China, Japan, Canada and the United States.

"Highlights were many and included meeting my girlfriend in Seattle, cycling and walking up Mount Fuji in Japan, crossing the Pacific on a 90,000 tonne container ship and sleeping rough in city parks including Helsinki, Tokyo and San Francisco.

"We cycled through road tunnels in Alaska and Japan to avoid paying bus fares, got up close to Black and Grizzly Bears in Canada and met comedian Rory McGrath who cycled out of Cambridge with us.

"We met and stayed with a lot of amazing people on the trip, all of whom helped us a great deal.

Work experience

"Before the trip, I'd had a number of bike shop jobs – the maintenance came in



handy. I found another on my return to Edinburgh when I enrolled as a volunteer with Sustrans and helped out in the office.

"There, I used GIS and CAD skills from my Archaeology degree to update our online mapping and I carried out our route survey of National Route 1 in preparation for the new Aberdeen to Shetland map.

The job

"After about five months, I was given a contract. I've since worked on a variety of projects such as updating maps and helping develop The Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative.

"For a career in active travel you need enthusiasm and to be motivated to encourage people to make different transport choices," said Tom. Cycling around the world is optional.



Camping in Norway at the start of the trip, Tom in Japan and pedalling through the Canadian fall



All images: Tom Bishop and John Mitchell



Get yourself some Quality Streets

Wouldn't life be great if the street outside your front door felt like your own space? Somewhere to chat with your neighbours, kick a ball around with the kids, and a safe place to ride bikes and play. Somewhere to give us all a better quality of life - a quality street.

For many of us the street outside our front door has become a place of speeding traffic, rat-running, noise and pollution. It's a place for others to travel through rather than for communities to claim as their own.

That's why we want local councils to invest more of their local transport budgets to create quality streets.

The first step is 20mph speed limits across whole villages, towns and cities. The second is residents being involved in designing their streets for living, playing, and getting out and about more. The result is better quality lives, quality chat and play, and safer more attractive places outside our front doors.

Safer streets for children to walk and cycle will encourage more of them to get to school in a healthy and enjoyable way that's also good for our environment.

Sign up to get your Quality Street at
www.quality-streets.org.uk

Teachers, parents, carers, school cycling officers and the whole school community can:

1. **sign up to the campaign at www.quality-streets.org.uk.** This will generate an automatic email to your **local councillor** telling them that you want to see 20mph zones introduced where you live and that you want budgets allocated to making streets safe, attractive and sociable places.
2. **spread the word.** Please let other parents, carers and teachers know about the campaign and encourage them to sign up. Can you add a banner to the school website? Can you mention it in a letter home? Or at a Parent Council meeting?

If you're involved in local transport planning and school travel planning you can:

- **sign up to the campaign and do what you can to let your colleagues know about it.** Please pass details of the campaign onto the Executive Member for Transport and other lead officers.

Subscription

Safe Routes to Schools Scotland Newsletter is aimed at transport, health, education and environmental professionals and is published bi-annually as a free resource. To subscribe, contact Sustrans School Travel Information Service by phone, email or via the SRS website. The newsletter can also be downloaded from www.sustrans.org.uk/saferoutes

To submit ideas, news, images and stories for inclusion, email schools-scotland@sustrans.org.uk

The School Travel project in Scotland is coordinated by Sustrans and is supported by the Scottish Government, Charitable Trusts and Sustrans Supporters.

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today.
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