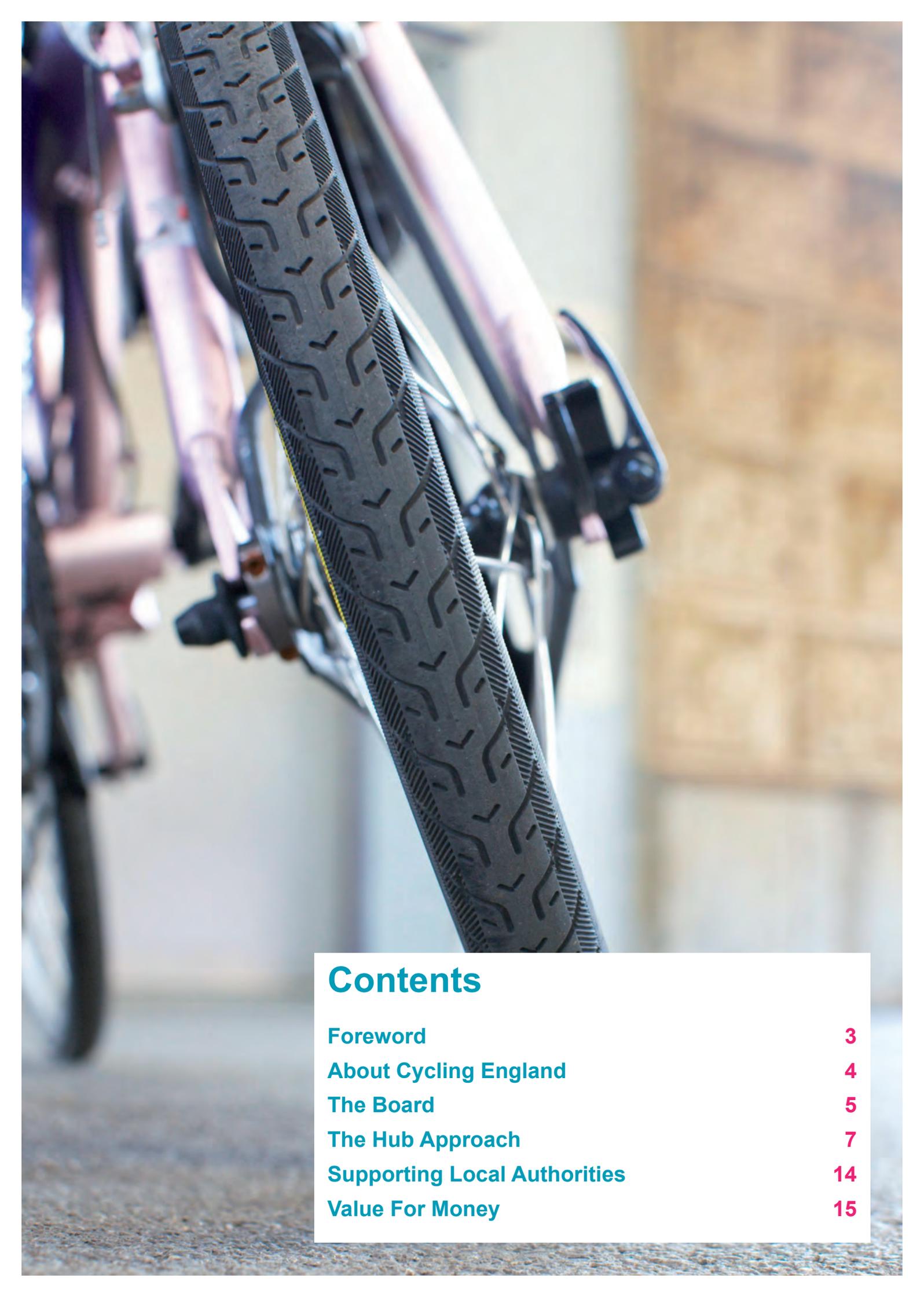


Cycling England Mid-Term Review

2008/9 - 2010/11



A close-up photograph of a bicycle tire tread, showing a pattern of small, repeating geometric shapes. The tire is mounted on a pink frame. The background is a blurred wooden wall.

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Foreword

The first half of the 2008/2011 Spending Review has marked some important milestones for cycling, and for Cycling England.

First results indicate that the Cycling Demonstration Town programme, started in 2005, is already driving major behaviour change; to date all towns have achieved significant success in getting more people cycling.

Bikeability, the Government's national cycle training programme, is now accessible in most local authorities in England, providing children with the skills and confidence to cycle in modern traffic conditions.

Lessons from the first six cycling towns prove for the first time in 30 years that smarter travel planning can reverse what had seemed like an inexorable decline in cycling participation. In the demonstration towns we are witnessing a real Lift Off for Cycling, and it is now clear this could be repeated in many other towns and cities around the country.

The figures summarising the results from this first phase of investment:

- Cycling trips up on average by 27 per cent in less than three years
- Cycling to school at least once a week has increased by 126 per cent
- Growing numbers of new people cycling
- Significant increase in measures of physical activity – contributing to improvements in health

These increases mirror the early successes seen in London between 2000 and 2003, suggesting that, as in London, we can double cycling levels in those six towns within 10 years.

Early and conservative economic analysis of the results gives us a cost benefit of at least 3:1 in terms of reduced congestion and pollution and improved health.

The success of this demonstration does not lead to a one-size-fits-all central solution for all local authorities. The demonstration serves as a guide – on how to put together a successful programme and with what components. The best outcomes have come from understanding local people and priorities, working with local partners, and developing bespoke programmes which blend known components (such as best practice in cycling infrastructure) and proven projects (such as Bikeability) with local innovation and marketing.

Overall, Cycling England is on track to meet its Spending Round objectives: to get more people cycling (especially children); to demonstrate the benefits of increased cycling for short trips and investigate the best ways of achieving this; and to explore new ways to introduce non-cyclists to cycling.

This is a very promising start but it must be sustained. The levels of cycling achieved in many European cities have only been accomplished through consistent policy and investment levels over two decades or more.

We cannot freewheel into our future: we need to continue to champion cycling throughout our communities. If we create the right conditions, families, employees, children, and other individuals will be able to choose the bicycle for their trip to the shops; their journey to school or work; or to travel to a catch up with friends.

Changing local travel habits will have a dramatic national impact: safer, quieter, greener roads; healthier, and potentially happier, individuals.



Phillip Darnton
Chairman, Cycling England



About Cycling England

Cycling England is a small non-departmental public body established by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2005. Its job is to get more people cycling, more safely, more often. It is working to show that cycling can contribute to tackling some of the most significant challenges facing Government today: congestion, pollution, climate change, and obesity.

Cycling England is a unique collaboration involving Government, the three national cycling organisations – British Cycling, CTC and Sustrans – and independent specialists in the fields of health, education and transport. It provides a single point of contact bringing together technical advice and expertise on cycling; facilitating links across Government, NGOs and the cycling community. The bulk of its role is in coordinating a programme of investment in new and existing projects to get more people cycling. It also acts as a central hub of expertise and best practice for local authorities.

Cycling England established two major initiatives at its launch: the development of six Cycling Demonstration Towns, and a new cycle training programme, Bikeability, the Cycling Proficiency for the 21st Century. The long-term goal for Bikeability is to give every child the opportunity to learn to ride a bike safely and well before they leave primary school.

Funding, initially £5 million per annum between 2005 and 2008, was exclusively provided and managed by DfT; during 2006, this was increased to £10 million to accelerate the cycle training programme.

As a result of early successes and mounting evidence of the value that cycling can play in tackling major public policy issues, the Department now invests £140 million in cycling: £20 million in 2008/9 and £60 million in each of 2009/10 and 2010/11. £15 million of this is from the Department of Health in recognition of cycling's significant contribution to health objectives.



The Board

Cycling England has a Board and a small executive team run from a virtual office. The Board works pro bono and is comprised of:

Phillip Darnton OBE (Chairman)

Phillip has chaired Cycling England since its launch in 2005, after serving on the National Cycling Strategy Board since 2002. Prior to this, Phillip was Chairman and Chief Executive of Raleigh plc for three years following a 30-year career with Unilever plc.

Dr. Alison Hill

Alison is Programme Director for the South east Public Health Observatory and head of the National Obesity Observatory.

Peter King CBE

Peter is Executive Chairman of British Cycling.

Kevin Mayne

Kevin is Director of CTC, the National Cyclists' Organisation.

Cllr. Dave Merrett

A York City Councillor from 1982, Dave led successive York Councils on transport matters between 1988 to 2002, before York was judged to be England's best cycling city in 2003.

Malcolm Shepherd

Malcolm is Chief Executive of sustainable transport charity Sustrans.

Lynn Sloman

Lynn is a transport consultant and Vice-Chair of the Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT).

Chris Spencer

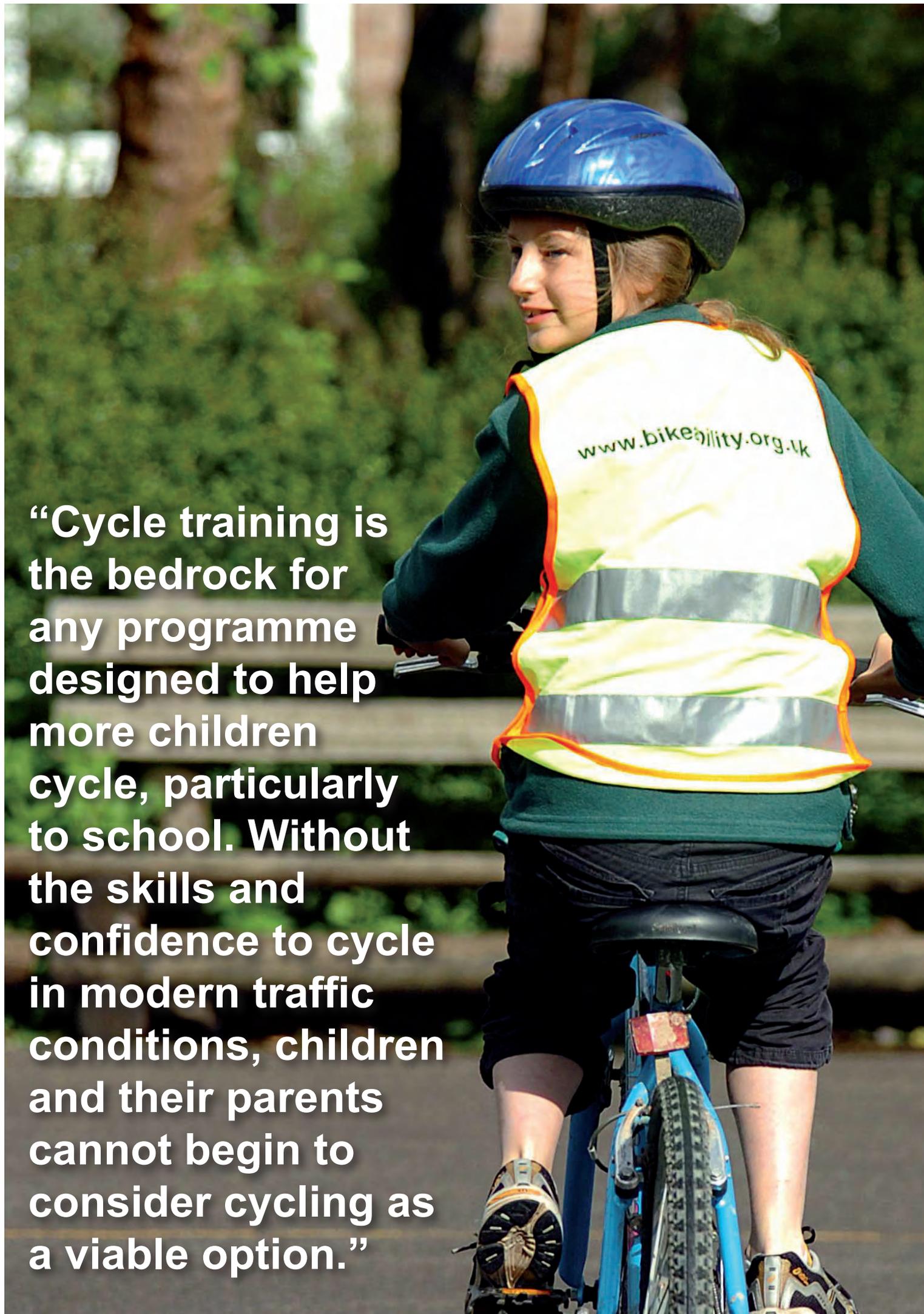
Chris is Director of Education, Youth and Leisure at the London Borough of Hillingdon.

Christian Wolmar

Christian is a writer and broadcaster specialising in rail.



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The Hub Approach

The Cycling Towns programme has shown that achieving increases in cycling is not simple, but often realised through a complex combination of different measures ranging from adjusting road layouts to building cycle lanes; cycle training; or the right kind of promotion and marketing. A different combination of measures is required for different local circumstances. However, successful strategies do have a simple formula – they are all tailored according to the following local variables:

- **People** – which people, why might they cycle, why don't they cycle now?
- **Place** – where do they want to go?
- **Purpose** – why are they making the journey?

An efficient way of targeting people is through the 'hubs' that connect them, the places they want to go and the reasons they go there. Hubs can be schools, railway stations, hospitals, universities or leisure destinations.

Schools

Schools, particularly primary schools, are perhaps the best examples of hubs that connect 'people, place and purpose' for cycling. Most children want to cycle, and they are undertaking at least one known journey everyday, and for a known purpose – the journey to and from school.

Bikeability

Cycle training is the bedrock for any programme designed to help more children cycle, particularly to school. Without the skills and confidence to cycle in modern traffic conditions, children and their parents cannot begin to consider cycling as a viable option.

If children are to cycle, parents must have the confidence their children have the right standard and quality of training. This means a nationally accredited scheme with Government set standards and qualified instructors.

At the same time local authorities and schools need flexibility in how cycle training is delivered, when and where, to reflect local circumstances.

Bikeability meets both these needs and is supported by Government, cycling and road safety organisations. There are now over 3,000 instructors and 200 local Bikeability schemes registered. More than 250,000 young cyclists have been trained and received the coveted Bikeability award.

In 2010 more than 80 per cent of local authorities support Bikeability and there are 226 School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) delivering it. Where local authorities need help delivering Bikeability, Cycling England has engaged with SSPs – clusters of schools working together to develop PE and sport opportunities for young people. These have allowed a flexible approach where schools would like to take the lead in arranging training. As all schools are part of one of 450 SSPs, the network is proving vital to achieving national coverage for Bikeability.

Cycling England aims that no child should leave primary school without the opportunity to take part in Bikeability training and is well on its way to the first milestone: the target to train half a million children by 2012.



Changing behaviour

However, Bikeability is just the first step. Although there is evidence that as many as two thirds of children are cycling more after completing their Bikeability training¹, it is clear that a package of measures is required to achieve a step-change in children cycling.

While training is fundamental to safety, skill and reassurance for parents, other barriers must also be tackled. It helps to have a champion for cycling within a school – to enthuse parents and teachers and tackle all the school's local issues, for example there must be safe cycle parking available to lock up children's bikes, and there needs to be a safe route to the school if children are to use their new skills to make their first journeys.

To turn cycling from an activity into a lifetime habit, there need to be further opportunities created to enjoy cycling – from after-school cycling clubs taking advantage of the extended school day, to BMX tracks or weekend bike rides.



Unlocking the bike shed

Bike It

Working with delivery partner Sustrans, Bikeability is followed up with a schools champions project known as Bike It. A network of more than 50 Bike It Officers work directly with over 500 schools, supporting them with travel planning, safety issues and lesson plans. Bike It is already having a dramatic impact on cycling to school levels. By the end of 2009, the percentage of children cycling to Bike It schools every day had doubled from four per cent to eight per cent, while the number cycling at least once a week had increased from around a sixth to a quarter of all pupils.

Bike Club

Cycling England is also funding a new project called Bike Club, formed by a consortium of three leading charities – CTC, UK Youth and ContinYou – that are combining their expertise in the area of extended services and non-formal education. Bike Club aims to support groups of young people with training, equipment and facilities that help them use cycling as a way to learn skills and achieve.

Safe Routes to Schools

Cycling England has committed to helping local authorities provide safe routes to schools, identifying and creating quiet cycle routes away from main public highways. During the current Spending Round over 250 Links to Schools will be built connecting around 500 schools to the National Cycle Network. These are more than highway extensions, they also include measures such as cycle parking.

¹ Results of Cycling England market research following a pilot of Bikeability in 10 regions between September 2006 and March 2007.

Towns

The first phase of the Cycling Demonstration Town programme, from 2005 to 2008, saw six towns across England receive significant investment to increase local cycling levels. £7 million was awarded to Aylesbury, Brighton and Hove, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and Lancaster with Morecambe. This was matched by their respective local authorities. In January 2008 Cycling England expanded the programme selecting England's first Cycling City and 11 additional cycling towns from a field of 74 excellent bids – more than half of all highways authorities, and a testament to a renewed interest from local authorities in the value of cycling.

At the mid-way point of the second phase of the Cycling Towns programme, much has been achieved, with measures ranging from infrastructure changes like 20mph zones, new cycle routes, signage and parking in key target areas, or building on training schemes to promotional partnerships with community hubs like schools, railway stations and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). A summary of each town or city's activity can be found on the Cycling England website.

The new towns continue to be a focus for innovation and experiment as well as a consolidation of what was learned in the first six. For example, the first cycle hire schemes have been launched in the cycling towns of Blackpool, Southport and Bristol.

These schemes are an example of how initiatives must be tailored to suit local needs: from large scale schemes aimed at significantly reducing commuter congestion, to highly targeted schemes focusing on tourists or the conference market.



“Cycling levels in all six Cycling Demonstration Towns increased by an average of 27 per cent, demonstrating a decisive break from the downward trend in UK cycling levels.”



Cycling Demonstration Towns – results

In November 2009, a joint Cycling England/ DfT publication was launched – ‘Analysis and synthesis of evidence on the effects of investment in six Cycling Demonstration Towns’. This analysed the results from the first three years of the programme, and was followed in December 2009 with a summary called ‘Lift Off for Cycling – Cycling Demonstration Towns Report’, accompanied with additional technical detail for local authorities².

These reports revealed cycling levels in all six Cycling Demonstration Towns had increased by an average of 27 per cent, demonstrating a decisive break from the downward trend in UK cycling levels³.

Importantly, the numbers of people cycling had increased – it was not just the same people cycling more. There had been a significant increase in measures of physical activity – most encouragingly amongst people who were previously classed as ‘inactive’.

Within the overall increase are included many encouraging statistics – Darlington has quadrupled the proportion of children cycling to school, while Aylesbury has seen a four-fold increase in residents using a bike as one of their two main means of transport in the last two years.

But it takes time to make cycling part of everyday life. The most successful European towns and cities have been investing consistently in cycling for 30 years. These results give us confidence that the six Cycling Demonstration Towns and the new wave of 11 Cycling Towns, together with Greater Bristol as a Cycling City, can – given time – make a real difference to the travel culture of the UK.

Cycling England is also working with the DfT on an in depth evaluation designed to address some of the key questions that need to be answered by future travel planners – ‘which groups of people can be encouraged to cycle/ ride their bikes more often’, ‘what triggered behaviour change’, ‘what are the wider and longer-term effects of cycling interventions on health, the environment or quality of life?’. Results will be available in 2012/13.



² Two technical documents accompanied this publication – ‘Cycling Demonstration Towns Monitoring Project Report’ and appendix, and ‘Valuing increased cycling in the Cycling Demonstration Towns’.

³ London excepted.

Workplace

One clear opportunity to target people, place and purpose is through the daily journey to work, using employers to champion cycling and facilitate greater take-up amongst staff and visitors. More than six million employees currently use cars or buses to travel less than five miles to work, and switching to cycling would lead to considerable health and carbon-saving benefits. In addition to these personal and environmental incentives, the planned introduction of parking charges is also motivating businesses to develop smarter travel plans.

Overview: Encouraging employers to work on cycling

During 2009 and early 2010 Cycling England set up a number of pilot projects with major employers, including the NHS and universities. Both health organisations and higher education institutions are appropriate partners given that they have significant numbers of potential cyclists to engage with. Hospitals typically have thousands of staff working across 24 hours, seven days a week. In the four participating hospitals in the North East – Newcastle, South Tees, Sunderland and Darlington – there are about 30,000 employees and more than 25,000 whole time equivalents (40 per cent of the entire region's NHS staff). Major employment sites, such as universities and hospitals, are subject to conflicting pressures of growth, centralisation, deliveries, building development and parking. Transport to and around such large sites, often with a number of different campuses/venues, can be challenging for staff, contractors, students and visitors. And although most major hospitals and universities have green travel plans, provision to encourage walking or cycling will often be insufficient or in need of upgrading.

Furthermore, given all the evidence to suggest that increased cycling levels can reduce premature deaths, and tackle the growing threat of youth obesity, promoting cycling to both staff and the general public can help the NHS reduce costs, meet their targets to address health needs and reduce carbon levels simultaneously.

The diversity of the partners, including individual hospitals in the South West selected for their specific workplace challenges, six PCT regions in the South East, four acute hospital sites in the North East and a teaching hospital and three university sites in Nottingham will generate some valuable results on which measures to encourage workplace cycling can be best applied in different situations at major workplaces.

Between all four projects a wide range of interventions are being trialled including: various types of bike storage facilities, loan, hire and pool bike schemes, parking permit redemptions, infrastructure improvements, bicycle user groups, motivational events, training, maintenance schemes, bike buddies and the introduction of the salary sacrifice scheme.

The relative success of these interventions will be closely monitored. The results will be widely shared with other major employers both at the local level via the regional health authorities, but also nationally by the DfT and Department of Health.

Railway Stations

Not all commuters are able to cycle directly to work, but many might be able to travel part of the way by bike. Targeting multi-modal journeys is a key part of Cycling England's strategy, helping people to cut down on their reliance on cars and consider alternative methods of transport.

Door-to-door journey times are a key factor for most travellers when deciding what mode of transport to use and there is a case to be made for how cycling, if well integrated at either end of a train trip, can help reduce overall travel times. For Train Operating Companies (TOCs) who are interested in increasing the number of passengers on their lines, evidence of quicker journey times can help to build a compelling economic case for encouraging cycling to/from their stations. Other factors for TOCs to consider include how installing cycle parking

can help overcome issues with car parking and space constraints, whilst catering for more customers.

And there is huge, untapped potential across the rail network to convert existing passengers, or attract new customers to cycling to the station given that many station catchment areas involve journeys of less than five miles, currently being made by car.

Cycling England and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) have developed a series of distinctive projects in partnership with four TOCs. The aim of these projects is to investigate more closely how best to encourage more cycling to railway stations, and at the same time, increase passenger numbers. A wide range of both infrastructure improvements and soft measures will be trialled, and closely evaluated to increase our understanding of how effective they are at encouraging more people to cycle to/from the station.

The evaluation will explore what package of cycling measures might best fit different types of stations – from small country stops to suburban stations and large urban centres. Once the results have been assessed and a series of best-practice examples produced, learning will be disseminated via ATOC and the DfT to other TOCs, providing valuable case studies on how they could develop similar schemes across the country. Cycling provision could also form a greater part of TOC franchise negotiations.

Leisure destinations

Cycling is often an exhilarating experience. Positive leisure experiences can lead to the development of new hobbies or habits, and cycling is no exception. The journey to work may be too much for some, but family holidays may provide the right incentive to get back to cycling. Whether individuals are motivated by a newfound spirit of adventure (or forced into submission through the pester power of their children or companions), Cycling England is exploring the idea that the route to more regular, everyday cycling starts with cycling for leisure.

Cycling England is working with three partners to explore the proposition that people who have had a positive leisure cycling experience are more likely to take up cycling for everyday journeys. The key to answering this question is first to be able to keep in touch with the 'target audience' on their return home and then to be able to monitor their cycling behaviour over a sufficiently long period to get a robust picture of how their cycling habits have changed as a result.

The partners in the leisure programme come from very different backgrounds – a county council, a national park authority and a collaboration between a government department, charity and commercial holiday operator – and so bring a wide range of experience, approaches and networks of contacts to the overall programme.

Each of the project partners are initially either enhancing existing, or providing new leisure cycling facilities to enable non-/infrequent cyclists or people that currently only cycle for leisure to enjoy cycling in an attractive recreational setting. Results will generate new evidence about the potential of leisure cycling as a route to regular, everyday trips by bike. This will not only help to guide future investment decisions for cycling, but also provide a wealth of best-practice examples that Cycling England and the partners can promote to their wider networks.

Supporting Local Authorities

Sharing what works

Cycling England brings together the expertise of leading cycling practitioners and national cycling organisations, helping pool best practice and deliver powerful support for change.

One of Cycling England's key objectives is to share innovation, successes and learnings from established and developing programmes – in particular from the Cycling Towns, which are developing many innovative projects to allow people to choose cycling. Whether it be cycling infrastructure design or planning, marketing or training, there is a growing set of insights and data which can be adapted and applied to local authority needs across the country. Project officers from the 18 towns and city meet one another regularly to share good practice and learn from one another. Wherever possible, good practice is also documented and shared with a wider audience online and through local authority media.

In addition to the national programmes, Cycling England provides expert advice and guidance to any local authority that requires support, in particular assisting authorities to meet local health and transport objectives within their local transport plans.

Cycling England helps local authorities compile evidence to make the internal case for increased investment, and supports them to access funding streams to deliver their projects. It can also act as broker, match-making complementary projects so that they are joined-up and deliver greater impact, more cost-effectively.

Sharing best practice is not just limited to the insights from Cycling England funded programmes. In 2009 Cycling England worked with the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) to ask local authorities for their view on how best to increase rates of cycling.

A consultation was held with 30 local authorities, who fielded a mix of elected members and senior officers. A 17 point series of recommendations was produced in a report entitled 'Active Communities: cycling to a better quality of life' and shared with all local authority chief executives.



Value For Money

Over the past three years, Cycling England has worked with the DfT and the national Obesity Observatory, amongst others, to consider the benefit to cost ratio of cycling programmes.

Research has explored the financial returns of cycling both from a per capita perspective (the notional value for each additional cyclist for Government and for local authority planning purposes); and has also calculated the actual cost/benefit ratio of investment in the original six Cycling Demonstration Towns.

In assessing the economic returns on cycling investment, it is necessary to consider the wider societal gains to be derived from more people cycling. Many of the reports published to date base their valuations of cycling on savings to health and other areas like congestion and pollution reduction. Although not every single cycling benefit can currently be quantified, the datasets that do exist demonstrate the dramatic returns which can be realised through increased cycling, giving providers and policy-makers the right evidence when considering cycling as part of a wider integrated transport plan, and as part of public health initiatives.

- A 20 per cent increase in cycling by 2012 would release a cumulative saving of £500 million by 2015, and an increase of 50 per cent would create total savings of more than £1.3 billion⁴
- Investment in new cycling infrastructure more than pays for itself⁵:
 - ♦ An investment of £10,000 requires just one additional regular cyclist in order to achieve payback through health, congestion and pollution benefits

- ♦ An investment of £100,000 requires only 11 additional regular cyclists
- ♦ Even a piece of cycling infrastructure costing £1 million needs to convert just 109 people to regular cyclists in order to break even

In addition to these findings, results from the original six Cycling Demonstration Towns tell us:

- The investment in the Cycling Demonstration Towns had a high benefit-cost ratio (BCR), estimated at 2.59:1, when only benefits in reduced mortality were taken into account
- Although this ratio is already encouraging, the BCR increases still further once a wider range of impacts like congestion and improved employee engagement are incorporated, moving to 2.6-3.5 over a decade
- Using this new ratio range, it is estimated that the six Cycling Demonstration Towns would in 10 years save:
 - ♦ £45 million through reduced mortality
 - ♦ £7 million through decongestion
 - ♦ £1-3 million from reduced absenteeism

These figures are conservative given the level of initial capital infrastructure delivered in the Cycling Demonstration Towns, plus the difficulty of taking into account reductions in morbidity/the benefits of children cycling from an early age.

Assuming some level of ongoing investment in behavioural change programmes and training, the BCR range would be still higher, 4.7 – 6.1, over 30 years.

4 Valuing the Benefits of Cycling, published 2008: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland/site/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/valuing-the-benefits-of-cycling-full.pdf>

5 In 2009 specialist economic consultancy SQW produced a Cycling Planning Model (CPM), which quantifies the wider benefits of cycling to produce estimates on the number of additional cyclists needed to pay back initial investment. It defines regular cycling as three times a week and measures the impact across the lifetime of a project assumed in this study to be 30 years. Importantly, this does not mean that the same people must continue to cycle, but that on average, there should be that many more cyclists each year than would be the case were the investment not made.

For more information about Cycling England, please visit www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland

For more information about Bikeability, please visit www.bikeability.org.uk

