

Teddington Dr Bike Project Report

Introduction

SWELTRAC has produced this report to summarise the Dr Bike and Cycle Maintenance programme that was run as part of the Teddington Travel to Work Network between November 2009 and October 2010. SWELTRAC organised these initiatives in order to assist members of the Teddington Travel to Work Network to encourage their staff to cycle to work by providing cycle maintenance services and classes.

Teddington Travel to Work Network

The Teddington Travel to Work Network began in November 2007 and is made up of a number of organisation representatives who meet regularly to discuss travel to work issues affecting their workplaces. It aims to improve workplace travel options for staff and reduce the number of single occupancy car trips to and from work in the Teddington area through promoting and facilitating alternative modes of travel such as cycling, walking and public transport use. The network is a joint initiative developed by SWELTRAC and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

SWELTRAC co-ordinates the network, which meets quarterly, with the meetings hosted by the network members on a rotational basis. The meetings provide a platform to discuss transport issues within the Teddington area and share ideas on staff travel to work methods. In addition, the meetings normally involve a number of presentations including advice on upcoming network initiatives, updates from SWELTRAC and Smarter Travel Richmond, and occasional updates from external sources such as Transport for London, the Energy Saving Trust and Streetcar.

The network provides a forum for members to take advantage of economies of scale as well as best practise in the areas of sustainable travel and promotion. As such meetings are well attended with attendance rates well above 70%.

Project Background

In September 2009, SWELTRAC sought feedback from the network members on various initiatives that they considered to be beneficial to their staff in terms of promoting sustainable transport use. Through the feedback each of the business representatives was asked to score the various initiatives on an attitudinal scale in an online survey. 13 responses were received and the results can be seen in the table below.

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Table 1: Responses to call for feedback on proposed initiatives

Open-Ended Response	Total points received
Cycle maintenance courses	57
Mapping of Teddington	55
On-site Dr Bike sessions	52
Bike events	51
Promotional material for the workplace	47
Travel Plan toolkit	47
Individual site maps	46
New webpages	45
Grants for the installation of small-scale infrastructure	42
Smarter driver training	41
Roadshows	41
Car-sharing	40
Workplace Cycle Challenge	40
Cycle Trial Scheme	39
Car clubs	38
Merchandise	38
Corporate cycle training	36
Teddington Bicycle User Group	28

Cycle maintenance courses and regular Dr Bike visits were amongst the most popular initiatives according to the members. Eight business representatives from six different organisations gave the maximum 5 points to the cycle maintenance and Dr Bike initiative. Other organisations also felt it would be useful to have these in the workplaces. Due to this high level of interest, we decided to start these initiatives at selected workplaces and have them in place on a regular basis throughout the next 10 months.

Objectives

The primary objective for the Dr Bike and Cycle Maintenance services was to provide an opportunity for businesses within Teddington to promote cycling to their staff. It was envisaged that regular bicycle checks, together with cycle maintenance classes, would encourage staff to cycle to work on a more regular basis.

Together with other travel planning support available from SWELTRAC and Smarter Travel Richmond the objective of this project falls within the wider objectives of SWELTRAC, to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and promote sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

Participants

The project was targeted at members of the Teddington Travel to Work Network with active participants including NHS Richmond, Tearfund, LGC, National Physical

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Laboratory, Haymarket Media Group, Lensbury Club, National Measurement Office and Teddington Studios. As part of SWELTRAC's wider travel planning work other organisations outside of the Teddington Network were included as part of the project. However, in these instances the services offered were more one-off events rather than occurring regularly.

The corporate Dr Bike and Cycle Maintenance services were carried out by Tony Congdon from Pedal Medic – a professional cycle maintenance business. The services themselves were primarily carried out by Tony Congdon but at times with support from colleagues. Tony has extensive experience in cycle maintenance and has gained a City & Guilds qualification in cycle maintenance and repair. Towards the end of the project cycle instructors and Dr Bike experts were also used from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Safety Education team for those businesses located within Richmond borough. The Safety Education team received funding through the Smarter Travel Richmond upon Thames programme and therefore it proved to be cost effective to utilise these resources for the businesses located within Teddington and allow Tony to concentrate on those organisations located outside of the borough.

SWELTRAC travel plan coordinators were also on hand at various events to provide support and to seek customer feedback.

How the Project was Promoted

Promotion of the project started approximately three weeks prior to the launch in November 2009. Initial promotion took place at the Teddington Travel to Work Network meetings. Attendees were informed about the project background, results of the online survey, project objectives, services provided and booking procedures. Attendees were then invited to ask any questions about the scheme.

Following the meeting, a follow up email was sent reminding network members of the project and its aims. Members were notified that SWELTRAC would be contacting them individually to finalise dates/times for the upcoming months.

Subsequent to the generic group email, members were sent an individual email highlighting again the purpose of the programme and the services available. Members were asked to complete a booking calendar, selecting preferred dates and times for the courses to operate for the following seven month period. An example of the booking calendar is shown below. This process was repeated at the end of the seven month period for the remaining five months of the project.

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Table 2: Dr Bike / Cycle Maintenance Course booking form

	Please fill the months in which you want to run dr bike and cycle maintenance courses.						
	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></div> dr bike </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: limegreen; margin-right: 5px;"></div> cycle maintenance </div> </div>						
NHS Richmond							
Tearfund							
LGC							
NPL							
Haymarket Media Group							
Lensbury Club							
NMO							
BMT							
Teddington Studios							
OLM Group							
Ellmers							
Amey							

Along with promoting the scheme to members of the network we also provided some marketing material including posters, email templates and postcards, which were available to the organisations to promote the upcoming services internally. An example of one of our poster templates is provided below:

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**Take your beat up bike
to the doctors...**

Free Bicycle Checks with Dr bike!

**Free Cycle Maintenance and Repair sessions are available as
below from 12pm to 3pm**

21st June - Teddington Health and Social Care Centre

20th July - Thames House

25th August - Teddington Health and Social Care Centre

22nd September - Thames House

20th October - Teddington Health and Social Care Centre

**Dr Bike will also be running cycle maintenance training
sessions from 12pm to 1.30 pm**

12th July - Teddington Health and Social Care Centre

29th July - Thames House

10th September - Teddington Health and Social Care Centre

To book a place on either please contact

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As mentioned above, a specific Dr Bike and Cycle Maintenance postcard was also developed for the project. The purpose of the postcard was to gain useful information about participants as well as an opportunity for them to provide feedback about the cycle services. The postcards were given to Tony Congdon and his team who then distributed to every person who attended a cycle maintenance course or had a bike serviced. Completed postcards were returned to Tony and subsequently sent to SWELTRAC for analysis.

The postcards took no longer than two minutes to complete and asked questions regarding the type of cycle service that participants took part in, gender, how often participants cycle to work, how they usually travel to work and provided a space for any additional comments. An example of the postcard is provided below.



We really value your feedback on our services in order to improve them in the future. We would therefore appreciate if you could take 5 minutes to complete this short form and return it to the Dr Bike / Course leader.

Which activity did you take part in today? Dr Bike Cycle Maintenance Course

Gender: Female Male

On average, how often do you cycle to work a week? _____

How do you usually travel to work? Please only tick ONE box.
 Bicycle Bus Car (alone) Car (shared) Train Tram
 Tube Walk Other (please state) _____

Please add any other comments about the cycle service today or more generally about your employer's transport facilities: _____

SWELTRAC ON-SITE DR BIKE AND CYCLE MAINTENANCE COURSES

 **sweltrac**
uniting London's transport

SWELTRAC, Transport Planning Section, 2nd Floor, Civic Centre,
14 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ.
Email: travelplans@sweltrac.org.uk Tel: 020 8467 5364
Website: travelplans.sweltrac.org.uk

Location & date
Date: _____
Location: _____

Cycle Services

The Teddington Dr Bike project provided two types of services, a Dr Bike service and a Cycle Maintenance class. Teddington organisations were able to book both courses. Overall, the Dr Bike services proved to be more popular with organisations generally booking one Dr Bike service per month, whereas one to two Cycle maintenance classes were booked per organisation during the project length.

Dr Bike Services are MOT type bicycle checks. They covered basic maintenance checks including some small parts used to improve the conditions of staff bicycles. The Dr Bike sessions were normally run between three and four hours with an individual bicycle check normally taking around 15 minutes. Staff who signed up to have their bicycle serviced would be allocated a 15 minute time slot where they could drop off their bicycle. Staff either had the option to remain with their bicycle or return to work and collect their bicycle at the end of the session.

Cycle maintenance courses on the other hand included a demonstration of basic skills in keeping a bicycle roadworthy. There was one presenter (Tony) and an

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assistant presenting to about 10/12 people. Handouts and cycle repair kits were provided. Each participant was provided with a £5 gift voucher courtesy of SWELTRAC and a supply of common maintenance products was available for purchase. While the £5 gift vouchers proved popular we did not find that they attracted more attendees. This workplace based course was designed to be held indoors and to cover the material in the course it took about 1½ hours, normally run over the lunch time period. Having looked at different options of running Cycle Maintenance classes, we decided that 1.5 hours is the perfect duration to cover most of the important and basic instructions. Sessions greater in time might not be attractive enough to the employers and staff because of time implications.

Project Results and Outcomes

The following table highlights the total number of Dr Bike and Cycle Maintenance Course sessions broken down by organisation.

- As a result, 46 sessions (148 hours worth of Dr Bike servicing) were taken up. We have so far received 168 completed feedback forms, with staff overwhelmingly positive about the services offered. Approximately 10% of the employees using the Dr Bike service were car drivers and a further 5% used public transport
- 12 on-site Cycle Maintenance Courses took place, averaging 10 students per lesson. Again, our feedback from participants has been extremely positive.

Table 3: Number of sessions booked

	Dr Bike		Cycle Maintenance Course	
	Sessions	Hours	Sessions	Hours
NHS Richmond (Teddington)	7	21	3	4.5
Tearfund (Teddington)	7	21	3	4.5
LGC (Teddington)	3	9	2	3
NPL (Teddington)	8	32	2	3
Lensbury (Teddington)	2	6	1	1.5
NMO (Teddington)	6	18		
Teddington Studios (Teddington)	1	3		
Teddington Bike Week	2	4		
VSO	2	9		
West Middlesex University Hospital	1	3		
Inghams	1	3		
Kingston Hospital	2	6		
St Georges and Springfield Hospital	1	3		
Sutton Hospital	1	3		
Wandsworth NHS	1	3		
RACC Event	1	4		
Positive Thinking			1	1.5
Total	46	148	12	18

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In total, approximately 642 bicycles were serviced through the Dr Bike programme, with an additional 77 bicycles put through the cycle maintenance course. Given that a high proportion of staff brought their bikes back for regular check ups, it is not possible to identify the exact total number bicycles serviced. As was mentioned above, one of the aims of the project was to encourage people to cycle to work and to cycle on a regular basis.



At the commencement of the project one of the uncertainties was whether the services offered would only appeal to those staff members who cycle to work regularly. Therefore, we conducted the survey as part of the online booking for Dr Bike sessions at the NPL Bike to Work Event in June 2010. A comprehensive analysis of participant modes based on 90 respondents is provided in the graph below. Overall it can be concluded that the project generated interest amongst a variety of different staff members who utilised a diversity of transport modes.

Furthermore, based on the postcard responses, 13% of people (48 respondents) who went through one of the courses predominantly travel to work by single occupancy car.

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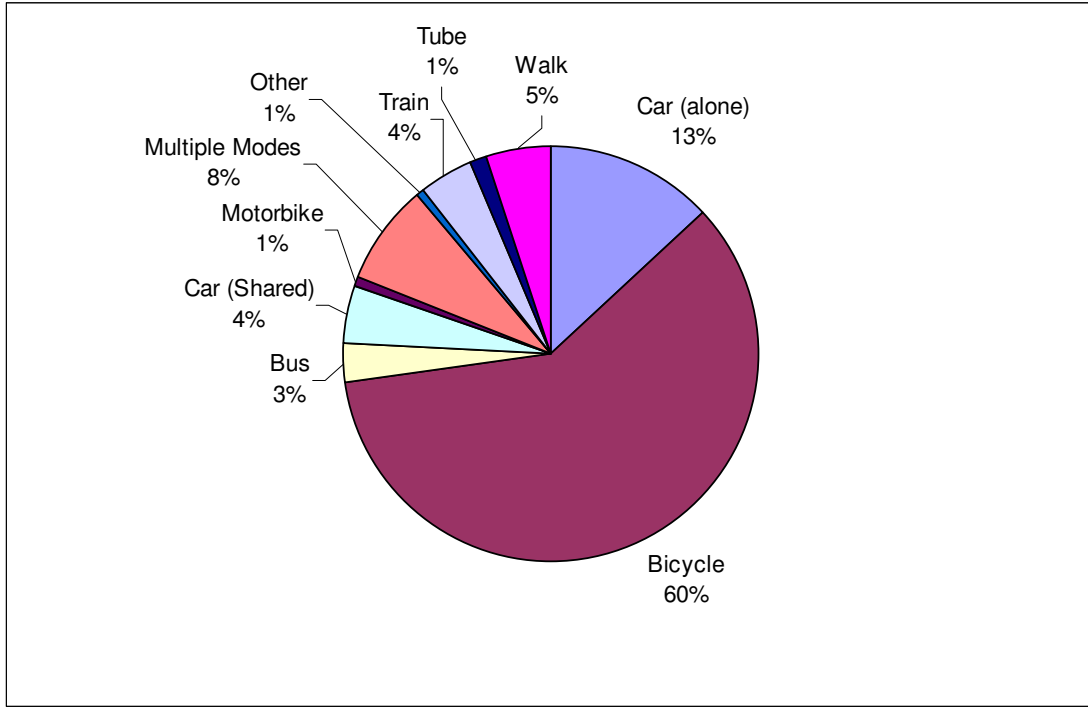


Figure 1: Main mode breakdown of service participants

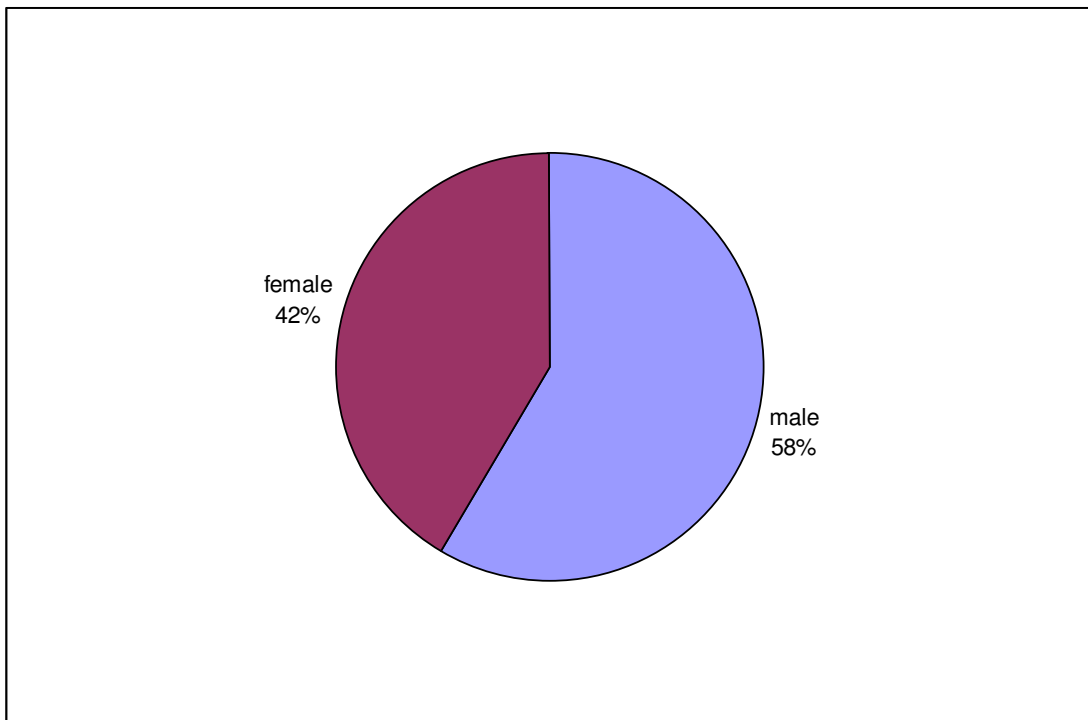


Figure 2: Current level of Cycling and Gender

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Staff Feedback

The overall success of the project can be ascertained by whether any staff members have been encouraged to start cycling to work (or to recommence after a period of inactivity). In this regard the staff feedback postcards have proved to be invaluable. We received a total of 168 completed postcards and approximately 80% of participants provided feedback. There were a number of staff members who felt that the Dr bike/cycle maintenance courses had given them the support and encouragement to start cycling to work including:

- *This is really great and encouraging to see bicycle riding incentives. Dr bike was very helpful and knowledgeable*
- *Fantastic service - brilliant idea - I fell motivated and confident to cycle to work as often as I can now*
- *I cycle 4 times wk - gaining confidence*
- *Great will help getting more regularly to work with bike*
- *This really encourages me to cycle to work. Wished that they did a maintenance course in the hospital over a Saturday*

Other participants felt the project provided an opportunity to learn new skills and have their bicycle serviced free of charge which would not have been possible prior to the commencement of the project.

- *Good helpful info on maintenance, cheers*
- *Excellent course, maintained bike for years but learnt new useful techniques*
- *Fabulous advice as well as a fix for my bike, can't recommend it highly enough - and a free maglight and repair kit*
- *I just wanted to give some quick feed back on Friday's cycle maintenance course. I found the course extremely beneficial and learnt a lot from it. The two trainers were excellent and really helpful and even tried to fix a major problem with my bike. I would highly recommend this course for anyone who uses a bike as the checks that we learnt to do were really valuable."*
- *Excellent service and technical know how and great advice given*
- *It was really great to have this service available today - it makes bike maintenance much less intimidating*

For some staff the project was further evidence of the good support they receive from their employers in terms of encouraging sustainable transport use. All respondents appreciated Dr Bike service.

- *Very useful and well delivered. NHS Richmond supports ride to work and offered covered cycle shed*
- *Superb service and great to have bike checked for safety - employer: excellent provision for cyclists - showers, lockers drying room*
- *Big thank you to Tony for sorting out my bicycle*
- *Really appreciated it! Now I feel much safer cycling knowing my bike is still road worthy. I appreciate Tearfund's commitment to environmental issues*
- *Brilliant service - keen to do maintenance course, great facilities at work*

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- *Great service, good advice. Our employer Tearfund is very pro bike use and green transport. What I learnt today will help keep my bike running smoothly and me to do more maintenance in future.*
- *Delighted with today's service and employer provides shower, towels and bike racks which is excellent*
- *Useful advice, thanks it's good for NPL to offer this and encourage sustainable transport*

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall it was felt that the project was a great success with close to 700 bicycles being serviced and approximately 80 people having gone through the cycle maintenance class. Feedback received from participants was overwhelmingly positive with a number of staff members encouraged to start cycling to work. The project provided an opportunity for staff to have their bicycles serviced conveniently at their place of work. It can therefore be concluded that the project aims have been achieved.

Feedback received from employers has also been positive. The project has allowed organisations to promote sustainable travel amongst staff while also fulfilling their corporate social responsibility commitments. Due to funding restrictions the project was not able to be extended beyond October 2010 and there was general disappointment amongst the Teddington organisations. This however could be an opportunity for the Teddington organisations to organise a collective Dr Bike service for the group with all interested parties allocating funds equally or relatively, dependent on their size and/or staff interest levels.

The opportunity to develop a Dr Bike service amongst a group of organisations obviously has economies of scale advantages. Whilst the project was funded by SWELTRAC, there is potential for the service to continue with several organisations registering their interest in having regular bike services for their staff. The project also has longer term financial savings as well. The increase in cycling provides financial savings for both the individual (petrol, parking and maintenance) and savings for the organisation (parking charges, expense claims, freeing up land for development).

With any project there is always room for improvement. A number of staff felt that the cycle maintenance course was perhaps too long, or fewer topics should have been covered within the 1.5 hours. Ideally in the future the maintenance course could perhaps be more hands on with staff able to bring their own bicycles and service them themselves. Again this has time implications, so depending on interest an after work course may perhaps be more appropriate.

- *Great stuff, very interesting but perhaps more examples using different styles of brake callipers etc Good session though*
- *Really useful, maybe would have been good to gauge ability at the beginning to tailor talk a little. But it was the right level for me - Thanks!*
- *V. Good quick course. Would like more hands on*
- *Very useful. Would have liked to have a go on a real bike*

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A few tips:

1. Check with employers which initiatives are realistic (Carrying out a managerial survey if more than one organisation is involved would help get clearer results);
2. Remember to help employers with promotion, production of posters, etc.
3. Try to get as much feedback as possible. We found that a postcard worked well as a feedback form and information tool;
4. Having looked at different options of running a Cycle Maintenance classes, we decided that 1½ hours is the perfect duration to cover most important and basic instructions. Sessions greater in time might not be attractive enough to the employers and staff because of time implications.
5. Find out about the customers and whether the courses and Dr Bike sessions attract any car drivers.

Acknowledgement

Special thanks go to Tony Congdon including Chris and Keith for their efforts and commitment throughout the course. Cameron Stewart¹ and his Safety Education Team from Richmond Council, the Smarter Travel Richmond team for continued support and funding and the travel plan coordinators at the various organisations for arranging venue and promoting services to staff.

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¹ It is with sadness that we learnt of Cameron's passing during the course of this project. He was a much loved and valued member of Richmond upon Thames council and his input into the Dr Bike Project added greatly to its success. He will be sadly missed by all.