



THEME:
Communities

TITLE OF LEARNING:
Active Travel Barriers for LSEG Communities

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do we develop opportunities to be active in the community?

AN EXAMPLE OF OUR LEARNING:

There are a number of significant infrastructure developments planned across the Black Country to encourage a mode shift from vehicle usage to cycling/walking. However, through our consultation ABC have identified important considerations that need to be made with such initiatives to re-educate, motivate and build the confidence of people, in particular those from deprived communities and those with complex needs, to have access to requisite knowledge, resources and ability to utilise and maximise the forthcoming infrastructure. The following must be taken into consideration;

Lack of **Awareness** at local level of forthcoming infrastructure projects and how they can impact/benefit lives through increased Cycling and walking

Messaging and imagery – Imagery connected to Walking and Cycling in particular through media is not reflective of the LSEG Black Country community and its diversity.

Perceptions – There is a perception around road and canal safety that emerges with people and even more so with LSEG communities and diverse communities.

Access to bikes and cycling confidence/competence - learnings through community cycle clubs, community orgs/clubs demonstrate low levels of bike ownership and that people do not have access to bikes.

Bike maintenance – We have found locally through community driven cycle programmes that there is a distinct lack of local outlets and/or volunteer leaders who can repair bikes and provide bike maintenance.

Access onto key routes for those with a disability/physical impairment -Research and consultation with stakeholders has revealed a distinct lack of disability cycling provision across the Black Country. Therefore, how are those with a disability/physical impairment being primed, supported and motivated to cycle and walk along key infrastructure as part of the cycling/walking revolution

HOW ARE THESE LEARNINGS BEING APPLIED?

Community cycling and Walking initiatives – We are supporting initiatives such as community cycling clubs in LSEG Communities which give access to bikes and led rides to improve cycling confidence and competence. Also, through this mechanism more local residents are being upskilled to led rides and trained in Bike maintenance.

Inclusive cycling initiatives – We are working to implement “Inclusive cycling Hubs” in parks and open spaces across the Black Country. This comprises of obtaining a storage unit, wide range of adapted bikes and volunteers to help address the regional absence of disability/adapted cycling provision. Additionally, through this practice raise awareness of barriers along routes that may restrict this audience from travelling independently.

Walking and Cycling along Canal – We are supporting initiatives that make use of the newly redeveloped parts of the canal system. This incorporates led rides connected to Community Cycle Clubs and local walking/running groups. Increased activity along the canal system through these programmes reduce the perception of it being an “invisible route” and raises awareness of it being a viable transport and leisure option.

Community Organisations, Sports Clubs and Places of Worship - Voluntary sector community organisations and faith-based groups are key touchpoints within their communities. There is a natural opportunity to get their audiences cycling and walking to their community touchpoint along the infrastructure. A key consideration is that many of these groups operate in isolation and the system does not always recognise the non-traditional forms that these groups use to connect society. A key example of this is a Sandwell based Community Organisation who are based near the Birmingham Canal old main line and use it to deliver an annual dragon boat racing festival.

HOW IS SUCCESS BEING MEASURED?

Number of Community Cycle Clubs and reach into LSEG Communities

Implementation of Inclusive cycling Hubs

Engagement in Sustrans and local partners walking/cycling initiatives along canals

Better Streets applications from LSEG Community Touchpoints

Increased awareness through forums and workshops