

Sustrans Bike It News

Newcastle schools : "Vive le Vélo!"



In October, 17 Bike It schools (4 from Newcastle) took part in a bike-to-school week with a French twist. Following the route of the Tour de France 2012, pupils cycled 'virtual stages' each day over the period of 1 week in an attempt to get as many children cycling and scooting to school as possible. Pupils also took part in Tour de France-themed Bike It activities during the week and learnt a French Vive le Vélo song. The winning school was Grange First School (pictured with their prize bike and trophy), with an amazing 49.2% of pupils cycling and scooting in the week. Competition was fierce however as Broadway East First School missed out on first place by less than 1%!

Jingle Bells and Snowy Tales

Frost, snow, rain and ice don't stop Newcastle Bike It schools from taking part in some activities. Despite days with wintry weather, some schools this term have held stabiliser-free sessions, breakfasts, assemblies and the fabulously festive Christmas 'Bling your Bike' days. All these activities have been a joy to be part of and the Bling your Bike days have left me feeling very Christmas-y!



I'd love to hear from you...



I'm Naomi, Sustrans' schools officer for Newcastle. Please get in touch if you have any great school stories or would like to find out more about our schools work.

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Join a thousand schools between **28 February and 20 March**, as they race around the UK on our virtual map... the more pupils, parents and staff who cycle or scoot, the quicker you'll do it, and the greater your chance of winning some **amazing prizes**. Can we reach 1 million journeys? www.bigpedal.org.uk

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. www.sustrans.org.uk

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Heard this term...

"The first Bike It event was a breakfast and we had torrential rain, waterproofs were wet through and giant puddles filled the playground. One mum came up to me drenched hair stuck to her face, mascara down to her cheekbones and said:

'I've never cycled to school, look at my bike it's got no brakes, flat tyres and I've never been so wet in my life but I'll do it again as it was so much quicker!'

Made my week!"

Naomi, Sustrans officer, York

"If we want to see a real change in the number of kids riding to school, and the benefits that entails, we need a minimum level of cycling education and facilities in every school in the UK."

Dani King, Olympic Gold Medallist 2012 and double World Champion, backing our call for a nationwide gold standard for school cycling – see P4

Little monsters on wheels!



Reception classes in all Newcastle Bike It schools are enjoying their Go Smarter balance bikes and funny animal helmets, donated to the schools by the Newcastle Go Smarter team. These bikes and helmets are being used in the playgrounds in schools and during Bike It stabiliser-free sessions. Balance bikes are great for helping children learn to balance on 2 wheels from the outset and make the whole learning-to-ride process a lot quicker and easier for child and adult. The funny animal helmets are not compulsory but certainly add more fun to the sessions!

This term in numbers

In Newcastle:

12 Bike It Schools

117 activities; working with 6675 pupils, 283 staff members and 227 parents.

In the region:

Since February 2012 Sustrans have delivered 2470 school events across the North East. We have had 121,515 children attend activities and promotional events held since February 2012 in the North East across our 13 projects.

Did you know?

77% of 7-11 year-olds say drivers need to slow down around their homes and schools (Brake survey of 8000 children, November 2012)

...and across the UK

Sustrans officers worked with over 1600 schools in 2012 to increase levels of walking, cycling and scooting UK-wide.

In that time:

- **Everyday cycling doubled** from 5% to 10% on average
- **Everyday car use** on the school commute **decreased by 11%** (35% before Sustrans' intervention, 31% after)

In our Teacher Surveys across 125 schools we found:

- **76%** of respondents thought that Bike It had a **good or excellent impact** on getting pupils at their **school more physically active**

The survey also revealed **improvements in pupils' leadership, teamwork and organisational skills:**

"Older children have taken on more responsibility, developed strong leadership skills & mentored younger pupils well"

... and **encouraged a cycling culture** at schools:

"Cycling is now entrenched as part of the curriculum & part of children's everyday lives"

What's Sustrans up to with schools in your region?

This autumn saw 17 schools take part in the Sustrans Vive le Velo scheme. The scheme is based on the Tour de France and is an incentive to try and get children to cycle to school as many times as they can during the Vive le Velo week, as well as take part in some French cultural and language activities.

There was a huge range of activities across all schools with many hosting French breakfasts, assemblies and classroom sessions on the Tour de France and the French language. The new Tour de France song was learnt by thousands of children across the region. The competition was won by Grange First School in Newcastle who managed 49.2% of all children cycling and scooting to school during the week.

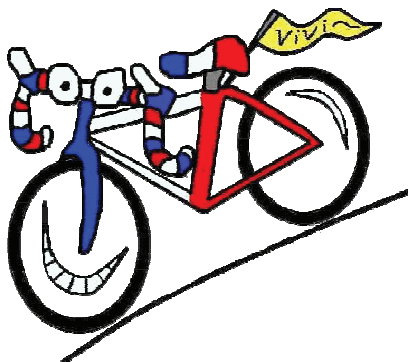


Photo competition: Snowy scooters



I just loved this blinged scooter for Broadway East First School's Christmas 'Bling your Bike' day – complete with lights, snow, tinsel and polar bear!

Hype that site – sustrans.org.uk/bigstreetsurvey

Pupils could help transform their neighbourhood with this fantastic curriculum resource developed by one of our own officers. They audit their streets and present what they would change to local and national leaders to help make them a reality. Includes teachers' guide, pupils' handbook, PowerPoint and other resources.

What else is new?

The summer term of 2013 will see the launch of the Green Explorer for the second year running in Tyne and Wear. The Green Explorer is an incentive to encourage families to visit their local cultural and heritage sites sustainably.

Upon arrival at their chosen venue the children can collect stamp cards which can be traded for badges and they can enter into a free prize draw. The scheme will launch at the end of April and will run all summer long.



Top tips for the new term

- **Join the Big Pedal** along with a thousand other schools and you could win amazing prizes www.bigpedal.org.uk
- **Do the Big Street Survey** and tell the decision-makers how you'd change your streets – **enter your manifesto before 22 March** and you could win a camcorder
- **The clocks change in April**, celebrate the extra light with an evening walk or bike ride
- **Check the calendar** for other key dates like Valentines Day or Chinese New Year to promote walking, cycling and scooting

Get these resources...

- Sustrans' **Stride Guide** to help run events for walking, or our **Pedal Pack** for cycling. Or make your own scooter rack with our Scooting infosheet! www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel

Our work with schools and colleges in the UK

Our **Access to Education** programme with eight partners has started this term, tackling congestion and physical inactivity with tailored measures in the different local authorities.

Along with other partners and projects in the UK, this sees a move in our work with young people towards **increasing walking, scooting and public transport** in addition to cycling. We are revamping our **School Mark** accreditation scheme to recognise this, look out for the new version coming soon.

We continue to campaign for 20mph limits in residential streets to make them safer for everyone. Our **Free Range Kids 20mph pledge** has over 11,000 supporters and counting. We are also a partner in the new **Go20** coalition (go20.org), whilst the 'Two-Zero Hero' competition received over 2,500 entries.

Our **Going for Gold** report called for a cycling gold standard in schools, and was back by Olympic gold champion, **Dani King**. We believe cycling should be in the curriculum, just like swimming, and it could be done for the equivalent cost of a few school dinners. **Download the report at www.sustrans.org.uk.**

As mentioned in the last issue, we have now produced our **Big Street Survey** curriculum activity to engage pupils with their local area and empower them to make improvements, creating manifestos to influence decision-makers at local and national level – and the most inspiring one could **win a camcorder**, see **Hype That Site on P3**.

Finally, **thanks to everyone we work with**, be they in schools and colleges, local authorities or organisations funding our projects.

Dates for the diary

January

25th Burns Night

February

10th Chinese New Year starts

14th Valentines Day – show how much you love walking, cycling and scooting
28th Big Pedal starts!!

www.bigpedal.org

March

10th Mothers Day – can you get mums on their bikes?

20th Spring Equinox, plus **Big Pedal ends**

22nd Deadline to win a camcorder for your Big Street Survey manifesto

29th Good Friday

31st British Summer Time starts

April

7th World Health Day

22nd Earth Day

May

6th Bank holiday

20th-24th Walk to School Week

www.livingstreets.org.uk

Please continue to support our work

Sustrans' vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment, and this applies to children just as much as it does to adults. The positive experiences of all the children that you have read about in this newsletter are the culmination of more than 16 years of Sustrans and our officers working with schools, colleges and young people.

Without your support, many children would not have the opportunity to enjoy independent and active journeys in and around their communities, so a huge thank you from us on their behalf. The long-term benefits of creating healthy and sustainable journeys will be shared by every one of us – in terms of our health, the environment and the wider economy.

If you like the sound of what Sustrans does and think that more schools, colleges and young people in your area could benefit from our work, or you want to know more, please get in touch.

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Sustrans is grateful for the continued support of our schools work in Newcastle from the following:

