

LEE LI MING

PROGRAMME IN

AGEING URBANISM

Cycle Training Programmes

Adithi Moogoor

Ageing and Mobility¹

Cycle training programmes and guided trips are important to encourage older people to cycle. These training programmes mainly address the psychosocial barriers to riding which may include fear of traffic on the road, of being involved in an accident, and lack of confidence in being out on their own. The cycle training programmes and guided trips instill confidence in older adults to ride bicycles on cycle pathways and roads.

'Fahrradportal' is a German bicycle portal funded by the Ministry of Transport and Digital Information. This web portal contains news, publications and examples of good cycling practices in and around Germany. The portal has a section on 'Cycling Expertise' featuring various research projects on cycle training programmes and guided trips for older adults. These programmes and guided trips cater to individual needs thereby recognising the considerable heterogeneity in the older population. Some of these featured

¹ This is an evolving database. We will be adding more examples and cases over time.

training programmes on the portal are highlighted below.

Green City-Senior Cycling Training, Munich, Germany

In 2006, Green City, an environmental agency, initiated a cycle training project with the support of the City Council of Munich. The aim of the project was to prepare older cyclists with skills required for dealing with critical situations in traffic and to overcome inhibitions towards using alternate bikes. The training course has three components: lectures, physical training and guided bike tours.

The training course is 4 hours in duration and held across two days at service centres for older persons. Most participants are around 60 years old. The course is promoted through advertisements by the distribution of leaflets at fairs and older people's service centres and press release.

The following three factors are critical to implementation:

- 1: Experts to talk about road safety and health aspects of cycling
- 2: Fleet of bicycles adapted to older adults
- 3: Space to build obstacle free bicycle tracks.

An overview of the two-day training programme is highlighted in Box 1.

Box 1: Two-day programme of Senior Cycling

Day 1

- A theoretical introduction about cycling and health.
- The City Police refresh participants' knowledge on traffic rules, rights and duties of cyclists.
- An occupational therapist helps participants to improve and maintain agility through exercises.
- Participants are made familiar with senior-friendly bicycles.

Day 2

- Guided bike tours are conducted on specially designed pathways in obstacle free open land.
- Participants have an opportunity to use bicycles and other forms of cycles.
- The afternoon session involves a practical test course using various cycle types, ranging from bicycles with low frames and pedal-powered vehicles with three or more wheels to battery-powered bicycles.
- The tours end with a social gathering of

participants.

Source: Gheno, I. (2010, October 25). Older people cycling training scheme. Munich. Germany.

Cycling Through the Years, Swindon, UK

‘Cycling Through the Years’ is a cycle training course for the older residents of Swindon. This training course was launched by Cycling UK, a charitable organisation which promotes the use of bicycle in the UK. The training course is for those aged above 50 and is also called the ‘Over 50’s Cycling Course’. It is an introductory course for people who have never ridden a bicycle before or have not ridden one in many years. The focus of the course is to ensure that participants enjoy cycling and interact with other participants. Some of the features of the training course are listed in Box 2.

Box 2: Features of the cycle training programme

- Each course runs over an eight week period with sessions held every Saturday morning
- The pace of the course is tailored to suit individual needs, gradually increasing the amount of cycling and improving cycling skills each week.
- The training takes place on the County

Ground Athletics track which is devoid of traffic. As participants gain the confidence of riding, they are allowed to cycle on roads.

- The course is free of charge
- Some participants have gone on to receive ride leader training so they can continue to guide other participants.

Source: Free cycling training for the over 50s in Swindon. (n.d.).

Up ‘n’ Cycling

As ‘Cycling Through the Years’ became popular, a number of people aged 50 and below expressed interest to participate. Consequently, Up ‘n’ Cycling was introduced as an all ages course. It consists of a beginner course of eight weeks followed by an intermediate course of six weeks. This time period is deemed necessary to provide riders with sufficient skills to venture beyond the athletics track and onto cycling paths and roads. This course is free to people aged 50 and above but participants aged 50 and below are charged a fee of 25 pounds.

Other initiatives in Swindon

In Swindon, people associated with day-care centres, football associations, and churches encourage and train their peers to ride bicycles. Another UK based initiative explored the possibility of offering cycle

training ‘on prescription’ from doctors as part of a special bicycle health plan.

AENAS-Guided Cycling Trips, Odense, Denmark

‘Attaining Energy-Efficient Mobility in an Ageing Society’ (AENAS), a European project on urban mobility of older people, conducted a workshop to encourage the older residents of Odense to cycle more in their everyday life. As part of this workshop, the ‘Guided Cycling Trips’ event was organised that focussed on guided cycling trips of different lengths, various starting points and destinations in the city.

AENAS and the City Corporation of Odense conducted 24 cycle trips headed by eight volunteer cycle captains. Cycle captains were found through advertisements in local newspapers and magazines targeted at the older citizens of Odense. Experienced cyclists aged between 58 and 71 volunteered to be cycle captains. Besides leading cycling trips, the cycle captains participated in a first aid course, learned about cycling in groups and participated in a discussion of planning cycling routes in the city. Each cycle trip is comprised of 15 participants and two cycle captains. As part of the cycling trips, the participants interacted with a municipal officer who informed them about the areas in which they were cycling.

Other initiatives conducted as part of the mobility workshop include internet seminars where participants are taught how to use a cycle route planner, and senior citizens’ test-ride day to use electric bikes.

The post evaluation of the cycling trips showed that 40% of the participants intended to cycle more in the future, while 23% wanted to drive less.

Sources:

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