

Outcomes of the Cycling Demonstration Towns programme: monitoring project report

Introduction

April 2017

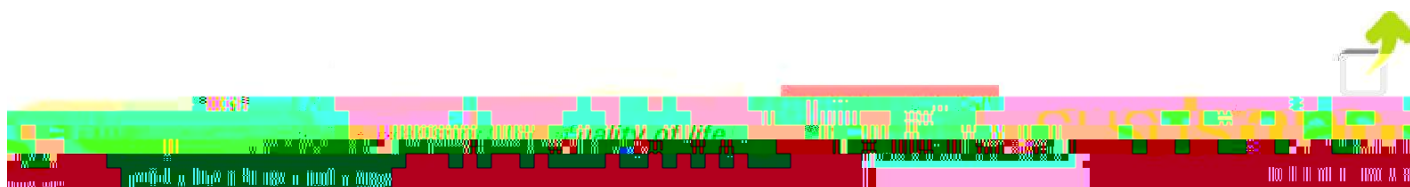
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PART A: INTRODUCTION

PART B: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYTICAL METHODOLOGIES

PART C: OVERALL FINDINGS

PART D: INDIVIDUAL TOWN RESULTS



About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle. We are engineers and educators, experts and advocates. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Sustrans works in partnership, bringing people together to find the right solutions. We make the case for walking and cycling by using robust evidence and showing what can be done. We are grounded in communities and believe that grassroots support combined with political leadership drives real change, fast.

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1 Introduction

The Cycling England / Department for Transport Cycling Demonstration Towns (CDT) programme ran from October 2005 to March 2011, in two phases (October 2005 to October 2008 and November 2008 to March 2011). The second phase of the CDT programme ran concurrently with the Cycling City and Towns Programme, which is described separately.

The towns involved in the CDT programme were selected following a competition for funding, which invited bids from medium-sized towns with a population of around 100,000. Thirty-one local authorities applied to join the programme, and towns were chosen on the basis of three principal characteristics: the ambition of their proposed programme to increase short urban trips by bike; the commitment and involvement of senior members and officers; and the commitment by the local authority to match-fund a Cycling England / DfT grant.

The six towns selected for the (CDT) programme were Aylesbury, Brighton and Hove, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and Lancaster with Morecambe. These are all medium-sized towns with populations of between 65,000 and 250,000 people and, taken together, they have a population of 874,000 people. While most of the local authorities involved in the programme sought to encourage cycling on a town-wide basis, two towns, Brighton and Hove and Derby, focussed on just part of their population. In the case of Brighton and Hove the focus was on the western half of the city, while the focus in Derby was on children and young people.

The programmes implemented in the CDTs involved a comprehensive mixture of improvements in cycle infrastructure; development of town-wide signed networks of cycle routes; branding and marketing of those routes; work with employers, universities, schools and other organisations to help them encourage cycling and improve facilities for cycling at their premises; and other activities.

All six towns were actively supported by Cycling England, through strategic advice on the appropriate focus and emphasis for their cycling programmes; high-level engagement with council members and senior officers to ensure their programmes received strong internal political support; and specialist technical advice on cycling infrastructure, travel behaviour change and other matters. The towns also worked closely together, with regular opportunities to exchange experience through visits, skill-share events and 'cluster' meetings with other towns¹. During the second phase of the CDT programme, the CDTs were able to share their own experience with the second wave of Cycling City and Towns. In a number of respects, the collective effort of the CDTs with Cycling England to explore how best to encourage cycling led to the development of new types of behaviour change intervention, such as bike hire schemes, workplace cycle challenges, and school-based cycling programmes, as well as development of good practice in the design and signage of cycle routes and other cycle infrastructure. A report on the principal outputs of the first phase of the CDT programme

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