

Woking Bike Stations – a bike re-cycling project

Building social infrastructure for Woking Cycle Town

Andrew Hargreaves (LCAG), Bob Morgan (WBC) and Mary Painter (FOE)

We are living through increasingly difficult economic times where resources are expensive and families especially living in areas of multiple needs are finding it difficult to make ends meet. There is a general environmental and economic imperative to recycle waste and promote healthy lifestyle and adopt more cost effective and sustainable transport options.

More people young and old are making the most that cycling has to offer to reduce costs of transport and contribute to their overall fitness and wellbeing. The pressure on the road network from congestion makes cycling and the new cycle routes even more attractive as a means of transport for both work and pleasure. Woking has the geographical advantage of being flat with a major canal route through its centre.



The Re-Cycle project meets these challenges and would fit well within the framework of Woking's bid to Cycle England for the improved infrastructure to become a Cycle Town. There is also potential links to activities in the run up to the 2012 Olympics. The project will operate and develop 'cycle hubs' in two of the most deprived areas of Woking Borough, Sheerwater and Lakeview where the benefits of cycling to healthy living and transport will be most effective. Young people will be engaged through their involvement in positive action towards a better future for themselves and their communities. The project provides a scalable and sustainable community led approach that contributes to the goal of Woking as a Cycle Town. The activity would be run as a not for profit social enterprise with all proceeds returned to the project.

Stage 1: Cycle Hubs (Bike reclamation and repair for re-use)

Every week potentially roadworthy bikes are found abandoned on Lakeview and Sheerwater and go to waste disposal. Bikes are also taken to Civic Amenity facilities or offered on Freecycle or to the Woking Furniture Project. The aim will be to reclaim these bikes for repair and restoration by young people who will

restore and rebuild them for resale / re-use at local centres of community led cycle activity and awareness (cycle stations or 'hubs'). A roadworthy bike with police checked frame number (assessed by a qualified bike mechanic) will be sold at a reduced price to local people or resold to the market with proceeds returned to the project. This could provide a source of low cost bikes for those targeted by the Personalised Travel Planning element of the Cycle Demonstration Town Plan. The project will also link up with other projects with comparable aims such as the New Life Church bike project in Woking and the plans for a BMX track on Horsell Common.

SITES AND PREMISES

The project will purchase or lease workshops and storage units for each site where the project will operate.

Two potential sites have been identified on Sheerwater and Lakeview Estate Woking and both fulfil the minimum requirements of having access to services, water, power and toilet facilities and direct access to the network of cycle path infrastructure throughout Woking and beyond to the National Cycle Network.

The Scout Headquarters at Sheerwater has space for two 2 x 4 metre units and at Lakeview the identified site is potentially larger on an area of waste land at the new Salvation Army Centre. Both partners have been approached and are in principle happy to host a Re-cycle activity Hub recognising that it will enhance their existing activities with young people and links with the surrounding community.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

As the project develops there is the potential to extend the model to other areas of Woking. There is scope to work with the Maybury Engagement Officer once they are appointed. As more volunteers/partners are identified, other communities might wish to set up their own bike hubs. The aim is to generate income from scrap metal sales, bike sales, sales of reclaimed spare parts, running bike repair sessions for office workers, and 'renting' bike stands for those who wish to repair their bikes but who do not have the tools or a garage. Other potential income streams could come from the sale of bike 'art'.

RE-CYCLE BIKE POOL SCHEME

Once the bike activity Hubs are in operation there is also scope to extend the activity to develop a bike pool scheme to improve sustainable transport options for people in Lakeview and Sheerwater initially. This would also allow people new to cycling to increase their confidence prior to committing to getting their own bike. This would link in well with the provision of cycle training to hard to reach groups.

BENEFITS

- The first phase of the project would deliver skills and training for young people who will learn how to repair bikes and experience social enterprise for the benefit of themselves and providing a service to the community. This will help engender entrepreneurial spirit among participants and giving them positive goals and a sense of achievement as well as the potential to acquire a nationally recognised vocational qualification (Cytech)
- Bikes abandoned, fly tipped or donated will be reclaimed through the scheme to be used again by people who would otherwise be unable to afford a bike.
- Reduction of waste and increased recycling (66 reconditioned bikes is equivalent of a tonne of waste).
- A scalable and sustainable approach to building a community led cycle initiative contributing to the aspirations of Woking as a Cycle Town
- Promoting bike awareness and use for journeys with a consequent reduction in carbon emissions.
- Supporting those already cycling by helping people repair their own bikes
- Promoting healthy exercise and lifestyle options
- Reduction in crime by eliminating the black market for second hand bikes by providing a cheap alternative source.

PARTNERS

WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LCAG

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

SALVATION ARMY (hosting a cycle hub)

WOKING SCOUTS (hosting a cycle hub)

GATEWAY ENTERPRISE

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

SURREY POLICE

WOKING CYCLE USERS GROUP

SHEERWATER AND MAYBURY PARTNERSHIP

ST ANDREWS CHURCH

SYTHWOOD SCHOOL

SAFER WOKING PARTNERSHIP

BUDGET (SET UP COSTS)

Total 3 Year projected budget	£85,000
4x workshop/storage units	£20,000
Legal, planning and contingency for workshop installation	£4,000
Cycle tools and work stands for 2 workshops	£10,000
Staff (part time mechanic for both sites for 3 years)	£30,000
Training (Cytech certification of volunteers) £2000/year	£6,000
Expenses £1000 per year (electricity, consumables)	£3,000
Marketing £1000 per year	£3,000
Insurance £3000 per year =	£9,000