



The Workplace Cycle Challenge

**Getting more people cycling by understanding
and achieving behaviour change**

CTC Challenge for Change designs and implements behaviour change programmes that get more people cycling. We have developed the Workplace Cycle Challenge, which has consistently proven to:

1. Encourage more people to take up cycling;
2. Encourage people who are already cycling to cycle more often; and
3. Encourage people to cycle for transport purposes.

Since 2008, we have delivered 38 Challenges, engaging more than 66,000 people and 2,900 organisations. Overall, our Challenges have inspired more than 21,500 'non-cyclists' to get back onto a bike again.

This document summarises the background, theory and recent achievements of the 'Workplace Cycle Challenge' programme.

1. Background

How does a Workplace Cycle Challenge work?

A Workplace Cycle Challenge is essentially a fun competition between organisations to see which can get the most employees to ride a bike. In each size category, the organisation or department that motivates the highest percentage of staff to cycle wins a team prize. Staff only have to ride a bike for ten minutes or more for their participation to count towards the Challenge. They can ride wherever they feel comfortable and whenever they like over the three week Challenge period.

Why is the Challenge based on participation, not trips covered?

Our results prove that a Challenge which rewards the level of participation within an organisation - rather than number of times they cycle - is far more successful at encouraging the key target audience of new and occasional cyclists to cycle.

A participation-focussed Challenge fosters a real sense of team work and creates a cycling culture within participating workplaces. It motivates regular cyclists to seek out and encourage their non-cycling colleagues to have a go. Non-cyclists who might only log a small number of trips in the Challenge can make an equal contribution towards the team effort as those who cycle every day.



In contrast, a trips/distance focussed Challenge appeals strongly to existing regular cyclists, but may actually discourage new or occasional cyclists from taking part. Regular cyclists are motivated to clock up more miles themselves, rather than encouraging their non-cycling colleagues to give cycling a go. It may reinforce the sense within a workplace that cycling is for the few, rather than a fun, enjoyable activity for everyone to try and reap the many benefits from.

What is the theory behind it?

A Workplace Cycle Challenge is an ideal way to introduce more people to cycling. Instead of promoting cycling through traditional methods, such as advertising and information on the benefits of cycling, a significantly more effective form of marketing is to get people to actually experience what it is like to ride a bike.



Giving people a fun ten minute cycling experience quickly breaks down negative perceptions about cycling and replaces them with new, more positive attitudes. We have found that when people have the opportunity to experience what cycling is actually like, as opposed to what they assume it to be like, they often say:

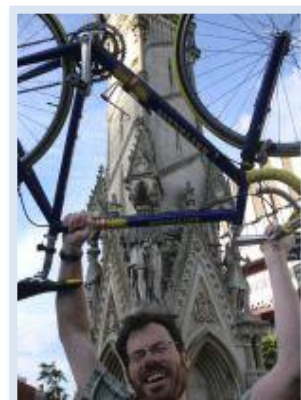
"Cycling isn't as scary or as hard as I thought it was. It's actually quite easy to ride a bike, and its fun!"

Giving people this positive cycling experience is an ideal first step to encouraging more people to start cycling. The seed is sown.

Creating 'Cycle Champions'

Most regular cyclists are quite passionate about cycling and would like to see more people out on bikes. A Workplace Cycle Challenge provides regular cyclists with the opportunity to encourage their non-cycling colleagues to hop on a bike and give cycling a go.

On average, every regular cyclist registering into the Challenge results in a 'non-regular' cyclist taking part. 'Non-regular' cyclists include people who have not cycled at all to those who cycle up to once a week.



A Workplace Cycle Challenge utilises existing networks of regular cyclists such as cycle clubs, local cycling events database and Bicycle User Groups. It gives regular cyclists the opportunity, the incentives and the mechanism to actively help us to get more people cycling.

"The Challenge persuaded me to get a bike and join in the fun and I am so glad I did. I hadn't had a bike since I was a young boy and had forgotten how enjoyable it was. I certainly intend to continue cycling and will promote the Challenge and the experience at every opportunity."

Karl - Non-Cyclist, Milton Keynes Partnership, Milton Keynes

"It has reminded me what fun it is and what a good way to keep fit. We have discovered cycling on tow paths and recently did 30 miles along the Thames - great fun!"

Stephanie - Occasional Cyclist, Chichester College, Chichester



2. Benefits

"The Cycle Challenge provided us with an easy access, popular and hugely effective tool that has been taken up with massive enthusiasm by Leicester businesses. CTC Challenge for Change has been very responsive to local need, provide great value for money and are a constructive delivery partner."

Andy Salkeld - Cycling Co-ordinator, Leicester City Council

As well as the primary benefit of encouraging more people to take up cycling, a Workplace Cycle Challenge offers many other benefits, including:

- **A database of cyclists**

The Challenge generates a database of the cyclists and 'non-cyclists' who took part in it. This database is valuable because it can then be used to continue the behaviour change process that the Workplace Cycle Challenge started and accurately measure the impact of the programme over time. Specific groups of people can be identified using the database, allowing for targeted communications.

- **Conducting research**

Research can be conducted with the participants of the Challenge programme using the database and an online survey tool. Different groups of people can be identified on the database (e.g. people new to cycling) and sent a tailored survey to gain a better understanding of the barriers and benefits specific to that group of people. The results can reveal real insight into the barriers and benefits that people perceive towards cycling more and provide essential information to aid the development of relevant programmes.

- **Follow-on interventions**

Follow-on interventions can be run to continue and advance the behaviour change among participants. Various interventions can be developed and then targeted at specific groups of people in order to overcome the barriers they perceive to cycling.

- **Effectively evaluates and measures success**

The database and survey tool measure the behaviour change with surveys at baseline, three weeks and three months after the Challenge. This enables a long term monitoring of the actual change in people's behaviour that has been achieved by the Challenge programme.



3. Applying Behaviour Change Theory

"Changing habits and behaviour is a notoriously difficult nut to crack. The Workplace Cycle Challenge targets the right people and genuinely encourages behavioural change in a fun and accessible way."

John Nicklin – Senior Air Pollution Officer, Lewes District Council

A Workplace Cycle Challenge incorporates principles of social marketing, behaviour change theory, and commercial marketing principles. It is important that promotions, campaigns and marketing efforts which aim to encourage more people to cycle go beyond the traditional elements of:

- raising awareness;
- promoting benefits;
- advertising; and
- providing information.

While the above elements have a role to play, everyone needs to realise their limitations. While these methods can be effective in raising public awareness, it is rare that behaviour change occurs simply as a result of providing information. The key behaviour change theories that the Challenge programme utilises are:

- **Self Perception Theory** – An understanding that people's experiences of a behaviour will give them their strongest perceptions of that behaviour. Giving someone a positive cycling experience is an ideal way to quickly and convincingly change a person's perceptions towards cycling.
- **Self Efficacy** – An understanding of what people perceive they are able to do or achieve. Self efficacy is similar to self confidence, but focussed on one particular behaviour.
- **Principles of Community Based Social Marketing (Barrier and Benefit Theory)** – An understanding that most behaviours can be broken down into a series of sub-behaviours that need to be carried out in order to complete the main behaviour. For example, starting to cycle can be broken down into: getting a bike, setting it up correctly, learning to ride, finding a safe route to cycle on. Each of these sub-behaviours has its own perceived barriers and benefits to carrying it out. These need to be identified and addressed in order to get people to implement the main behaviour.



4. Evaluation

"York especially benefitted from the number of new cyclists the Challenge created. The results and feedback from the project evaluation report have helped to inform and steer other cycling work in the city... Since Challenge for Change has been in York, they have made further improvements to their Challenges; they are continually developing one of the best workplace engagement projects we have seen."

Graham Titchener, Programme Manager, Cycling City York

Each programme is measured and evaluated via the following surveys:

- A **baseline survey** of participants at registration to find out about participants' previous cycling behaviour.
- A survey of participants **three weeks after the Challenge** to gather information on the barriers and benefits that participants perceive towards cycling more often.
- A survey of participants **three months after the Challenge** to monitor changes in participants' behaviour after they took part in the Challenge programme.

The results of the surveys are analysed, evaluated and presented in a final evaluation report at the end of the programme.



5. Results

"The Southampton Cycle Challenge has raised the profile of cycling within our workplace and given staff 'permission' to challenge others who don't cycle. The results are far better than expected, the second year Challenge provided new cyclists with an added prompt to try cycling to work. The Cycle Challenge shows that you don't have to wear lycra to be an active traveller!"

Wendy Hislop - Health Improvement Manager, Solent NHS Trust

The 'Workplace Cycle Challenge' programme has achieved consistent results in getting more people cycling in each area it has been implemented.

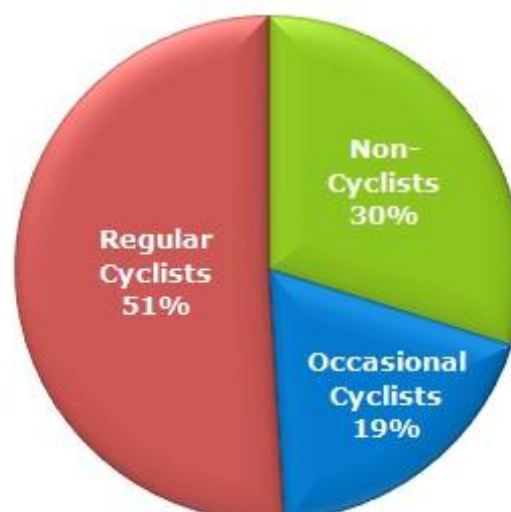
The following pages display and compare the results of our most recent Challenges in 2011 from across the United Kingdom. They demonstrate consistency in the results of the programmes and can be used to understand the potential to get more people cycling in other locations.

Targeting the Right People

The Workplace Cycle Challenge programme has consistently attracted high proportions of non- and occasional cyclists – our two key target audiences. Figure 1 shows the average breakdown of participants from 12 Challenges in 2011 from across the UK, based on their cycling behaviour before they took part in the Challenge.

Figure 1.

On average, 49% of the Workplace Cycle Challenge audience is made up of non- and occasional cyclists and 51% of regular cyclists.



Objective 1: Encouraging non-cyclists to take up and continue cycling

Table 1 shows non-cyclists' behaviour three months after participating in the Challenge. Overall, **an average of 40% of participants reported cycling at least once a week¹**. This highlights very positive indications of change for a group who had either never cycled in the 12 months prior to taking part in the Challenge, or had only cycled once or twice.

This demonstrates that the Challenge is consistently successful not only at encouraging non-cyclists to try cycling during the Challenge, but also at inspiring them to continue cycling beyond the Challenge period. The Challenge database offers a great opportunity to continue working with this group through targeted interventions (such as cycle training) to cement the behaviour change process.

Table 1. Reported cycling activity amongst non-cyclists, three months post-Challenge

3 months after the Challenge...	Ashford	Cardiff ²	Chichester	Isle of Wight	Leicester Shire	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire	Southampton	York	UK AVERAGE in 2011
% of non-cyclists cycling at least once a week	41%	17%	32%	34%	44%	35%	50%	45%	55%	40%

"Cycling kick-started the motivation I needed to return to a healthier lifestyle. I am now monitoring my weight more closely. I have joined a local gym and have also started running too. "

Mick - Non-Cyclist, University of Leicester, Leicester Shire

"I enjoyed the Challenge and the information collected on how many miles travelled, calories lost and what other people were doing - a great idea."

Sarah - Non-Cyclist, Carnival UK Plc, Southampton

"Thank you for encouraging me to get my bike out of the cobwebs - it still needs some work but is just about roadworthy. My son has just learnt to ride without stabilisers and he is pleased I am back on my bike so we can all go out cycling together as a family."

Allie - Non-Cyclist, Gurit UK, Isle of Wight

¹ Average of nine Challenges only, as three Challenges in 2011 did not have three month surveys and cannot be reported on.

² Cardiff's results are lower as their Challenge ran in September and the three month survey assesses behaviour during the autumn/winter period, which is less favourable for non- and occasional cyclists.



Objective 2: Encouraging people who are already cycling to cycle more often

Table 2 shows occasional cyclists' behaviour three months after participating in the Challenge. Overall, **an average of 43% of occasional cyclists reported cycling regularly (at least two days a week) in the last three months** compared to before the Challenge took place.

This suggests that the experience of cycling during the Challenge has reinforced the benefits of cycling to these occasional cyclists, encouraging them to maintain a higher cycling frequency of cycling beyond the Challenge period. Many of these occasional cyclists have now become regular cyclists.

Table 2. Reported cycling activity amongst occasional cyclists, three months post-Challenge

3 months after the Challenge...	Ashford	Cardiff	Chichester	Isle of Wight	Leicester Shire	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire	Southampton	York	UK AVERAGE in 2011
% of occasional cyclists cycling regularly	34%	20%	39%	37%	51%	34%	52%	51%	56%	43%

"I have cycled more in the last few weeks than in the last few years and have really enjoyed it - punctures and all!"

Keith - Occasional Cyclist, Slated Row School, Milton Keynes

"It was a great way to get me cycling and I now save about £70 a week on petrol. I have met lots of new people and even took part in a 60 mile sportive on 21 August - before the Cycle Challenge I didn't think I could even cycle 9 miles!"

Cari - Occasional Cyclist, Elsevier Ltd, Oxfordshire

"Enjoyed it. Liked the weekly task/target setting. Found myself seeing how others at work were progressing and cycled a few extra leisure miles because of it."

John - Occasional Cyclist, Natures Way Foods Ltd, Chichester



Objective 3: Encouraging people to cycle for transport purposes, especially to work

Table 3 shows the frequency of cycling to work amongst non-cyclists, three months after the Challenge. Overall, an average of **31% of non-cyclists reported cycling to work at least once a week** since taking part in the Challenge.

Table 3. Reported cycling to work frequency amongst non-cyclists, three months post-Challenge

3 months after the Challenge...	Ashford	Cardiff	Chichester	Isle of Wight	Leicester Shire	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire	Southampton	York	UK AVERAGE in 2011
% of non-cyclists cycling to work at least once a week	18%	13%	35%	25%	36%	24%	39%	36%	47%	31%

Table 4 shows the frequency of cycling to work amongst occasional and regular cyclists, who reported that they had not cycled at all to work at the start of the Challenge, three months after the Challenge. Overall, an average of **32% of non-commuting occasional and regular cyclists reported cycling to work at least once a week** since taking part in the Challenge.

Table 4. Reported cycling to work frequency amongst non-commuting occasional and regular cyclists, three months post-Challenge

3 months after the Challenge...	Ashford	Cardiff	Chichester	Isle of Wight	Leicester Shire	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire	Southampton	York	UK AVERAGE in 2011
% of non-commuting occasional and regular cyclists cycling to work at least once a week	20%	24%	29%	38%	23%	17%	34%	35%	54%	32%

These findings suggest that many non-, occasional and regular cyclists tried cycling to work during the Challenge. This experience, combined perhaps with the higher profile of cycling within the workplace following the Challenge, has encouraged many to make cycling to work a regular activity.



Table 5 shows the percentage of participants who reported travelling to work by car at baseline who switched to cycling to work as their main mode of transport, three months after the Challenge. Overall, an average of **12% of car users reported cycling to work as their main mode of travel** since taking part in the Challenge³.

Table 5. Reported main mode of travel to work amongst car users, three months post-Challenge

3 months after the Challenge...	Ashford	Cardiff	Chichester	Isle of Wight	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire	Southampton	York	UK AVERAGE in 2011
% of car users switched to cycling to work as their main mode of transport	9%	6%	6%	11%	6%	9%	16%	27%	12%

This mode shift further illustrates the large impact the Challenge can have on people's travelling behaviour.

"I am now going to try to cycle either in or from work once a week (it is 22 miles so a bit of a trek!). I felt a huge sense of achievement and it helps with the petrol cost."

Tiffany - Non-Cyclist, Ordnance Survey, Southampton

"I realised how easy it is to cycle into work and how quick/ convenient it is rather than using a car."

Danielle - Occasional Cyclist, Environment Agency, York

"I have recently discovered it is possible to cycle the 11 miles to work and not collapse in a heap at the end!"

Louise - Regular Cyclist, University of Southampton, Southampton

³ Average of eight Challenges only as Leicester Shire did not ask this question in their three month survey.

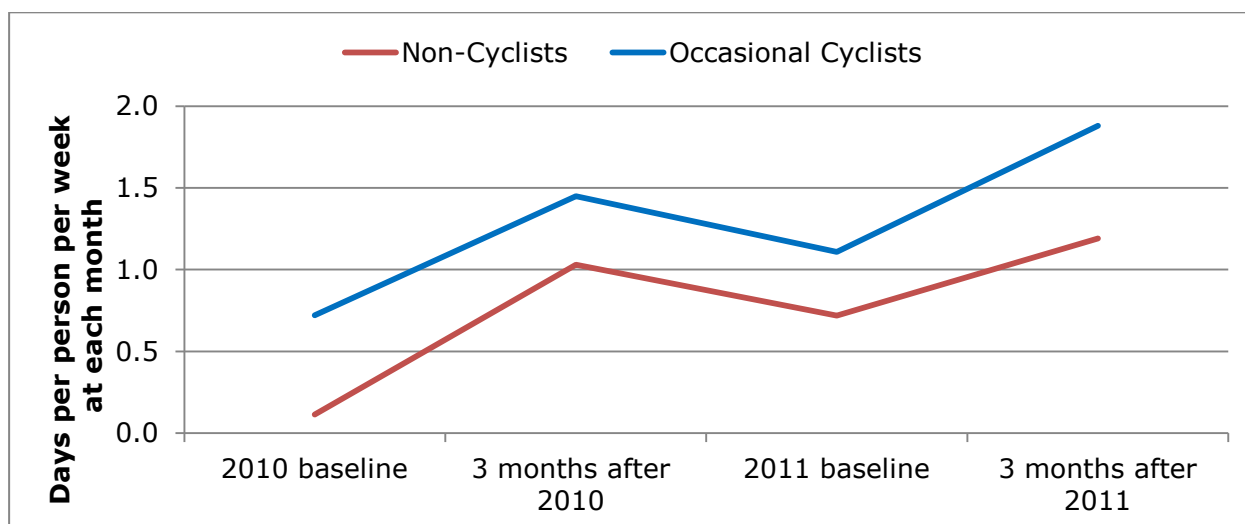


Repeat Challenges

Running a Challenge in consecutive years provides an important opportunity to track the year on year behaviour change of a group of cyclists of all experience levels.

Figure 1 shows the changes in cycling activity across two years where Challenges have been repeated. The results show that whilst non-cyclists showed a reduction in average trips per person per week from 3-months after the 2010 Challenges to the beginning of the 2011 Challenges (from 1.0 to 0.7 days), this cycling behaviour was greater than when they started the 1st Challenges in 2010 (from 0.1 to 0.7 days). As expected, cycling behaviour increased again after taking part in the 2011 Challenges (from 0.7 to 1.2 days). A similar pattern was also seen amongst occasional cyclists.

Figure 1: Average changes in cycling activity amongst non- and occasional cyclists during the South East Health projects



This shows that the Challenge programme is successful at achieving positive and long term behaviour change amongst our key target audience of non-cyclists. Repeat Challenges successfully influence and increasing cycling frequency year on year.



Cost Benefit Analysis

A benefit cost ratio analysis of our Challenges using the World Health Organisation's Economic Assessment tool shows that the benefit:cost ratio of seven Challenges from 2011 is **7.6:1** on average. This is based on distance of trips and is a weighted-average based on the number of participants that took part in the Challenge (average 1,107 participants per Challenge).

The ratio is based on 10% of the cycling data being attributed to our Challenges, which is a conservative estimate. This calculation only accounts for the health benefits, therefore where transport related benefits are considered, this ratio would be even more favourable.

Several Challenges have instigated improvements in cycling facilities at workplaces that have a lasting benefit. Furthermore, as we tackle the attitudes and perceptions that prevent people from cycling, this proportion could be at least twice as much – giving a benefit:cost ratio of 15:1 on average or more.



6. Find out more

CTC Challenge for Change is a partnership between the CTC Charitable Trust and Challenge for Change Ltd.

If you're interested in running a Workplace Cycle Challenge in your town, area or company, then we'd love to hear from you. Please contact:



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