

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Cycling City and Towns Programme Update note – June 2009

1. Monitoring and evaluation in the 12 new city/towns

The evaluation project team have recently completed an initial design and scoping phase. As you know, consultants AECOM (formerly Faber Maunsell), University of the West of England and the Tavistock Institute are developing a programme of work to evaluate Cycling England's investment in the 12 new Cycling City and Towns, and also the Schools and Young People programme. Since the cluster meetings in March, they have had several meetings with the steering group (made up of representatives from Cycling England, the Department for Transport, and the Department of Health), and met with 6 of the 12 new city/towns. Many thanks to everyone who has taken part in initial meetings with the research team so far. The remaining towns not yet visited will be contacted shortly.

The evaluation project is taking place alongside work by Sustrans, University of Bolton and Cavill Associates, who are responsible for monitoring the changes in cycling in all 18 cities and towns. A draft monitoring plan has been agreed with all of the 12 new city/ towns, and these are being finalised currently, in negotiation between yourselves and Sustrans. Cycling England hopes that this process can be completed by the end of July for all 12 city/towns.

The main elements of the recommended work programme for the evaluation are as follows:

1.1 Gathering additional data on changes in cycling activity

A baseline household survey and 7-day travel diary will take place over summer 2009 in the 12 new city/towns, starting in July. The 'after' survey and travel diary is currently planned for summer 2012¹.

The *household survey* will comprise of short face-to-face interviews with all household members (including children) for a random sample of 1,250 households in each city/town. The interview will cover household demographics and car ownership, cycling behaviour, overall physical activity, and attitudes to cycling. It will give information which is statistically significant at the level of each city/town on:

- changes in the number of people cycling
- changes in the number of people of different 'cyclist status' (e.g. new to cycling / occasional cyclist / regular cyclist etc)
- changes in the number of people with different levels of physical activity
- changes in attitudes to cycling.

This will be broadly similar to the information that we gathered for the six Cycling Demonstration Towns via a telephone survey, which was conducted by ICM in 2006 and again in 2009 (see below), with the addition of some attitudinal information.

It is important to Cycling England that this information should be available for each individual city or town (as opposed to being averaged across all 12 city/towns), as this will enable us to understand which places have been most successful, and then to examine the characteristics of the programmes in those places. For obvious reasons, this part of the evaluation is also of particular interest to the Departments of Health and Transport.

The *7-day travel diary* will involve a sub-sample of households (425 per town) - all members of the household will be asked to complete the 7-day travel diary. This will be distributed and collected by the interviewer. This will help us to answer the question:

¹ However, Cycling England has expressed concern that summer 2012 may be too soon to detect statistically significant changes in cycling levels across the whole programme using the 7-day household travel diary. It has been agreed by the steering group that the timing of the 'after' survey and travel diary will be reviewed in late 2011.

- 'Given that there has been an increase in cycling, how has this affected trip-making, in terms of switches of mode and, potentially, destination?'

This question will also provide information on household dynamics, and is of particular interest to the Department for Transport, because it will provide robust data to help ensure investment in cycling is considered alongside other transport measures in funding decisions (considering particularly the Department for Transport's goals of reducing emissions, bringing benefits for health, reducing congestion, and improving local air quality).

The number of travel diaries that are required to yield statistically significant results is such that it is not feasible to answer this question for each city or town. This means that the 7-day travel diary will only yield information on the average modal shift across all 12 city/towns.

1.2 Evaluation of measures implemented

The evaluation team will also look at packages of measures implemented in the 12 new city/towns, to understand *what* has changed and *why* these changes have occurred, using a 'Theory of Change' framework. This will include carrying out case study research, to understand the effects of specific packages of interventions. This work will be carried out in consultation with Programme Managers. A final decision has yet to be made on which packages of measures will be evaluated in this way. Process evaluation will also form part of this work. Key learning lessons from the ongoing process evaluation of the 12 new city/towns will be shared regularly at future cluster meetings.

1.3 Evaluation of investment in the Schools and Young People programme

There will be a particular focus on packages of measures aimed at schools and young people, because this forms a major part of Cycling England's investment programme (larger, in fact, than the amount of money being invested in the Cycling City and Towns programme). Final decisions are yet to be made on this strand of the project.

2. Monitoring and evaluation in the original 6 towns

As you will already know, Sustrans, University of Bolton and Cavill Associates are responsible for monitoring the changes in cycling in all 18 cities and towns. They are currently re-negotiating monitoring work programmes with the original 6 towns. Cycling England hopes that this process can be completed by the end of July for all 6 towns. In addition, the following evaluation will also be conducted:

2.1 Telephone survey

An interim telephone survey with 1,500 individuals in each of the 6 towns, covering cycling behaviour and physical activity, was carried out in Spring 2009 by ICM. Results, showing changes since the baseline survey conducted in Spring 2006, will be available in September 2009. A third round of telephone surveys will be carried out, using the same methodology, in Spring 2011.

2.2 Process evaluation from the first phase (2005-08)

Beth Hiblin from the Professional Support Team has been leading a process evaluation – many thanks for your participation in this work over the past few weeks. This process evaluation, looking at what has worked well in your programmes during the first phase of the Cycling Towns Programme, will be published in September 2009.

2.3 Process evaluation for the second phase (2008-11)

A decision has yet to be made whether any new work needs to be commissioned to carry out further evaluation during this second phase of the programme for the 6 original towns. This decision will be made in September 2009.

Further information

If you have any questions about evaluation and monitoring for the Cycling City and Towns Programme, please contact Tricia Allen, Programme Manager, on 0117 372 8605, or tricia.allen@cyclingleland.gsi.gov.uk.