

Increasing walking and cycling in Greenwich through personalised travel planning (UK)



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City:
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Country:
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Topic:
Walking and cycling

In brief

In summer 2014 London's Greenwich council delivered Phase 1 of their PTP-Cycle project. PTP-Cycle demonstrates that Personal Travel Planning (PTP) activities can be transferred and adopted by diverse implementation sites and target groups, leading to increased levels of cycling and walking in cities, as well as public transport use and car-sharing.

The project will support cities in their pursuit of reduced congestion, cleaner air, healthier citizens and reduced CO2 levels. Some 5 000 households and 270 local residents were contacted within their homes or at local events and offered PTP to help them switch their solo car journeys to more sustainable modes

Context

The Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) is situated in south London where in recent years there have been positive transport improvements connecting the borough to the rest of London.

RBG is committed to tackling poverty, improving the health of its residents and reducing the impact of climate change. RBG has also been committed to improving air quality for many years and is one of only four 'Beacon Authorities' in the UK. To enhance this work RBG became a partner city in the European project, *PTP-Cycle*. Not only does PTP contribute to reduced emissions through transport mode shift, it also provides employment opportunities for local residents and connects people to jobs.

RBG chose Abbey Wood as the target area because of the levels of health deprivation and unemployment, high levels of car ownership, as well as the good access to walking and cycling routes and public transport links.

In action

During the early stages of PTP-Cycle, a wealth of best practice resources were developed through research into projects from across Europe. A multi-setting methodology was developed and has been made available to cities, workplaces or organisations interested in delivering a successful PTP project.

PTP-Cycle in Greenwich is a residential project with added elements of 'in-the-field' events. An audit of the available sustainable transport information showed an excellent range of leaflets already available from the council, but nothing specifically focused on the target area. A new 'Local Travel Map' was designed showing all the cycling, walking and public transport routes in and around Abbey Wood. This was packaged together with a newly developed discount card for local bike shops to form a menu of information to support project participants to change their travel behaviour. A team of

fieldwork staff was recruited from the local area and trained in giving travel advice through the Motivational Interview technique.

Through Motivational Interviewing travel advisers encourage the project participants to identify journeys they usually make by car that they could change to a more sustainable mode. The travel adviser then asks the participant to think about the barriers they have to using this form of transport and ways in which they could overcome these barriers. Once these solutions have been recognised the travel adviser can offer the participant local information and practical support to encourage their behaviour change. This conversation gives the participant autonomy to change their behaviour and the knowledge to be able to, and is highly successful in creating positive change.

The project was promoted in the local area through posters, leaflets and press releases, at local events and through social media. Prior to travel advisers contacting households an announcement postcard was delivered by hand to every house in the target area to let the residents know a bit more about the project and to get them ready for the travel advisers' visit.

After the travel advice conversation, a bespoke information package is created for the beneficiary and delivered to them on bike or by foot. This pack contains all the information they have identified as being useful to them to overcome their sustainable transport barriers and project contact details if they need further support.

Results

From a target population of 5 000, 3 500 residents were contacted with 62 per cent interested in receiving travel advice, leading to 2 175 information packs being delivered. In addition, 274 people were given travel advice at local events.

Baseline information was collected at the initial meeting with the participant. The survey used to collect data was designed to aid the travel advice conversation rather than add an additional step to the process. Short-term follow-up surveys were carried out in December, three months after project-delivery ended. Long-term follow-ups are planned for summer 2015.

From those who responded to the short-term follow-up the following encouraging results have been identified:

- 6 per cent of respondents increased their number of cycling trips by a median increase of two cycling trips per week;
- 42 per cent increased their number of walking trips by a median increase of four per week;
- 33 per cent decreased their number of solo car trips by a median decrease of five per week;
- 22 per cent increased their number of bus trips by a median increase of one trip per week;
- 7 per cent increased their number of train trips by a median increase of one trip per week.

Challenges, opportunities and transferability

Key successes of the Greenwich PTP-Cycle project were the popularity of the Local Travel Map and the 'in-the-field' events. The Local Travel Map (LTM) was developed to combine existing and new local information into one handy guide. It incorporated cycle routes, walking routes, public transport links and local facilities. The LTM also contained basic information about the advantages of active travel and how to get started. The travel advisers offered them to participants on the doorstep or at events which usually resulted in more information being ordered.

As part of the 'in-the-field' element of the project, travel advisers engaged with members of the local community at 10 events during the summer. At these events the participant approaches the travel adviser for information. By making this decision they are showing real interest in the project and there is a high chance of long-term behavior change as a result.

The main challenge during PTP-Cycle Greenwich was the use of electronic pens to capture data on the door step. This innovation was incorporated to reduce data entry costs and improve accuracy. However, the systems needed the travel adviser to write in a very specific way which was hard to achieve when conducting a conversation on the doorstep and led to a lot of time being spent checking all the data at the office. The travel advisers reverted to using standard paper forms and data entry after three weeks.

In Depth

- [PTP-Cycle website](#)

Image courtesy of [PTP-Cycle](#).

Related Case Studies

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Overcoming transport challenges in Antwerp through personal travel plans (Belgium)
Public events for personalised travel planning in Riga (Latvia)
