



**BIRMINGHAM
CYCLE REVOLUTION**

Our Journey

January 2020



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Introduction

Birmingham was one of 8 cities awarded Cycle City Ambition Grant (CCAG) funding by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2013.

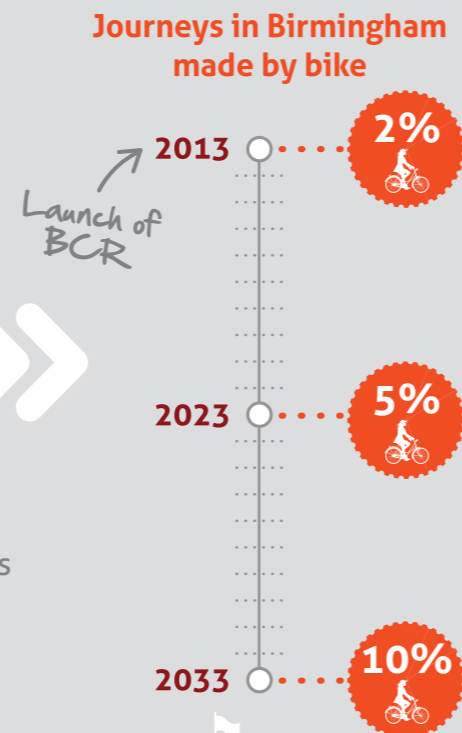
This has been delivered locally as the **Birmingham Cycle Revolution (BCR)** programme.



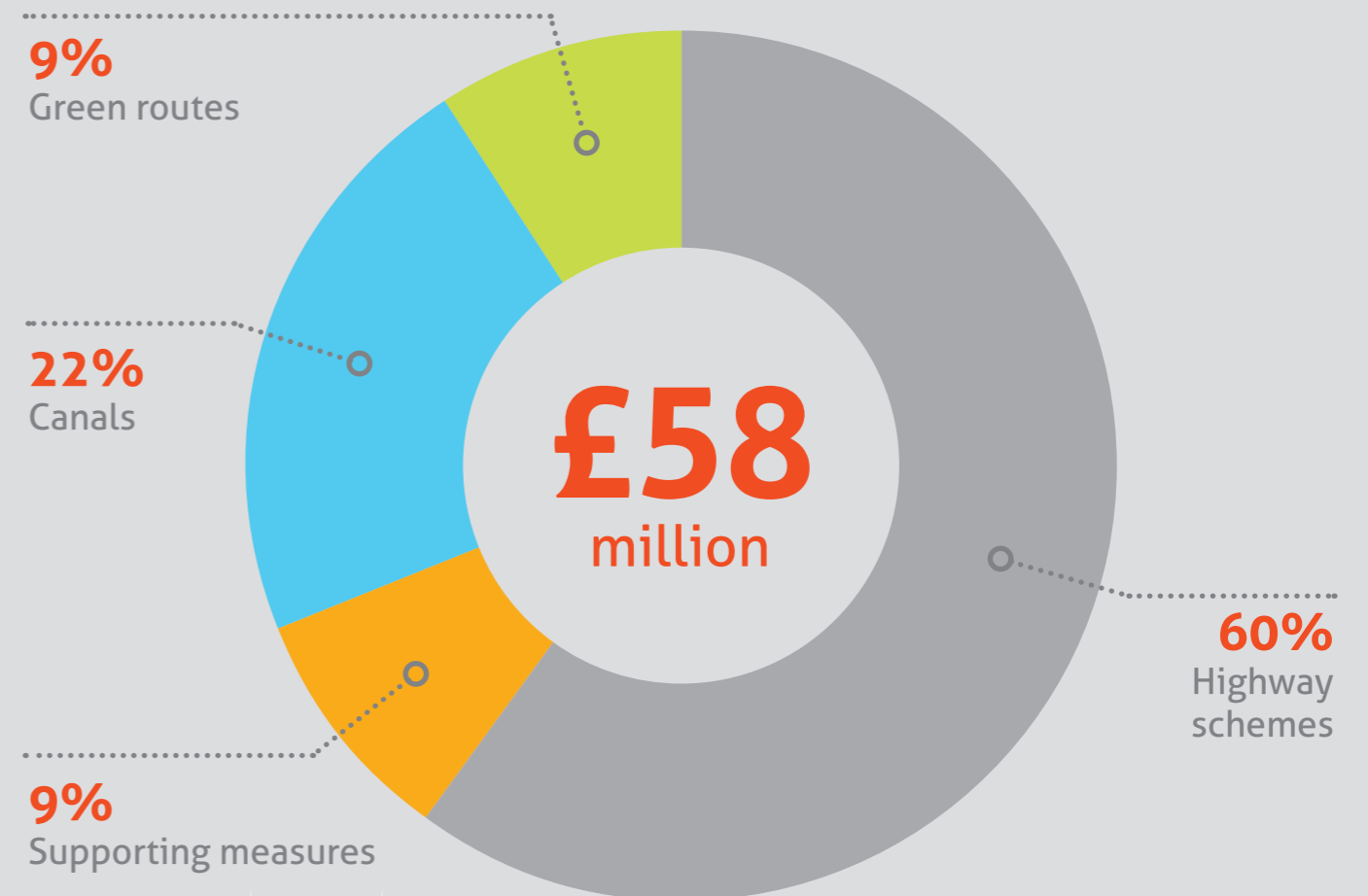
The key elements of the city's bid were:

- An ambitious 20-year plan to enable cycling to become a mainstream form of transport across the whole city.
- A target to increase the proportion of cycling trips from a level of 2% in 2013 to 5% by 2023, and to 10% by 2033.

Birmingham was successful in receiving a second tranche of DfT CCAG funding in 2015, along with funding from the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Growth Fund. The city council has also contributed match funding towards the programme.



In total, £58 million has been spent on highway schemes, off-road schemes including canal towpaths and green routes, and a range of supporting measures.



Infrastructure

Birmingham's ambition was to deliver a range of cycling infrastructure that would appeal not only to existing cyclists, but also to 'would be' cyclists, including families and those returning to cycling.

The funding accelerated the development of Birmingham's overall strategic cycle network, with an initial focus on routes and destinations within 20 minutes of the city centre.

» Canal routes

In partnership with the Canal & River Trust (CRT), all canal towpaths in Birmingham – 46km in total were upgraded with an all-weather surface, along with access improvements. Wheeling ramps were installed at twelve sites, including University Station, Five Ways Station/ Lee Bank Middleway, Bath Row, Granville Street, Brookvale Road and the rear of Alexander Stadium in Perry Barr.

The upgraded canal towpaths are on: Birmingham & Fazeley canal, Birmingham Mainline canal, Grand Union canal, Worcester & Birmingham canal, Stratford canal, and Tame Valley canal. Funding has also been used to significantly widen the canal towpath through Edgbaston tunnel on the Worcester & Birmingham canal.

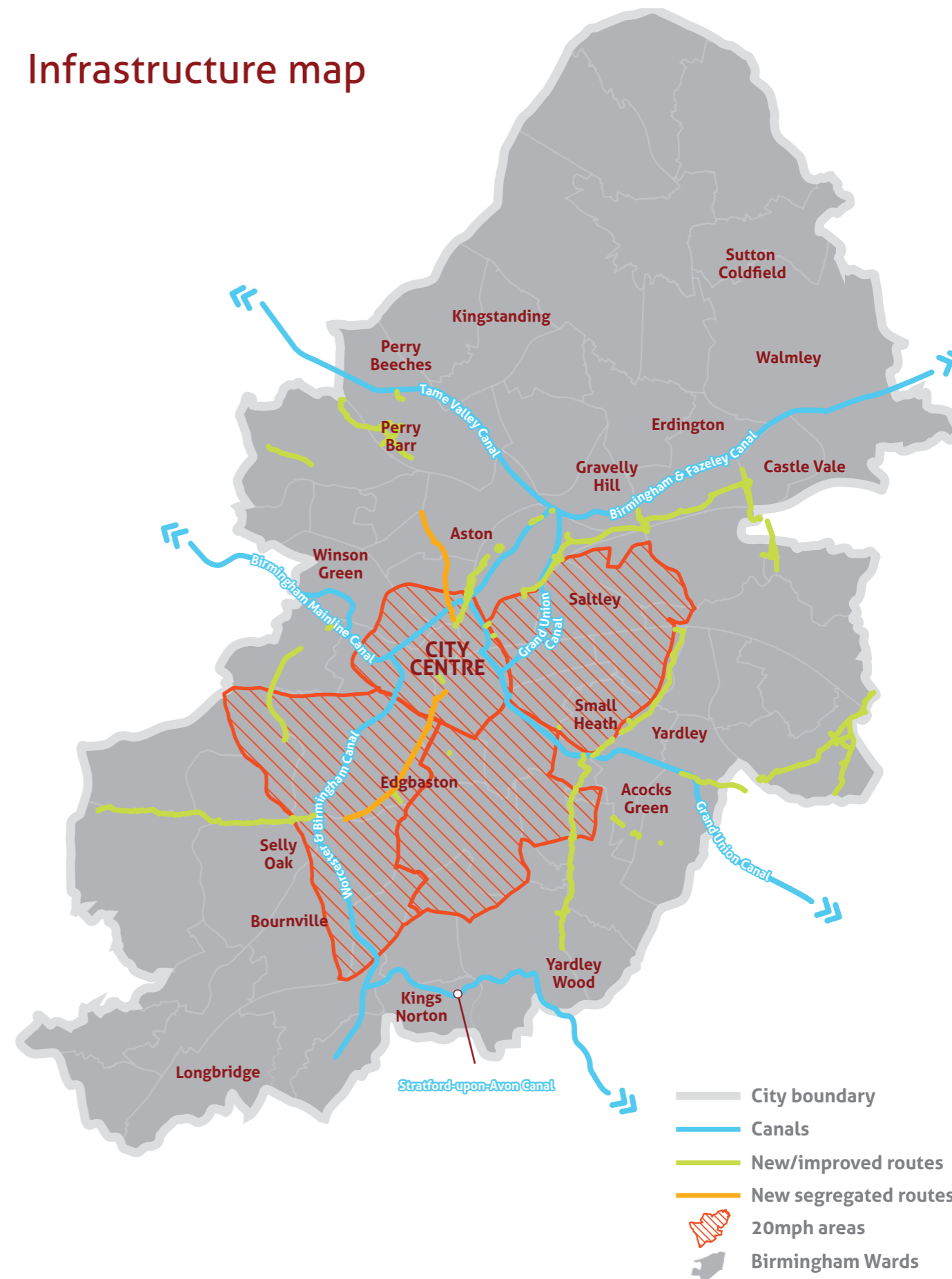


46 km
of canal towpaths
have been
upgraded

There have also been lighting and wayfinding upgrades on the section of canals within the city centre.



Infrastructure map



» Green Routes and new off-road routes

Routes through our parks and other open spaces provide important links within the city's strategic cycle network, as well as offering a selection of 'family friendly' routes – the majority of which are traffic-free apart from some crossing points.

Approximately 24km of new and upgraded routes have been constructed, including two cross boundary schemes with Solihull.

Routes where works have taken place include:

- Harborne Walkway
- Bournbrook Walkway
- Cole Valley
- Woodgate Valley Country Park
- Castle Bromwich Hall & Gardens
- Lyndon Playing Fields/Yardley Cemetery
- Hatchford Brook
- Sheldon Country Park.

24km
of new or upgraded
green routes

4km
of existing green routes
re-signed

12km
of shared use footway
on highway

7km
of off-road segregated
cycle track

River Cole
(Small Heath highway
section)



BEFORE



AFTER

The Ackers Cyclenway



BEFORE



AFTER

Bordesley Green
(East to Stechford Lane)



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER

Approximately
24 km
of new or
upgraded green
routes



» Highway schemes

A network of new and improved cycle routes was originally planned along the main corridors into the city centre including parallel routes along quieter roads to link main corridors with local schools, health centres and other community facilities, as well as the canals and green routes.

The A47 Parkway to Castle Vale main corridor scheme was implemented as well as parallel routes to A41 Soho Road, A34 Stratford Road and A41 Warwick Road. The parallel routes primarily consisted of advisory cycle route signing and cycle markings on the road, rather than segregated cycle tracks.



» A34 and A38 cycle routes

An early review of the BCR programme identified that the initial highway schemes were unlikely to meet the aspirations of existing or new cyclists, and the desired modal shift would only be achieved if higher quality cycle routes with a large degree of segregation for cyclists was provided.

It was agreed to re-focus the allocated highway funding on delivering high quality segregated cycle tracks on two main corridors: the A34 and A38.

The 2.9km A34 route links the city centre with Birchfield (Heathfield Road), while the 4.1km A38 route links Selly Oak and the University of Birmingham with the city centre.

Both routes provide high quality, two-way segregated cycle tracks with priority crossings at side roads and signalised crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at major junctions.

The A34 route will be extended to Perry Barr centre by 2021.

There is also an aspiration to develop and deliver a city centre cycle route connecting these two routes at the earliest opportunity.



“”

Just cycled from @BhamCityCouncil to @unibirmingham in under 15 min. In rush hour! Unheard of pre-@BCRbirmingham #NewBlueRoutes. Cannot give these things enough love!

“”

Getting to meetings in town just got a whole lot better! #A38CycleRoute



7km
of off-road
segregated cycle
track



» 20mph Slower is Safer

Lowering speed limits makes streets safer for those who choose to walk and cycle. Birmingham adopted a policy of 20mph in 2014. BCR funding was used to introduce four 20mph pilot areas across the city, mainly on residential roads but also in some local centres.



Three areas were completed in October 2016, with the fourth in November 2018. This has meant that about two-thirds of the inner-city area (within a 20-minute cycling time) now benefit from 20mph limits.



The average speed on roads where a 20mph speed limit was introduced decreased by 1.4mph

The 20mph areas



City Centre
The area within the A4540 ring road.

Central South-West
Including parts of Edgbaston, Selly Oak, Harborne and Bournville.

Central South
Including parts of Sparkbrook, Kings Heath, Moseley and Sparkhill.

Central East
Including parts of Ward End, Saltley, Bordesley Green and Small Heath.



Supporting Measures

» Marketing and Promotion

Through BCR we have sought to actively promote cycling as an easy and attractive way of travelling and as an alternative to driving, whether for work, education, leisure or health.

Social media

Social media has proven to be a very useful tool to reach people and spread the cycling message, with BCR Facebook and Twitter channels being very popular.

Twitter @BCRbirmingham
Facebook @BirminghamCycleRevolution

2,848 followers*
2,636 followers*

* As of December 2019

Top Tweet

BhamCycleRevolution @BCRbirmingham · 19 Jun
Yippee! Congestion on the new A38 cycle route!! #BrumsOnBikes

Could you try out the new #A38 or #A34 cycle routes for your commute? Find downloadable route maps here: ow.ly/2NF550uHQCh

16 replies 30 retweets 124 likes

Our promotion of the new A38 and A34 cycle routes in June 2019 earned a huge **12.8K impressions.**

Top Facebook Post

Birmingham Cycle Revolution
April 9 · 🌐

The new blue cycle route between #Birmingham city centre and Heathfield Rd in #Birchfield is now largely open, with just a bit of corrective work still to do. So why not get your bikes out and give it a go? #BrumsOnBikes #NewBlueRoutes

61 likes 2 comments 33 shares

In April 2019 this post reached **8,244 people** and got **897 engagements.**



Events

BCR has been promoted through a wide range of events including the BCR launch event, HSBC UK Let's Ride Birmingham and we even put on a 'Bike Fest' festival.

Campaigns

In addition BCR promotion has run regular campaigns, challenges and competitions to increase participation in cycling, such as the annual **Winter cycle challenge** (in partnership with BetterPoints), **photo competitions** on social media and the **Love to Ride Bike Week challenge** to name a few.

Literature

BCR has produced an array of useful activity programmes, maps and guides, some of which includes:

- Quarterly cycling activity programmes
- Canal route maps
- A34 and A38 segregated route maps
- Green route maps
- 'Share with Care' pocket booklet
- 'Lock-it or Lose-it' leaflet
- 'Cycling in Winter' advice guide
- 20mph toolkits
- Bike passports
- 'Think BLUE, let cyclists through' driver awareness guide



Bike Fest



Winter cycle challenge leaflet

Bike Maths

Bike Maths was developed as an educational game for primary schools, designed for KS2 children to practice a variety of maths skills, whilst incorporating a fun cycle theme.



HSBC Let's Ride Birmingham 2019



Quarterly cycling activity programme



'Lock-it or Lose-it' leaflet



'Share with Care' booklet



Downloadable family friendly green cycle route maps



» Signage

Clear and consistent signs along cycle routes delivered or upgraded by BCR, particularly on the Green Routes and main highway schemes connecting to key destinations, are due to be installed.



» Cycle parking

Cycle parking has been installed at key locations in the city centre, such as Colmore Row, Snow Hill Station and Digbeth High Street, along with bike maintenance facilities.

Further cycle parking is due to be installed along the A34 and A38 cycle routes and in Perry Barr and Selly Oak local centres. In total, 914 cycle parking spaces have been created across the city.



» Top Cycle Location Grants

Grants of up to £10,000 were made available to local businesses and schools to improve cycling facilities for employees, pupils and visitors, in order to encourage more active travel to work or school. Money was used towards cycle shelters, showers and lockers as well as pool bikes, cycle jackets and bike maintenance equipment.

To be eligible for this grant funding, schools were required to sign up to Modeshift STARS and participate in online travel surveys, as well as being offered Bikeability cycle training. Businesses were able to access support from a Sustrans' workplace officer including advice on local cycle routes, route planning, loan bikes and led rides.

New cycle shelter at Mondelez in Bournville



New cycle shelter at Hawkesley Primary School

» Brompton Docks

Two public bike hire docks containing iconic Brompton folding bicycles were installed at Brindley Place and Aston University to add to three that were previously installed in partnership with Transport for West Midlands at New Street, Moor Street and Snow Hill stations.

Brompton Dock at Brindley Place



A total of
62 businesses and 69 schools
received grants from BCR.



5 
BROMPTON
BIKE HIRE
docks established



» Big Birmingham Bikes

Over 7,000 free bikes were given away to people living in the most socially deprived parts of the city, alongside provision of cycle training and bike maintenance sessions. The Big Birmingham Bikes (BBB) project was designed to improve health and wellbeing, social mobility, and access to employment opportunities by encouraging people to cycle more often and reduce short trips being made by car. Bikes have also been made available for short term (day) loan at a number of local Wellbeing Centres across the city.

Supporting volunteers from the local area to become cycle trainers, bike mechanics and ride leaders has seen many people benefitting from this scheme - giving time back to their local community and ensuring a sustainable legacy for the BCR programme. Monitoring of Big Birmingham Bikes usage was originally done through GPS trackers on the bikes, and more recently through a smartphone app. This has not only assisted engagement with individuals, it has also provided information that can be used to inform future infrastructure investment decisions.

This scheme was originally delivered by the city council's Active Wellbeing Service, which is now The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS).

In 2017 the Big Birmingham Bikes initiatives won the national Ashden Award for Clean Air in Towns & Cities.

**Ashden
Award
winner
2017**



**7,000
free bikes**
were given out to
the most socially
deprived areas



Case study:

Paul –
**Big Birmingham Bikes
saved my life**



I didn't really leave the house due to my mental health and physical problems, but since I got the Big Birmingham Bikes free bicycle, my mental health and physical health improved tremendously.

The mental health problem I have is as follows: paranoid personality disorder, dissociative personality disorder, unspecified inorganic psychosis, depression, anxiety and spondylolisthesis.

When I was in Bruce Burns Unit at Solihull Hospital (a now closed unit for mental health patients), I'm 100% sure that if there was something like this scheme to help us out, we would recover sooner.

What makes mental health even worse, is having nothing to do, except dwell on my negative thoughts. What Big Birmingham Bikes did for me was put my mind on planning my day with my partner, focusing on where I'm going, focusing on the road, focusing on everything, apart from my negative thoughts. I was going downhill, and Big Birmingham Bikes saved my life.

Big Birmingham Bikes is amazing.



» Bike Banks

The Active Wellbeing Society and British Cycling have built on the success of Big Birmingham Bikes by launching this scheme which offers recycled, serviced and upgraded bikes for children and young people. These are distributed through a network of Wellbeing Centres and Community Hubs where under 16s can borrow a bike that is the right size for them and then return it when they outgrow it and swap it for a bigger one. Everyone borrowing a bike is encouraged to undertake Bikeability cycle training either at school or in the local community.



» Community Cycle Clubs

Cycling UK appointed a Community Clubs Development Officer to establish a network of Community Cycle Clubs (CCCs) across the city, with many of these being set up so that people can access cycling activities in their local community. A number of the clubs are based at hubs where there is a container of bikes for use by riders. Some clubs have their own bikes for use too.



These clubs are generally run by volunteers and offer a variety of activities such as learn to ride sessions, led rides, bike maintenance and bike recycling. They also provide a great social environment for people to gain confidence and skills on a bike.

As of December 2019 there are 23 CCCs in Birmingham with more due to be set up.



Community Cycle Clubs

1. Amanah Bike Club (Muath Trust)
2. ACP CCC
3. B10 CCC
4. Balsall Heath CCC
5. Cycle South Brum
6. Gear Up CCC
7. Gorilla Coffee Cycling Collective
8. Handsworth CCC & Hamstead Pavilion CCC
9. Joyful Bellas and Fellas CCC
10. Ladywood CCC (New Roots)
11. Friends United for Wellbeing (formerly Leisure Forum CCC)
12. Moor Pool Cyclists
13. Pathfinders CCYW CCC
14. Saheli Ward End CCC
15. Sara Park CCC
16. Share (Calthorpe) CCC
17. 3CJ CC
18. Bike2Life CCC
19. Cannon Hill CC
20. Bike North Birmingham CCC
21. Hawksley CCC
22. Rookery Riders CCC
23. Cobble Café/E Bike Brum CCC

23
Community
Cycle Clubs



Case study:

Sam proves it's great to start cycling — at any age

Sam saw her grandchildren riding their bikes and asked them if they would help her to cycle, but they said she was too old!

quickly passed and she started attending every week.

At 61, Sam certainly proved them wrong, discovering Handsworth CCC, a thriving cycling group which had just become a Cycling UK Community Cycle Club.

Sam learned to ride a bike in five sessions and declared: *"Coming to the group felt like a family."*

Sam visited Handsworth Park and asked at the centre about Learn to Ride sessions. She nervously attended a session, admitting that she was scared about learning to ride. She was shown what to do, and that fear of the unknown

Since then she has trained as a Ride Leader, leads rides, and has trained as a National Standards Instructor teaching people in her community how to ride which she now does 5 times a week volunteering at Handsworth CCC and Hamstead Pavilion CCC.



» Ride Active and Let's Ride

A partnership between Big Birmingham Bikes and British Cycling has provided a range of fun, social cycling activities for adults, whether they are complete beginners or looking to get back into the saddle.

Birmingham City Council has also worked with British Cycling, HSBC UK and TAWS to develop and deliver a series of guided and social rides throughout Birmingham. The Let's Ride cycling festival on closed roads in Birmingham city centre has become an annual highlight for many cyclists.



Pics of the Let's Ride Birmingham event in June 2019

» Support of Partners & Stakeholders

Partnership working has been key to the success of Birmingham Cycle Revolution, with groups such as **The Active Wellbeing Society, British Cycling, Cycling UK** and **Sustrans** playing a central role in the delivery of various projects and activities.

BCR scheme design and development has been greatly informed by input from a number of cycle stakeholders, in particular **PushBikes** – the Birmingham cycling campaign group.

We have also benefitted from the support of bike user groups and keen cyclists at the **University of Birmingham, Birmingham Children's Hospital** and **Colmore Business District**, amongst others.

The introduction of **Wheels for All** cycling sessions at Small Heath Leisure Centre and ParkRide in Sutton Park (delivered by **Cycling Projects** and **Midland Mencap**) have added inclusive cycling activities using adapted bikes to the city's cycling offer. This will be an important consideration for the design of future cycling infrastructure.



Wheels for All



Some of our Partners



» West Midlands Police Road Harm Reduction Team

In 2016 West Midlands Police developed Operation Close Pass as part of a 'Give Space, Be Safe' campaign to educate drivers about giving cyclists more space when passing them on the road. This campaign has received national recognition and been adopted by a number of police forces up and down the country. They have delivered training to professional drivers at companies such as National Express and Royal Mail, and supported the Exchanging Places campaign providing advice to cyclists and HGV drivers around sharing the road.

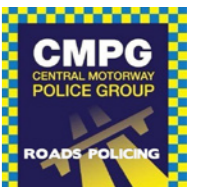
Particular credit should be given to support received from PC Mark Hodson and PC Steve Hudson of the Central Motorway Police Group.



Exchanging Places event



West Midlands Police have also provided enforcement where required, such as with the new 20mph speed limits and patrolling of the A34 and A38 cycle routes, where the 'Think BLUE, let cyclists through' campaign was developed to raise awareness of new cycle infrastructure with drivers.



What next?

While the Cycle City Ambition Grants and match-funding is now largely spent, the revolution very much continues...



Birmingham City Council has published a new **Walking & Cycling Strategy and Infrastructure Plan**, following consultation in the summer of 2019. This aims to make walking and cycling the everyday choice for local journeys, as part of a safe and integrated transport network set out in the **Birmingham Transport Plan**.

Thank you for following us on our amazing journey





BIRMINGHAM CYCLE REVOLUTION

www.birmingham.gov.uk/cycling



Birmingham Cycle Revolution is part of the Birmingham Connected vision to reinvent the way people and goods move across the city, find out more at www.birmingham.gov.uk/connected.
Email: connected@birmingham.gov.uk



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