

Wee Bike Library

Evaluation Report

2023-2024



THE **BIKE** STATION



WHO WE ARE

The Bike Station began in the late nineties when some parents with children at Sciennes Primary School in Edinburgh set up an informal bike swap for kids who had outgrown their bikes.

Our Mission is to promote cycling in all its forms by:

- Refurbishing donated bikes and re-using components
- Enabling healthier, happier and more affordable journeys
- Developing skills, confidence and the spirit of adventure
- Supporting better connected and environmentally sustainable communities

Across Edinburgh and Perth we deliver:

- Refurbished donated bikes that are available through our community programmes or for public sale
- Two impactful behaviour change programmes: Shifting Gears - an equalities based approach and Free Wheel - a place based approach
- Free access to kids bikes through our Wee Bike Library
- Fix Your Own Bike and bike maintenance sessions to increase bike skills in our communities
- Industry-level courses to bike mechanics
- Work with the Scottish prison service and Royal Edinburgh Hospital to support prisoners to gain skills

Our environmental work also supports our circular economy, which helps us reduce waste through the promotion and facilitation of active travel.

In 2023 we saved nearly 7,000 bikes from landfill - an average of 100 tonnes worth of bikes - and provided over 1,000 safe, affordable and refurbished bikes to the general public - an extra 18 tonnes of bikes.

Our Wee Bike Library programme allows families to access kids bikes for free, championing UNCRC's Article 31 - the right for all children to play and rest.

WEE BIKE LIBRARY

What is the Wee Bike Library?

It is our free-to-access library of bikes for children and young people operating from our branches in Edinburgh and Perth.

How does it work?

Our Library uses an online booking system where parents or guardians of children and young people can select a bike to borrow from our large stock (ranging from balance bikes to 24") and collect it from one of our branches.

These bikes can then be returned to the Wee Bike Library and exchanged for the next size up as their children grow.

At the point of collection, children are also provided with a lock, lights and a helmet. They are also entitled to free repairs on their bikes during the loan period.

How much does it cost?

NOTHING! This is a project funded by Transport Scotland and it is completely free for families and children.

Why is The Bike Station doing it?

- To increase the number of children and young people cycling in Edinburgh and Perth
- To remove financial barriers to children and young people cycling.
- To encourage positive attitudes to cycling in children and young people and inspire a new generation of sustainable travellers
- To understand the barriers to cycling that children and young people face and work to remove those barriers
- To increase the number of adults cycling as a result of accompanying their children

IMPACT

Since August 2023, the Wee Bike Library has:

834

customers signed up

100%

of customers said they would use the Wee Bike Library again

50%

increase in bikes saved from landfill each week

426

bikes borrowed

50%

increase in demand for kids bikes compared to the previous 12 months

nearly

500

accessories provided

FEEDBACK

What do people say about the Wee Bike Library?

73%

of customers said their children are cycling more or much more than before they borrowed a bike from us

92%

of customers found a bike straight away or in less than 1 month

92%

of customers gave us 4 or 5 stars for quality of service

95%

of customers gave us 4 or 5 stars for the quality of the bikes they borrowed

FEEDBACK

Our 3 year old did a Play on Pedals programme at nursery. We were able to get her a second hand pedal bike from you and practice at home and **she can now ride a pedal bike (no stabilisers)**. This is an absolutely brilliant service, thank you!

I have triplets so affording new bikes as they grow is big **financial challenge**. The bike library has been brilliant for us. It is a fantastic service!!

It allowed my eldest to have a bike as he had outgrown his and we now can have **family bike rides!**

As we have 3 kids it makes giving them opportunities to bike more accessible. **It also teaches them a valuable principle of not needing to buy new all the time** and that reusing and sharing things is so important for the planet and also for people to be able to enjoy the outdoors more

It was **great to chat and get advice from the staff** on choosing the right bike. As children keep on growing so quickly, having the option to switch bike sizes so easily is just amazing!

My daughter has a wonderful bike that she can ride and as a result **we all cycle much more than we previously did**. Thank you so much. I have been raving about the Bike Library!

We are struggling with the cost of living crisis so this was a godsend. Our daughter needed a bike for a while but we couldn't afford to get her a new one.

It changed our lives, brought so much joy and new hobbies for my kids, they love a sport now when they thought they didn't like sports

FEEDBACK



LEARNINGS

What has The Bike Station learnt so far?

There is demand and opportunities to work more closely with schools and remove barriers to participating in cycling-based activities, such as not being able to access a bike

There is demand to work in a more targeted way with young people and adults to provide more support and opportunities and encourage cycling

There is an opportunity to dovetail with other behaviour change programmes, including more place-based approaches focused around school catchment areas and other programmes such as Shifting Gears

There is an opportunity to learn more from our Wee Bike Library participants about what barriers they face to cycling and hearing directly from young people

FUTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

How is The Bike Station going to improve the Wee Bike Library in its second year?

We will increase the number of bikes built and distribute them evenly across our branches. This will lead to even more kids on bikes and even less bikes recycled

We will develop partnerships with schools and other relevant organisations to increase outreach and deliver more bikes, especially to vulnerable families

We will refer Shifting Gears participants who require kids bikes to the Wee Bike Library, so they can benefit from all services The Bike Station provides

We will host bike events during school holidays and contact inactive users regularly to ensure they benefit from the programme they signed up to

PARTNERS

Special thanks

We would like to thank Transport Scotland for funding this project and therefore helping us break down barriers to cycling.

We would also like to say a special thanks to NatWest, who donated 30 new kids bikes to us at the start of the project and contributed to the delivery of the programme.

