



The Leicester City of Sanctuary Bicycle Loan Scheme, Leicester and Leicestershire 2010-2013

A Report on Organization and Outcomes

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Supported by and in co-operation with



In partnership with the British Red Cross

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Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction and Context	2
Description of Scheme	3
Results	4
Costs	5
Outcomes	5
Evaluation	8
Appendix 1 Contract form	
Appendix 2 Questionnaire form	

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I wish them all success in the future, and assure them of the heartfelt thanks from the many asylum-seekers whose lives they have helped to improve.

Michael Tully thanks Ms Elizabeth Barner and Mr Eric Nkundumubano for review. All remaining errors are my own responsibility. The author can be contacted by Email at: tully.michael@gmail.com

Introduction and Context

Asylum-seekers are among the most vulnerable member of society. When dispersed to different areas by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) they are often allocated accommodation in areas of cheap housing which are frequently themselves deprived areas. Financial support to a substantial proportion of Asylum-seekers is limited to £5/day per person, administered through the *AZURE* card. They have no access to cash and are therefore unable to buy bus tickets or pay for other kinds of transport. Other day-to-day necessities, such as shoe repairs or haircuts are also rendered difficult

In consequence, wherever they live, they have a disempowered and limited existence. In spite of the generally welcoming and tolerant community they encounter in Leicester:

- They find it difficult to get to the medical, legal and community support they so often desperately need:
- *Assist*, their admirable medical service is appropriately located in the City Centre and close by bus stops, yet, without cash, their clients encounter difficulty in getting there.
- Legal support practices are located in scattered areas of the City, restricts both access and choice.
- Though some community support services are located near the City Centre, others, for example, the British Red Cross, are in Oadby.
- Several charities do offer voucher help with bus fares, but this both requires clients to plan their visits in advance and inflicts a substantial repeated financial outlay to the charities per client visit, (usually £4.20-£5 per day return ticket per visit). Transport costs incurred for asylum-seekers by the Leicester BRC amount to £10 000/year.
- The difficulty faced by asylum-seekers to attend English lessons in the few places that still offer them free is further compounded by the infrequency of bus services in the evening
- Asylum-seekers often live far from the supermarkets to which their card restricts them; they are therefore unable neither to buy cheaper food nor to purchase ethnically or religiously appropriate food.
- Their limited mobility impedes visits to friends and supporters and volunteer activities, with negative consequences to mental health and constructive interaction with the community into which they have been inserted.

One approach to mitigate this deplorable situation follows from the observation that many asylum-seekers come from countries where cycling

is a common form of transport. Providing bicycles for them to move around Leicester, a city which is arguably reasonably suited for cycling, and which is relatively safe for cyclists, would give them mobility at moderate cost.

The first such attempt at a scheme was carried out by Mr John Coster in 2009. The present report summarises a subsequent revival and development of it.

Description of Scheme

The scheme was coordinated by *Leicester City of Sanctuary (LCofS)* a local charity set up to support Asylum-seekers in cooperation with the Refugee and Asylum-seeker team at the Leicester office of the *BRC*, who assessed the clients for suitability for participation in the scheme as part of their overall needs assessment. The clients were then invited to a meeting at the *BRC* office with the *LCofS* coordinator in which the scheme and its conditions were explained to them and were then helped to complete triplicate forms [Appendix 1] containing the terms of the contract, a *pro-forma* to record cost and relevant extracts from the Highway Code. The client was then directed towards the supplier of bicycles.

The scheme operated in three distinct periods with different financial inputs. For the first period, the scheme was partially supported by the *CTC* via *Bikes4All*, a community bicycle shop, part of *Leicestershire Groundwork*. The residue of the financial contribution was by *LCofS* consisting of collecting unwanted bicycles from their supporters and the wider public through publicity campaigns in City and Shire, and arranging for their collection by, or delivery to *Bikes4All*. The latter refurbished them using grant-supported labour, and matched a proportion of them to clients of the scheme, with the remainder being sold to the public.

After this arrangement became less financially sustainable because of changes to City support of local charities, the scheme continued through *Bikes4All*, but with financial support for cycles of those asylum-seekers who resided within designated deprived zones coming from the *CTC*. Support for those clients, however, who resided outside these zones was financed by a grant from the Community Foundation. This arrangement ended when *Bikes4All* ceased trading in consequence of the winding-up of *Leicestershire Groundwork* in May 2013 contemporary with the end of the Community grant.

The third block of activity took place from June 2013 to date and consisted of *LCofS* directly refurbishing 'in house' cycles collected from their supporters before providing them to clients. This was at a lower level of activity, simultaneously with the collection of outcome and other data for audit and review.

Results: Costs and Outcomes

Results

Sixty-nine bicycles were allocated during the period in question. Of these 64 were allocated to males and 5 to females. That males show a disproportionate allocation of bicycles as compared with females at least partially reflects the gender balance of asylum-seekers. That the females who asked for bicycles all came from Countries of Origin in Africa indicates also that cultural factors may operate. Of the 69 bicycles, twelve were allocated between June 2012 to April 2013 using funds from the Community Foundation grant. The detailed financial accounts kept for the latter bicycles enabled precise costing.

Outcomes of benefits for the clients of the scheme were assessed mainly by telephone survey using the form given in Appendix 2. A few assessments were conducted face-to-face during interview at the BRC office. In addition to outcomes measuring perception of wellbeing by the clients, the amount of physical exercise undertaken by them and the fate and condition of the bicycles were recorded. A survey by telephone was used since these clients are mobile: their residences are liable be changed by UKBA often at short notice. Limitations on staff time at the Red Cross and language barriers made a short interview necessary.

The decision to separately analyse client outcomes for those bicycles supplied by the Community Fund was intended to see whether the needs or outcomes of these clients differed from those of the other clients who mostly reside within the City Council's designated areas of intervention. In the event, one of the twelve clients had been deported, and two could not be contacted, so data could be gathered from nine of them. Since, however, the cost of these twelve cycles had been carefully recorded and analysed, however, some assessment of the relationship of cost to benefit can be made.

Of those clients whose bicycles had been financed by the City Council/CTC, 22 were interviewed.

Costs

The average cost of supplying a bicycle was £79 for the Community-funded bicycles, a little higher than the predictions on its Project submission (£70). This reflected both slightly higher contributions to labour costs during this period from *Bikes4All* and the purchase of more expensive and robust locks (see below). There are no indications to suggest that the cost of the bicycles funded from the other sources differs from this figure. When one considers that this figure includes the cost of a lock (£6.00-£13.00), lights (£2.40-£5.20), bell (£1.70), the cost seems reasonable when labour is factored into the cost.

During the period of this scheme, 5 of the 69 bicycles were reported stolen, of which 3 were reported to the police and replaced. The thefts were associated with particular places in Leicester, the bus station being a notable site for theft. Thieves on several occasions sawed through substantial D-locks. This point is reviewed in Evaluation and Future Work below.

Outcomes

The results of the telephone survey are given in Table 1. They show that the main use of the bicycle was for education (67%), and that its provision helped greatly with attainment of the aim of referral. Why the 'Other support' group recorded so many other activities, while the Community-funded group did not is difficult to explain.

The most significant outcome, however, was that nearly all (97%) clients perceived that their quality of life had improved either 'A lot' or much'.

What else stands out from this set of data is the wide variation in frequency of use and the hours of physical activity within users which the bikes enabled. The extreme reports of 42 or 46 hours per week of activity appear to be levels of physical activity not normally associated with people other than racing- or otherwise keen cyclists. These extreme figures, however, are explained by the two clients reporting these high levels riding between Leicester and Rothley several times a week in one case for social and in another to attend religious services and instruction. These journeys would have been impossible without the bicycle. Other large usages are explained by some clients' frequent journeys to the British Red Cross in Oadby for advice and help on their ongoing immigration and asylum cases and asylum support matters. Several

comments from clients indicated that they rode out from Leicester into the countryside or along the canal path for rest and recreation.

Ten such comments are:

'I am happy that it takes a short time to get to City Centre and also for my leg exercise' (F)

'I live in Highfields so I often take my bicycle to Victoria Park for exercise and to 'relax my mind' (M)

'I did exercise travelling to and from the ...community Centre which took me one hour' (M)

'The bike scheme changed my life' (M)

'I now manage to exercise following my heart operation' (M)

'The bicycle is very helpful and has helped me reduce my weight a bit' (M)

'The bike has helped me to socialise and keep fit' (M)

'I use the bicycle primarily to go to College, but also for any other travel such as travel to town for shopping, library and to the park'

'Very happy with the bicycle'

The hoped-for savings in transport costs were difficult to evidence in quantitative terms largely because the charities concerned are so overwhelmed by meeting demand that it is difficult for them to collect firm data on which clients they award bus vouchers to. Anecdotal evidence from charities, however, is both that those asylum-seekers in the bicycle loan scheme claim vouchers less often, and are indeed more frequently active in volunteering than those who are not. Similarly 'hard' evidence to support an improvement in mental health would be difficult to gather, but such an improvement is likely since *Assist* the health care provider for asylum-seekers in Leicester has been the prompt for several referrals to the *BRC* for inclusion in the scheme.

Other information collected from the comments section of the questionnaire (in 6 of the 31 responses) indicated that repair and maintenance emerged as an issue after *Bikes4All* had closed.

Table 1: Outcomes of the scheme - summary

Clients			Aim of referral			Did bike enable achievement of the aim?			Improvement of quality of life			Bicycle still in possession?	Physical activity (median)	
	Number	Number surveyed	Education	Integration	Other	Completely	Much	Some	A lot	Much	Not much		No journeys/Week	h/Week
Community Fund supported	12	9	7	3	1	9	0	0	9	0	0	8	21 Range 4-46	10 Range 2-42
%			78	33	11	100			100			89		
Other support	57	22	13	1	15	17	5	1	17	5	1	17	14 Range, 3-42	10 Range, 3-21
%			59	5	68	77			77			77		
TOTAL	69	31	20	4	15	26	5	1	26	5	1	25		
%			67	13	48	84	16	3	84	16	3	81		
Statistical significance (Chi –square d.f.=1) n.s. = not significant			P=0,2, n.s	figures too small	P = <0.01**	These percentages add up to more than 100% because of rounding			These percentages add up to more than 100% because of rounding			P=0,9, n.s		

Evaluation and Future Work

The data show that the scheme offered an economical and effective way of improving the quality of life of asylum-seekers. It encountered a setback, however, when its partner charity *Bikes4All* ceased training, which both slowed the provision of bicycles to possible clients and impeded servicing and repair of existing bicycles in the scheme.

To mitigate the latter problem, work has begun to train and equip asylum-seekers to repair their own bicycles, the bicycles of other asylum-seekers as well as those of other needy member of the local population.

Theft of bicycles was also a problem, though not necessarily more of a problem to asylum-seeker clients than to the general public – a somewhat surprising finding, since asylum-seekers live in multiply-occupied premises with generally poor security. Action to reduce such loss was taken during 2012 by buying more robust locks. Another action, begun with all cycles emitted since August 2013 is to record all bicycles on the scheme on the *Immobilise.com* website and to *Smartwater* them.

But the most important future work, other than seeking funding to re-energise the scheme, is to locate and contact (an)other partner charity to enter into a partnership to refurbish and supply bicycles to asylum-seekers. This would not be a 'one-way' partnership as *LCofS* has both a large supporter base who can supply bicycles for refurbishment not only for asylum-seekers but, as in the first tranche of this scheme, also to other needy members of the wider community.

Leicester Bicycle *Loan* Scheme – Client Contract

Applicant: Appendix 1-A

First Name					Family Name										
Address															
Post Code LE					Tel no. 0 7										
UKBA Card No.															

Receives the following bicycle on **loan** from the Leicester Bicycle *Loan* Scheme for employment/legal/medical/social, recreational, Red Cross Support and/oruse.

Bicycle:

Make		Frame number	
Colour	Description		

Declaration

I have read and understood the following conditions of **loan**.

- 1) The cycle is for my own use and cannot be transferred to any other person. I undertake to show adequate identification to **Bikes4All** at all transactions.
- 2) I shall return the cycle to **Bikes4All** in good condition if I move away from Leicester/Leicestershire, or when I become financially able to buy my own cycle.
- 3) I undertake to follow any course to teach safe riding or maintenance of the cycle offered to me.
- 4) I undertake to keep the cycle locked when not in use. I understand that its loss does not entitle me to a replacement.
- 5) I undertake to comply with the Highway Code of Great Britain, especially the items overleaf.

(Signature)_____ (Date)_____/_____/201____

(Witness/emitter of bicycle)_____

Other equipment received (emitter's initials in box)

Helmet		Front light		Fluorescent jacket	
Lock		Rear light		Bell	
UKBA card checked				Basket	

Paragraphs from the Highway Code

60 At night your cycle **MUST** have white front and red rear lights lit. It **MUST** also be fitted with a red rear reflector (and amber pedal reflectors, if manufactured after 1/10/85). Flashing lights are permitted, but it is recommended that cyclists who are riding in areas without street lighting use a steady front lamp.

64 You **MUST NOT** cycle on a pavement. [Laws HA 1835 sect 72 & R(S)A 1984, sect 129]. (You can cycle on a pavement **ONLY** if it is duly marked) [See note below.]

68 You **MUST NOT** (Law RTA 1988 sects 24, 26, 28, 29 & 30 as amended by RTA 1991)

- carry a passenger unless your cycle has been built or adapted to carry one
- hold onto a moving vehicle or trailer
- ride in a dangerous, careless or inconsiderate manner
- ride when under the influence of drink or drugs, including medicine

69 You **MUST** obey all traffic signs and traffic light signals. (Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD reg 10(1)) [See note below.]

71 You **MUST NOT** cross the stop line when the traffic lights are red. (Some junctions have an advanced stop line to enable you to wait and position yourself ahead of other traffic.) (Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 36(1)) [See note below.]

79 Do **NOT** ride across a pelican, puffin or zebra crossing. Dismount and wheel your cycle across. Toucan crossings, however are light-controlled crossings which do allow cyclists and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time. Cyclists are permitted to ride across these crossings (only). (Law TSRGD regs 33(2) & 36(1))

66 Advice on riding a bicycle: You should

- keep both hands on the handlebars except when signalling or changing gear
- keep both feet on the pedals
- never ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding round bends
- not ride close behind another vehicle
- not carry anything which will affect your balance or may get tangled up with your wheels or chain
- be considerate of other road users, particularly blind and partially sighted pedestrians. Let them know you are there when necessary, for example, by ringing your bell or calling out.

NOTE TO CLIENTS: You may well see some cyclists disregard the above laws with apparent impunity. **Do NOT follow their example!** - If Police see them do so, they may sometimes take action. **YOU, however, as a user of this scheme MUST comply with the law at all times.** If you do not, then the Police may also take action; furthermore, those clients of this scheme who are reported to us as disregarding these laws may have their loan terminated.

Leicester Bicycle **Loan** Scheme (LCofSanctuary)

Applicant: Appendix 1-B

First Name					Family Name										
Address															
Post Code LE					Tel no. 0 7										
UKBA Card No.															

Received the following bicycle on **loan** from the Leicester Bicycle Loan Scheme for employment/legal/medical/social/recreational/Red Cross support, and/oruse.

Bicycle:

Make			Frame number											
Colour			Description											

(Signature)_____ (Date)_____/_____/201__

Other equipment received (emitter's initials in box)

Helmet		Front light		Fluorescent jacket	
Lock		Rear light		Bell	
UKBA card checked				Basket	

The total cost of the bicycle and equipment issued was

£_____ (.....Pounds sterling andp)

And I, as employee of *Bikes4All* request the reimbursement of the above sum from Leicester City of Sanctuary

(Witness/emitter of bicycle)_____

Date of signature ____/____/201__

Please send to: Mr David Oldershaw, 11 Pendene Road, LEICESTER LE2 3DQ

Please turn over

Payment Record:

Cheque number

Made out to: Groundwork, Leicester and Leicestershire Ltd

To the value of.....

Posted to: *Bikes4All*, 52 Sanvey Gate, LEICESTER, LE1 4BQ (FAO Mr M Winning)

On:/...../201.....

Sent:

David Oldershaw, Treasurer, Leicester City Sanctuary

Cheque Received: On/...../201.....

Matthew Winning, Cycle Projects Coordinator , *Bikes4All*

Leicester Bicycle *Loan* Scheme Contract – BRC copy

Applicant: Appendix 1- C

First Name					Family Name										
Address															
Post Code LE					Tel no. 0 7										
UKBA Card Number															

Receives the following bicycle on **loan** from the Leicester Bicycle **Loan** Scheme for employment/legal/medical/social, recreational, Red Cross Support and/oruse.

Bicycle:

Make		Frame number		
Colour		Description		

Declaration : I have read and understood the following conditions of **loan**.

- 1) The cycle is for my own use and cannot be transferred to any other person. I undertake to show adequate identification to **Bikes4All** at all transactions.
- 2) I shall return the cycle to **Bikes4All** in good condition if I move away from Leicester/Leicestershire, or when I become financially able to buy my own cycle.
- 3) I undertake to follow any course to teach safe riding or maintenance of the cycle offered to me.
- 4) I undertake to keep the cycle locked when not in use. I understand that its loss does not entitle me to a replacement.
- 5) I undertake to comply with the Highway Code of Great Britain, especially the items on the obverse of my copy of the Contract.

(Signature)_____ (Date)_____/_____/201__

(Witness/emitter of contract)_____

Other equipment received may include:

Helmet		Front light		Fluorescent jacket	
Lock		Rear light		Bell	
UKBA card checked				Basket	

CTC Activity Registration

Current levels of physical activity

1 In the **past week**, on how many days have done a total of **30 minutes or more** of physical activity sufficient to raise your breathing rate? _____

To include sport, exercise and brisk walking or cycling, but not to include housework or the physical activity which is part of your job.

2 In the **past week**, how many journeys have you made by walking, cycling or public transport? _____

3 In the **past week**, how many journeys have you made by car/van/motocycle? _____

About you	(Optional questions)	Age _____	Male/Female
4 Lone Parent?	Y N		
5 Carer?	Y N	Prefer not to say	
7 Disabled?	Y N	Prefer not to say	
8 Incapacity Benefit	Y N	Prefer not to say	
6 Employment status? Education?	Employed/Self-employed/Full time education/not in employment or education		

How would you describe your ethnic origin? (tick)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White/British | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British/Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British/Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British/Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British/African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British/Other Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British/Other Black |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed white & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British/Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Other Mixed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed white & Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |

Data protection: This information will be managed by the British Red Cross and after *complete anonymisation* may be shared with other agencies for purpose of administration, careers, statistical and other research purposes. I agree: **YES/NO**

Publicity, photo, film and video consent: we may take photos and videos of activities to put onto our website, newsletter or other publicity purposes. They may be used in publicity by our funders. **No details of any individuals taking part will be divulged.** I agree: **YES/NO.**

Appendix 2 Audit questionnaire for the Bicycle Loan Scheme 2011-2013

Name of client:.....

(Detach at line above and discard after data input to anonymise data)

1) Date of telephone interview:/...../2013

Needs Assessment

2) Why did we refer you for a bicycle? (Tick the appropriate box.)

Education Employment Community Integration Other

If other, please describe

3) Did the bicycle loaned from *Bikes4All* enable you to travel in order to achieve the above goal? (Tick the appropriate box).

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

4) Did the bicycle loan improve your overall quality of life?

Yes, a lot Yes Not much Not at all

The bicycle

5) Do you still own the bicycle? Yes No

6) If no, what has happened to it?

Broken/in need of repairs Lost/stolen Gave to a friend Other

If answered 'other', please describe what and happened to the bike and (roughly) when:

.....

If answered 'Lost/stolen', did you report the loss to the police? Yes No

If 'Yes' did you get a crime number? Yes No

Physical Activity

7) How many journeys do/did you make a week on the bicycle?.....

8) How many hours a week of physical activity does/did this make?.....

9) Do you have any comments or recommendations for the bicycle scheme?
(Record these overleaf)

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this short questionnaire.

Please leave this space blank

Comments or Recommendations

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