

The Scottish Cycle Challenge Initiative

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Summary

The Scottish Cycle Challenge Initiative was announced by Scottish Office Ministers in December 1996 as a one year initiative to be funded during 1998-99. It was aimed at encouraging an increase in cycle use in Scotland and contributing towards the measures needed to implement the National Cycling Strategy's national targets to double cycle use by the year 2002 and to double again by 2012. The Scheme originally committed funds of up to £500,000 (€850,000) to pump-prime local and innovative cycle projects designed to encourage an increase in cycling both as a transport option and a leisure pursuit.

Eighty applications were received from a wide range of bodies by the closing date. These included public and private sector organisations as well as voluntary groups and local tourist organisations. The types of projects applying for support included Safe Routes to School, Cycle to Work, Cycle Routes, Links with Public Transport, Cycle Awareness, Cycle Clubs, Cycle Data, Cycle Hire Schemes, Cycle Route Promotion, Cycle Security, Cycle Training and Health Related Cycle Schemes.

Each application was evaluated on its ability to encourage the use of cycling for local journeys, its innovative content, the project's ability to demonstrate effectiveness and not to compromise the safety of cyclists or other road users. Wider aspects were also considered such as geographical spread and whether projects were of local relevance only or whether they could be adopted elsewhere in Scotland. Priority was given to bids which sought 50% or less funding and those involving partnerships between groups.

In December 1997, Ministers announced that 37 projects had been successful in securing funding under the Initiative. Due to the high quality of bids received, Ministers agreed to increase the original funding package by some £150,000 (€255,000) to a total of £650,000 (€1.1M).

The grants awarded range from £450 (€765) to establish a school cycle club to £150,000 (€255,000) to modify express trains in Scotland to carry cycles.

This paper describes how the scheme was administered as well as highlighting some of the more innovative and unusual projects.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In December 1996, Scottish Office Ministers announced their intention to hold the Scottish Cycle Challenge. This one year initiative was in response to the National Cycling Strategy which had been published some six months earlier. The Strategy was a consensus document agreed by central and local government, cycle user groups and other interested parties to double cycle use in 1996 by 2002 and to double it again by 2012.
- 1.2 The announcement of the Cycle Challenge Initiative was the then Government's response to the National Cycle Strategy. The Government recognised that cycling levels in Scotland were low and cycling was in need of a boost if the targets were to be met.
- 1.3 Initially the Government committed funds of up to £500,000 (€850,000) to support innovative projects designed at encouraging an increase in cycling. The Scheme was publicised and advertised widely in the press in Scotland and details of the Challenge were sent to all Scottish local authorities, health boards, National Health Service Trusts, cycle interest groups and to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) in Scotland. It was made clear that the Challenge was open to all types of organisation and not just local authorities which are responsible for the provision of cycling infrastructure in Scotland. The closing date for applications was set as 15 June 1997.

2. General Election – May 1997

- 2.1 In May 1997, the United Kingdom held a General Election which resulted in the installation of a new Government under the leadership of Tony Blair. Although the Scottish Cycle Challenge had been an initiative of the previous administration, the new Government decided it was an extremely worthwhile exercise and continued to give the Scheme its full support.

3. Evaluation of Bids

- 3.1 Eighty applications for funding were received by the closing date of 15 June 1997. The total value of the projects was some £5.5 million (€9.35M), with applicants seeking approximately £2.3 million (€3.91M) from the Challenge fund.
- 3.2 An Evaluation Panel was set up under the Chairmanship of a Senior Official from The Scottish Office to assess the applications. It comprised one representative from the Scottish Tourist Board, an official from Glasgow City Council and two other officials from The Scottish Office. The Evaluation Panel met on three occasions.
- 3.3 Applications were categorised into the following types of project:-
- Safer Routes to School
 - Cycle to Work
 - Cycle Routes, Construction
 - Cycle Routes, Promotion
 - Links with Public Transport
 - Cycle Awareness
 - Cycle Clubs
 - Cycle Data
 - Cycle Hire Schemes
 - Cycle Security
 - Cycle Training
 - Health Related Cycle Schemes

Initially, members of the Panel assessed each application individually on its merits. Then they went on to consider each collectively and applied criteria which had been set out on the application form and had been made clear to applicants. These criteria required a project to be designed to encourage the use of cycling for local journeys, to be innovative, to be able to demonstrate effectiveness and not to compromise the safety of cyclists or other road users.

- 3.4 The Evaluation Panel also considered whether projects were of local relevance only or whether they could be adopted elsewhere in the country. In addition, as the Government viewed the Challenge as a pump-priming exercise, the Evaluation Panel favoured projects which sought 50% funding or less. Where appropriate, the Evaluation Panel sought advice from the Scottish Road Safety Campaign and The Scottish Office's own road and highway engineers.
- 3.5 In assessing the bids, the Evaluation Panel considered not only the aims and objectives of each application, but their matching funding proposals together with their targets and monitoring arrangements. In reaching its final recommendations, the Evaluation Panel considered wider aspects such as geographical spread over Scotland and whether the number of each type of projects to be funded reflected the full range of projects submitted.

4. The Evaluation Panel's Recommendations

- 4.1 Following its assessment of the 80 bids, the Evaluation Panel recommended that 36 projects should receive funding totalling some £500,800 (€851,000). These represented 12 different project types and comprised:

- 17 projects from local authorities;
- 9 projects from voluntary organisations;
- 5 projects from health related bodies; and
- 6 projects from a variety of other organisations such as schools.

4.2 In addition to the 36 projects noted above, the Evaluation Panel also recommended that an additional award of £150,000 (€255,000) be made to ScotRail, the main rail operating company in Scotland, to enable it to increase the cycle carrying capacity on many of its trains.

5. Announcement of Challenge Winners

5.1 The Evaluation Panel's recommendations were accepted by Scottish Office Ministers and on 30 December 1997, the then Transport Minister, Henry McLeish announced the list of projects which were successful in their bid for funding. The successful projects totalled some £1.5 million (€2.55) in investment value for cycling in Scotland with The Scottish Office contributing £651,000 (€1.1M).

5.2 Following the Minister's announcement, the Department wrote to the managers of the 37 projects with a formal grant offer and instructions on how to proceed. Work on the projects was expected to commence during April 1998 or as soon as possible thereafter with final grant claims submitted by the end of March 1999. Project managers were required to submit quarterly progress reports throughout the course of the year and a final evaluation report at the end of the project.

6. Scottish Cycle Challenge Winners

6.1 The projects which were successful in receiving grant are listed as follows:-

Project Managers	Project Description	Award
Aberdeen City Council	To develop a cycle network for the Cove, Altens and Kincorth area in South Aberdeen. The Council will work closely with schools, community groups and businesses in the area to promote the route and its use. Once completed, this section of cycle way will provide the link between Aberdeen and the North Sea Cycle Route.	£15,000 (€25,500)
Aberdeen Cyrennians	To purchase 9 basic mountain bikes to enable young homeless people to gain new skills and discover healthy alternatives to their current lifestyle.	£1,600 (€2,700)
Aberdeenshire Council	To publish a series of 25 leaflets describing cycle leisure routes around Aberdeenshire. This will help to promote and develop tourism in this area of Scotland.	£6,000 (€10,200)

Aberdeenshire Council	To encourage more cycle/rail commuting in Aberdeen by providing cycle parking facilities at railway stations within Aberdeen city boundary. This project was taken forward in conjunction with the rail operator ScotRail.	£10,000 (€17,000)
Angus Council	To provide 24 cycles available for hire at 3 council managed caravan sites at Forfar, Carnoustie and Montrose. Three leaflets were also produced in association with hire scheme highlighting local cycle routes within the area of the caravan site. Another initiative to help and promote tourism in Scotland.	£4,100 (€7,000)
City of Edinburgh Council	To commission the design and installation of secure cycle storage systems for flatted developments in the City of Edinburgh.	£15,000 (€25,500)
Clackmannanshire Council	To develop proposals and market the Clackmannanshire Countryside Cycle Network, including signing and facilities, map and completion of missing cycle links.	£60,000 (€102,000)
Cycle Touring Club) (CTC) Scotland	To establish a National Cycling Database, which includes cycle development practice notes, cycle route information, cycling events, cycling organisations, publications and a newsletter. The Database has its own Internet website.	£23,800 (€40,500)
Downfield Surgery, Dundee	“The Lifestyle Project” – a health project aimed at encouraging a fitter and healthier lifestyle locally. The project aims to purchase cycles and provide storage facilities to enable these to be used by surgery patients to improve their health.	£1,850 (€3,150)

Dundee City Council	To develop a safer route to school pilot scheme targeting Braeview Academy, Dundee.	£50,000 (€ 85,000)
Dundee Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	To provide improved access and security for bicycle parking at various locations around the hospital sites.	£7,500 (€ 12,750)
East Dunbartonshire Council	To extend the Craighdu Wedge Cycle route, thus enabling more residential areas to link to the local sports centre and primary school.	£11,000 (€ 18,700)
East Dunbartonshire Council	To produce a map based leaflet providing route information which is designed to encourage people to cycle in the Council's area.	£900 (€ 1,500)
Fife Council	To provide secure cycle parking, a shower/changing area and locker facilities for Council staff to encourage greater numbers of staff to cycle to work. A "Green Travel" plan.	£9,000 (€ 15,300)
Forestry Commission	To create a historical cycle route from Peebles through Glentress Woodland Park.	£8,000 (€ 13,600)
Friends of the Earth (Edinburgh)	To target and approach large employers and gain their support to help encourage people to cycle to work.	£1,500 (€ 2,550)
Glasgow City Council (Parks & Recreation Department)	To develop and promote cycle training courses for women. These are aimed at beginners and less experienced women cyclists and are based at 2 locations in Glasgow. The training includes cycle maintenance and cycle proficiency.	£1,500 (€ 2,550)

Glasgow City Council (Roads & Transport Department)	The “Fit for Life” project – A schools based safer routes and health initiative. The project will add Holyrood School to 4 schools currently participating in the scheme which encourages children to think about their travel choices and to make more sustainable decisions.	£20,000 (€ 34,000)
Grampian Regional Transport	To provide 7 secure cycle lockers at Aberdeen’s first bike & ride site near Bridge of Don at Aberdeen Conference Centre. Includes CCTV surveillance for added security.	£2,500 (€ 4,250)
Highland Council	Bike to school initiative aimed at increasing number of cycle trips to Nairn Academy. The project provides 125 secure cycle parking spaces at the school, cycle route and route guides.	£10,000 (€ 17,000)
Highland Cycle Campaign	To create a temporary post of community-based Cycling Promotion Officer in Inverness. The post is to raise local and tourist awareness of cycling in the area.	£6,400 (€ 10,900)
Inverclyde Council	To provide publicity and literature to Inverclyde community to raise awareness of advantages of cycling. Provision of cycle parking facilities at shopping centres, places of work, public amenities and Council offices throughout the Inverclyde area.	£10,000 (€ 17,000)
Kinross-shire Community Action Project	Loch Leven Cycling Initiative – to provide a safe, well signed, cycle route around Loch Leven.	£25,000 (€ 42,500)
Lothian Safe Routes	School based activities to increase awareness of children cycling and walking to school by providing an information and advice service for staff, pupils and parents in the Lothian area.	£10,000 (€ 17,000)

Moray Council	“Moray Cycle Tourist Rides” provide a number of short well signed cycle rides linking local places of interest. The project produces a series of maps and leaflets containing information about the routes.	£6,100 (€ 10,400)
National Engineering Laboratory	To provide 4 secure cycle storage areas to encourage staff to cycle to work.	£3,800 (€ 6,500)
Orkney Islands Council	To provide safe routes in Orkney to link schools with major housing schemes in the area and open up the adjacent countryside for leisure and recreation purposes.	£25,000 (€ 42,500)
PAMIS/ENABLE Glasgow Project	To purchase 4 adapted cycles for use by people with disabilities in conjunction with a friend, carer or relative.	£8,800 (€ 15,000)
Queen Margaret Hospital NHS Trust, Dunfermline	To link hospital roadways to the Kingdom of Fife cycle route and provide enhanced secure cycle facilities for hospital staff.	£6,250 (€ 10,600)
Raigmore Hospital NHS Trust, Inverness	To encourage staff, patients and visitors to cycle to the hospital by providing cycle tracks, secure cycle storage facilities and shower facilities.	£8,500 (€ 14,500)
Roseburn School Cycle Club, Edinburgh	Formation of a school cycling club for 9 and 10 year olds, with assistance and participation of staff and teachers to teach road safety, repair and maintenance.	£450 (€ 765)
ScotRail Railways Limited	To modify 46, Class 158 ScotRail Express units to accommodate 2 cycles per 2 car unit and to modify 30, Class 156 units to accommodate an increase from 2 to 5 cycles in each 2 car unit.	£150,000 (€ 255,000)

Shetland Community Bicycle Scheme	To provide cycle hire and loan service to establish a workshop for renovating old cycles for resale to run cycle maintenance courses for Shetland communities and to produce literature supporting/ encouraging cycling.	£10,200 (€ 17,300)
South Lanarkshire Council	To provide an expanded comprehensive cycle network throughout East Kilbride by building on existing facilities. In addition enhanced cycle parking provided.	£50,000 (€ 85,000)
SPOKES	To send a leaflet, by mailshot, to every house in Edinburgh, incorporating a questionnaire about cycling in order to establish a database. If the questionnaire is returned, each householder will receive a cycle map of his own area.	£25,000 (€ 42,500)
SUSTRANS (Scotland)	“Access for All” at Rouken Glen Park to design and construct a circular cycle route. Propose to help develop awareness of the need to respect shared use facilities as well as encourage disabled cyclists to use these type of facilities.	£18,000 (€ 30,600)
Transport Management Solutions	To trial both underfloor cycle compartments and front loading bike rack (subject to testing) on central Express coaches and local bus services.	£28,200 (€ 48,000)
	Total	£651,000 (€ 1.1M)

7. Evaluation of Cycle Challenge Scheme

- 7.1 As part of its commitment to assess value for money in public sector investment, the Scottish Executive now wishes to commission a programme of research to evaluate the outcomes of the Cycle Challenge Initiative. In particular, the Executive wishes to assess the Initiative’s impact on cycling in Scotland and the effectiveness of projects at a local level.

- 7.2 The evaluation exercise will consider in detail how effective the different types of project have been and assess whether the money allocated to each project has been well spent in terms of outputs and what has been gained in terms of cycling increase in that area. The research will also evaluate whether the Cycle Challenge Initiative as a whole has achieved its objectives in increasing cycling in Scotland.
- 7.3 In addition, the research programme will identify and evaluate other outcomes of the Initiative such as raising awareness of cycling as a sustainable mode of transport, the receipt of grant as a lever to attract additional investment and the contribution the Initiative has made to wider transport policy objectives. Finally, the assessment of Cycle Challenge Initiative will identify factors which have contributed to the success or otherwise of different projects and the lessons learned in the process.
- 7.4 The work to evaluate the Cycle Challenge Initiative will be commissioned in April/May 2000 and the final report is to be submitted by the end of October 2000.