University of **Salford**
MANCHESTER

Communicating Cycle Training

Perceptions and Experiences of Adult Cycle Training

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research aims to better understand the communication strategies that can most effectively be used to engage with the diverse community of adults who cycle, or would cycle, and help convince them of the benefits of cycle training. The research is based upon empirical work in Greater Manchester comprising a web-based survey and a series of focus groups.

Rationale and Context

Cycling is increasingly recognised in research and policy as an activity that can make significant contributions to a range of contemporary challenges, including health promotion, social inclusion and the reduction of emissions related to climate change. Despite this potential, it remains a marginal activity in the UK, with numerous barriers to take-up.

A major barrier is the perceived danger from sharing the road with motor vehicles. Cycle training offers a response to this by enabling individuals to build skills and confidence and therefore equip more people to cycle confidently in traffic. Many UK adults had insufficient training at school, have not cycled as either a child or an adult, or have seen traffic levels increase and become increasingly dissuaded from cycling.

Studies indicate that cycle training can help to boost confidence and cycling rates. They also indicate, however, that cycle training is not necessarily sufficient in itself and that it should be understood in the context of the behaviour of other road users and the quality of roads and infrastructure for cycling. Cycle training also has the potential to improve standards of cycling among those for whom it is already part of their routine. In some cases, cycling behaviour such as red-light running and cycling on pavements can contribute to a negative image of cycling.

Despite adult cycle training being freely available to many people in Greater Manchester, there are challenges in promoting it. People who are not confident to cycle in traffic may not feel that cycle training is something that can help them overcome their fears, and those who already cycle but would benefit from training to improve and consolidate their skills, may not recognise the opportunity. In recognising this challenge, BikeRight! has instigated this research.

Methodology

The study comprised four stages: interviews with BikeRight! staff; a web-based survey of cycling in Greater Manchester; three focus groups; and qualitative and quantitative analysis of the survey data and focus group transcripts. The web-based survey received 935 responses and collected data on demographic factors; frequencies of utility, leisure and sport cycling; metrics on cycling designed to assist sample selection; confidence in different configurations of infrastructure types and traffic levels; and experiences of cycle training. Three focus groups were carried out in November 2013 and January 2014, one for each of three population segments. These were structured around sets of visual prompts comprising existing promotional images relating to cycling and cycle training.

Building on several studies that have sought to segment the population to better understand experiences of, and attitudes towards, cycling and in order to be able to effectively target policies and promotion, the focus groups reflected three samples:

- 'Utility Cyclists', who see cycling mainly as a mode of transport and have a relatively cautious approach to cycling in traffic;

- 'Sporty Cyclists', characterised by heavy participation in cycling as a weekend endurance sport and a confident, fast style of cycling in traffic; and

- 'Traffic-free Cyclists', who own bikes and can cycle but are wary of cycling regularly in traffic for utility journeys.

Findings

The web-based survey received 935 responses (379 female, 551male and 5 'prefer not to say'). The survey indicated that:

- There are positive correlations between training level achieved and level of confidence cycling in traffic.

- Of those respondents who had received training, it is those who only had Learn to Ride who were most likely to never cycle for utility, whereas those with Level 3 training were most likely to utility cycle every day. The causal relationship is, however, not clear: i.e. does training lead to more utility cycling, or are utility cyclists more likely to seek out training?

- When asked why they had not taken cycle training, the most common reason given was 'I don't need it' (22% of females and 48% of males). There appears to be a cor-relation between stated maximum speed and interest in cycle training, with the likelihood of stating 'I don't need it' increasing with maximum speed, and 'I intend to but haven't yet' decreasing with maximum speed.

In the three focus groups, a range of issues relating to cycle training and approaches to promoting it were discussed. Prominent themes included:

- Cycle training has a role to play in building knowledge of good cycling and creating opportunities for cyclists and potential cyclists to develop skills and confidence in traffic.

- Focus Group participants perceived limitations to cycle training and these may affect take-up. These related to its ability to build skills they would need to cycle confidently in traffic, as opposed to the knowledge of what they should do; that cycling in traffic requires a level of athleticism that cycle training cannot offer; and that cycle training may not deliver anything above what they can learn through experi-ence.

- There was a recognition that cycle training needs to operate within the context of improvements to the cycling environment: that is, cycle training will not be sufficient to overcome fear of traffic if roads and infrastructure remain poor for cycling and dangerous driving is seen to be tolerated. As a broader point, this means that funding

programmes see cycle training as a measure that sits alongside other cycling-related improvements.

- There is a perceived risk that a focus on cycle training implies that responsibility for safety is placed solely on the cyclist, rather than emphasising the shared responsibility of all road users.

In terms of communicating cycle training, the research leads to the following recommendations:

- The research suggests that the different segments used (Utility Cyclists, Sporty Cyclists and Traffic-free Cyclists) are useful in understanding differing requirements of and attitudes towards cycle training.

- Cycle training should be promoted in such a way as to emphasise the shared responsibility of all road users.

- New ways of describing and presenting cycle training should be considered and these should be motivating and aspira-tional. They should reflect the emphasis on skills in traffic and avoid unwanted connotations of the term 'training' with BMX and sport cycling and indirect meanings of 'beginners and advanced'.

- Responsible cycling should be promoted in ways that retain the fun and relaxing elements of cycling.

- Shocking and negative imagery should be avoided in promoting responsible cycling; where it is used it should be complemented by clear advice that presents an 'alternative'.

- Creative ways to package cycle training should be explored: for example by including it with, or as elements of, events and social occasions.

- In order to appeal to a wide audience, it may be beneficial to include a balance of helmeted and non-helmeted cyclists in promotional images.

1. Introduction

Cycling is being increasingly recognised in research and policy as an activity that can make significant contributions to a range of challenges, in particular climate change mitigation and health promotion. Yet in the UK it remains a marginal activity with numerous barriers to take-up.

1.1   Rationale

A major barrier, evidenced in recent research, is perceived danger from sharing the road with motor vehicles. Cycle training offers a response to this by enabling individuals to build skills and confidence and therefore equipping more people to cycle in traffic. The cycle training offer, as provided by BikeRight! and other training providers, is structured around the National Cycle Training Standard (referred to as National Standard throughout this report), which is detailed in Appendix A.

There is an opportunity for increased take-up of cycle training to boost cycling levels and to improve the overall safety of cycling in traffic. Whilst cycle training may be associated in the popular imagination with school pupils, many UK adults had insufficient training at school, have not cycled as either children or adults, or have seen traffic levels increase and become increasingly dissuaded from cycling.

A further contribution of cycle training is in improving standards of cycling as a whole, among not only those new to cycling but also those for whom it is already part of their routine. Confident cycling in traffic does not necessarily equate to the highest standards in terms of safety and risk minimisation. In some cases cycling behaviour, such as red-light running and cycling on pavements, can contribute to a negative image of cycling.

Increasing the take-up of cycle training among adults is a challenge, even though it is available free of charge to many people. Those who are not confident to cycle in traffic may not feel that cycle training is something that can overcome their fears, and those who already cycle but would benefit from training to improve and consolidate their skills may not recognise this opportunity, or at least not prioritise it.

In recognising this challenge, BikeRight! has instigated this research with a view to better understanding what communication strategies can most effectively be used to engage with the diverse community of people who cycle, or would cycle, and convince them of the benefits of cycle training. The research is based upon empirical work in Greater Manchester comprising a web-based survey and a series of focus groups.

1.2   Aim

The overall aim of the research is to contribute to an understanding of the barriers to the take-up of adult cycle training and to develop recommendations for communication strategies that will help boost take-up. This aim is supported by the following objectives:

- to improve understanding of the barriers (physical, emotional and psychological) to utility cycling;

- through background research, to identify issues in cycling promotion, including typologies and market segmentation;

- to identify challenges in the communication of cycle training; and

- to develop recommendations for communication strategies that will encourage adults to access cycle training courses that are designed to overcome some of these barriers.

1.3   Structure

To set the context for the research, Chapter 2 begins by discussing the potential contribution of cycling to addressing contemporary challenges and the ways in which cycle training can help increase and broaden the take-up of cycling. It continues by outlining research that has investigated the potential impact of cycle training and, since this is an approach that has been

important in this research, ways in which researchers and policy-makers have sought to segment the cycling, and potentially cycling, population. It concludes with the typology established for this research.

Chapter 3 describes the approach taken in this research, outlining the four stages: interviews with BikeRight! staff, a web-based survey of cycling in Greater Manchester, focus groups with three different segments of the cycling population, and the quantitative and qualitative analysis that have informed this report.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the web-based survey of Greater Manchester, providing information on levels of cycling and exploring the relationship between cycling confidence and characteristics such as frequency of cycling, type of cycling, gender, training levels and reported cycling speed.

In Chapter 5, themes arising from the three focus groups are discussed, and Chapter 6 summarises the findings, provides concluding remarks and presents a set of recommendations.

1.4   Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU), University of Salford

The Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) is a multi-award-winning research and consultancy unit based at the University of Salford.

The Unit's work navigates through complex issues in the built and human environment and aims to address societal issues and provide an evidence base for effective policy-making at the local, regional, UK and European levels. Consisting of applied social scientists, it offers a wealth of expertise and provides research and consultancy services under the two core themes of Inclusive Places and Sustainable Living.

1.5   BikeRight!

BikeRight! was established in 2000 and has grown into a successful, thriving cycling development business. Every year BikeRight! trains over 20,000 individuals using a pool of 60+ National Standard accredited instructors, making it the largest cycle training organisation in the UK.

It is one of the few commercially active Department for Transport accredited Instructor Training Organisations and is a member of the Cycle Training Standards Board, an Investor in People and a multi-award-winning company.

The BikeRight! head office is in Manchester and it has four further offices: two in Liverpool, one in Birmingham and one in Newcastle.

BikeRight! contributes to cycling developments at both local and national levels, advising on several committees at a national level.

BikeRight! offers:

- Adult cycle training to levels 1, 2 and 3 of the National Standard

- Bikeability levels 1, 2 and 3 for schools

- Learn to Ride courses for adults and children

- National Standard cycle instructor training courses

- 2WheelsAware – Safe urban driving and cyclist awareness courses

- Emergency services pedal cycle officer training

- Bicycle maintenance courses including professional mechanic training courses from the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) and City & Guilds

- Mountain bike skills courses, experiences and taster sessions

- Promotional and community cycling events

- Cycling consultancy, development and advocacy

2. Context

This chapter sets the context for the subsequent research. It outlines the current situation, identifying the opportunities and challenges presented by cycling and the potential for cycle training to be a response to these challenges. It then summarises findings from recent studies on the impact of cycle training.

2.1   Introduction

Taking the idea of segmentation as a useful way to both appreciate the range of people who cycle, or would cycle, and understand the way factors influencing cycling activity differ across segments, it reports on recent typologies that have been developed. In closing, it sets out the typology used to structure this research.

2.2   Cycling as Opportunity and Challenge

Whilst cycling offers numerous benefits, it continues to be a marginal pursuit. Pooley et al. argue that 'the various barriers to cycling ensure that it remains a very marginal means of urban travel. Outside of specific times and places cycling is unusual, and so are those who do it' (2013: 150).

In their review of sustainable transport in the UK, Docherty and Shaw (2008: 120) pose the question 'Why plan for cyclists?' and put forward a range of reasons. Cycling is, they argue, a cheap way of providing mobility and an efficient use of space; it is a benign form of transport, not only in terms of environmental impact but also in terms of impacts such as noise and pollution; it contributes to energy conservation; it keeps people fit and healthy and has the potential to cut death and injury on the roads; it is reliable in terms of journey time; and it is equitable in providing mobility to many.

To a society looking for ways to address climate change, air pollution and growing levels of ill health associated with sedentary living, cycling is a promising offer. This can be seen in renewed interest in cycling and is evidenced nationally in The Times manifesto for change and the establishment of an All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, 2013). Examples local to this study include Greater Manchester's Velocity 2025 vision to 'transform cycling' with national funding through plans that feature a 'major new network of strategic, integrated and – where possible – segregated cycle routes'1 and Manchester's plans to 'Go Dutch' with segregated cycle lanes on its busy Oxford Road corridor.

Yet actual take-up of cycling remains relatively low and many adults do not cycle as part of their everyday journeys. In the UK, cycling accounts for less than 2% of all journeys (All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, 2013), much lower than for many other European countries: the equivalent figure for the Netherlands is 25% (Pooley et al., 2013).

Whilst some may perceive cycling to be strenuous, a recent study (Pooley et al., 2013: 149) expressed more concern about 'heavy and fast-moving traffic' than 'wet weather and hills'. They found that cycling is contingent on the cycling environment, finding that 'most people are only willing to cycle under quite specific conditions. When those conditions do not hold, most people we spoke to are simply unprepared to cycle' (Pooley et al., 2013: 132). With increasing car use since the 1960s, walking and cycling can become less attractive options (Sloman, 2006) and 'the fragmented city becomes more hostile and it can force even reluctant users into their cars' (Banister, 2005: 6).

In a survey during 2010, Thornton et al. (2011) asked respondents who did not cycle to work why this was the case. Some 20% of those respondents who normally travelled 5 miles or less to work, and 25% of those who normally travelled 5 to 9.9 miles to work cited 'too much traffic / too dangerous'. Traffic-related fear was identified as a barrier to cycling in Pooley et al.'s study (2013). Other

1 http://cycling.tfgm.com/velocity/

barriers include journey length, sense of personal fitness, lack of secure cycle parking and storage locations, and having to carry equipment.

Despite the potential of cycling to meet many contemporary policy aspirations, take-up remains low and the cycling environment, including traffic, is a factor in this apparent reluctance to cycle.

2.3   Cycle Training as a Response

Cycle training, for both children and adults, is one response to a lack of confidence in cycling in traffic and its provision is a potential way to overcome this significant barrier.

It is currently under-represented in cycling literature, which has tended to be concerned with addressing barriers through infrastructure improvements and traffic reduction, and promoting behavioural change through incentives and awareness-raising. Whilst both of these are essential parts of the promotion of a mass cycling culture, cycle training enables cyclists and would-be cyclists to build skills and confidence that better equip them to cycle in current traffic conditions rather than expecting them to wait for traffic-free cycle highways to be rolled out. It also complements incentives and awareness-raising by

Freewheeling!

Want to get fit and save money on your travel costs at the same time?

If so then cycling more often for everyday short journeys is the answer. But if you're worried about safety, want to brush up on your skills and road knowledge or need a boost of confidence then our **FREE cycle training courses** could be right up your street.

Go to:
www.bikeright.co.uk/freewheeling
to find out more and took book your free cycling course today.

Figure 1 - BikeRight! flyer for Freewheeling cycle training

helping those interested in cycling to develop the skills and confidence they need.

There is some recognition of this value. The Times 'Cities Fit for Cycling' manifesto includes a demand that 'the training of cyclists and drivers must improve and cycle safety should become a core part of the driving test'. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE 2012) in its guidelines on walking and cycling recommends that it is 'ensure[d that] training is available for those who are interested in cycling, either as a form of transport or as a recreational activity'. The All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (2013: 13) in its report 'Get Britain Cycling' emphasises the importance of training and education and includes a recommendation to offer widespread, affordable cycle training to 'encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to give cycling a try'.

Pucher and Buehler (2012) in their survey of international examples of cycling practice conclude that 'improved cyclist education' is one of the ten key lessons for the successful implementation of cycling policies; their description of it is limited to child education, however. Whilst child cycling education is important, in the UK it is the case that many adults had no or insufficient cycle training at school, cannot ride a bicycle, have had a significant break from cycling since school, or have seen traffic levels rise significantly since they last cycled. Whichever of these is the case, and it is likely to be a combination of all four, adult cycle training has a role in helping people establish, or update, skills for cycling in a busy modern conurbation.

Whilst cycle training is important in building skills and confidence so that more people feel able to cycle on the road, a parallel issue is the behaviour of those who already cycle. It is not necessarily the case that confidence equates to a good standard of cycling or one that is conducive to safety on the road for the cyclists themselves or other road users. Even those who cycle confidently can therefore benefit from cycle training.

The behaviour of those who currently cycle can impact upon the public image of cycling. Running red lights, for example, is frequently cited as a cycling behaviour that annoys other road users and the media often generalise such infringement as 'evidence of general unlawfulness' (Johnson et al., 2013). In focus groups carried out in Australia, for example, it was found that the non-riders tended to frame cyclists as 'a public nuisance, or risk takers' (Daley and Rissel, 2011: 214) and the authors argue that 'it is possible that the negative feelings generated by the more obvious rule breaking by some riders (such as running red lights, or going up a one way street the wrong way) may be transferred to other riders who happen to be on the road' (Daley and Rissel, 2011: 216).

It was suggested in the interviews with BikeRight! staff that cycle training may contribute to a reduction in the amount of red-light running since good positioning, as taught in the National Standard, can help to avoid situations in which the cyclist feels crammed in between motor vehicles at a junction. They also emphasised that rule-breaking is not limited to those who cycle at speed and with confidence.

Cycle training, then, whilst underrepresented in the literature on cycling, is gaining in recognition. It responds to the need, as part of cycling promotion, to build the skills and confidence of those considering cycling, whether for utility or leisure journeys. Furthermore, it has a role to play in raising standards of cycling across the board and therefore potentially contributing to increased safety on the roads and mitigating some of the negative perceptions of cycling in public discourse.

2.4   Research on Cycle Training

There are relatively few studies of the effectiveness of adult cycle training (Johnson and Margolis, 2013). As McAuley (2012: 12) points out, those that are available tend to rely on basic pre, post and 4- or 6-month questionnaires and on self-reported attitudes and cycling levels. However, they give a sense of the perceived shorter-term impact of training.

In 2003, Transport for London commissioned a survey of the effectiveness of cycle training in London (Cycle Training UK 2004), involving questionnaires to those who had received one-to-one training between August 1998 and August 2003 inclusive. The study suggested that, after training, people cycle with greater confidence, are prepared to cycle further, make more weekly bike trips and are happy to cycle all year round. In particular, 81% felt more confidence after training and the average number of weekly cycle trips per trainee increased from 0.9 to 2.2.

In 2008, a study of both adult and child cycle training in Lambeth, London found that the cycle training resulted in more trips being made by bicycle (primarily for leisure purposes and commuting to work or school) and the trips being more confidently made (Steer Davies Gleave, 2008: 4). The authors argue, however, that this cycle training itself was insufficient to overcome all safety concerns, finding that the majority of those trained continued to see cycling as a 'dangerous activity'. Approximately half the sample claimed to have increased the amount of cycling since the training. For those adults that had increased their rate of cycling, 44% cited 'health/fitness', 34% 'cycle training' and 14% 'increased confidence' as their main reason; given that increased confidence is likely to be related to the training, this implies just under half the sample attributed their increase to the training. A total of 61% of adults reported that they would not have made the extra cycle trips without cycle training.

An Australian study (McAuley, 2012) looked at three training courses delivered to employees in four workplaces. It found that, against a baseline of 11%, four months after the training 54% of staff were cycling to work. Initially 85% of participants reported feeling either 'not confident' or 'a little confident' about cycling on the road in traffic, and this figure decreased to 36% four months after the training. Some 55% reported being 'quite confident' after the training. The workplace setting is interesting and the authors emphasise the importance of combining cycle training with other measures such as infrastructure improvements, on-going peer support and changes in workplaces.

Johnson and Margolis (2013) carried out baseline and 3-month follow-up surveys over a year of training provision in Tower Hamlets. They found statistically significant increases in average weekly cycling levels, with a 'substantial proportion' of new trips appearing to be generated by encouraging participants to cycle to work. There was also evidence that the length of cycling (in minutes) each day increased.

BikeRight! carries out its own surveys of participants in the Freewheeling adult cycle training scheme. A recent study looked at those who had received training in Greater Manchester between June 2010 and June 2012.

The survey suggests a positive effect on frequency of cycling. A total of 35% of respondents reported that they 'never' cycled before the training, and this figure was reduced to 7% after training. The number of those reporting cycling 'not often' fell from 25% to 18%, whilst those cycling 'once a month' or 'once a fortnight' increased from 10.4% to 27.6% and 'most days' increased from 19% to 35%. Some 26% said they had changed how they travel to work after the training, whilst 53% said they had not: those travelling to work by car as a regular way of getting to work decreased from 133 to 98 and those travelling by bike increased from 35 to 95.

The most common reasons given for seeking cycle training were confidence and safety: 42% said 'to improve my confidence when cycling on the road' and 28% 'to help me feel safer when cycling on the road.' A total of 83% said they 'feel more confident on the road' and 82% felt that the training 'increased my competence when cycling on the road', with 79% saying it 'helped me feel safer when cycling on the road'.

A recent study (van der Kloof et al., 2014) in the Netherlands sheds some light on the differences between the UK and countries with high levels of cycling. 'In countries with a tradition of cycling,' it argues, 'like the Netherlands or Denmark, children are usually taught how to ride a bicycle by their parents or caregivers' (van

der Kloof et al., 2014: 4). The reason that the adult cycle training that is the subject of their research is targeted at ethnic minorities of which 'a good number of children… grow up in households without adults able to ride a bicycle in traffic' is that 'learning how to cycle is not an obvious part of growing up in such a setting.' Data for first-generation immigrant women from Turkey, Morocco and Suriname, for example, indicate very low levels of cycling. For over 20 years, cycling lessons have been organised for adult non-natives in Amsterdam. Van der Kloof et al. (2014) report that their study confirms that the skills learned from the lessons can contribute to higher bicycle use and increased participation in society but, for a substantial share of the participants, acquiring a bike and starting to cycle in traffic remain significant challenges.

Whilst there is evidence that cycle training can have a positive impact on many, it is no guarantee of increased confidence and it should not be assumed that increased levels of cycling will be sustained over time. McAuley (2012: 12), for instance, provides a summary of different cycle training programmes in Australia and the UK and highlights the fact that studies identify participants who have cycled less or stopped cycling since the course: 15% in Sydney, 16% and 17% in London, 18% in Perth.

2.5   Segmenting Cyclists

Segmentation is both a marketing and a research device in which meaningful subgroups are defined. It is a way of reducing the number of entities to a smaller number of groups that share characteristics and about which it is possible to make predictions and allow better-targeted policies to be made (Anable, 2005).

In the case of cycling, it has been argued that identifying groups with common attitudes and experiences of cycling can help 'focus on the key initiatives and messages that they most need, and avoid squandering resources on populations that are resistant or not interested in cycling' (Cycling England, 2011).

It is, however, important to be cautious in making such generalisations. For example, it could be argued that the 'a priori defined groups typically used in travel behaviour research are not necessarily homogenous and false assumptions of homogeneity can lead to bias in interpretation and explanation of behavioural tendencies' (Anable, 2005: 67).

The idea of segmenting those who cycle is well-established. Davies et al. (1997: 6), for example, classified people according to their motivations for cycling, with the implication that these would help identify the cycling promotion strategies to which they would be most receptive. Their groups were practical, idealist, fair weather, lifestyle and mainstay. They also looked at age

groups, arguing that the motivations for and barriers to cycling vary over the lifecycle.

More recent examples include a report by Transport for London (2010), which grouped those who cycle or could cycle by living situation. Table 1 shows these groups together with their 'propensity to cycle' metric indexed against an average of 100.

Through this segmentation approach, it identified that of those trips that are potentially cyclable, around two-thirds are made by the four segments with the greatest propensity to cycle.

By comparing potentially cyclable trips with those currently made it found that, whilst those who frequently cycle are typically white, male, between 25 and 44 years old and on a higher than average income, many of the potentially cyclable trips would be made by women, ethnic minorities, younger and older people and those on a lower income. This implies that not everyone is enjoying the benefits of cycling to their full potential and also that there are strong social inclusion benefits of increasing cycling. Whilst hard-pressed families, for example, display a low propensity to cycle, they account for 19% of potentially cyclable trips and would benefit from opportunities for low-cost transport.

Segment	Propensity to cycle	Potentially cyclable trips
A Urban living	140	21%
B Young couples and families	113	15%
C High-earning professional	106	13%
D Suburban lifestyle	102	19%
E Hard-pressed families	85	19%
F Manual trades	42	6%
G Comfortable maturity	30	7%

Table 1 London cycling population grouped by living situation, with propensity to cycle (against average of 100) and their share of potentially cyclable trips. (Transport for London, 2010)

The Portland Office of Transportation (Geller, 2009) considered the relationship of the population of Portland, Oregon with cycling and proposed four groups.

'Strong and Fearless', Geller argues, will cycle regardless of cycling conditions and see cycling as part of their

identity. The 'Enthused and Confident' have 'been attracted to cycling in Portland by the significant advances the city has made developing its bikeway network and supporting infrastructure'. Their cycling is more contingent on the quality of road and traffic conditions.

'Interested but Concerned' are 'curious about bicycling… but, they are afraid to ride'. They are concerned about safety in traffic. Finally, the 'No Way No How' group is 'currently not interested in bicycling at all, for reasons of topography, inability, or simply a complete and utter lack of interest'. He estimates that these groupings represent respectively 1%, 7%, 60% and 33% of the city's population.

Whilst Geller (2009: 9) admits that this typology was devised on limited data, he argues that 'so far, [it] has been supported by all available data that has since been generated regarding either bicycle use or attitudes toward bicycling'.

This typology is powerful, since it implies the existence of a large audience that is 'warm' to cycling, who see its benefits but need reassurance that they can cycle with confidence. It also highlights the limitations of assuming people will simply make do with inadequate infrastructure, as it is likely to be only the 'Strong and Fearless', estimated at 1%, who will cycle under such conditions.

A Cycling England (2011) report looked at people who had cycled in London in the past 12 months (n = 1.2 million) and created the segments presented in Table 2.

Segment	%
(Utility)	
Students going to school	5
Cycle everywhere	3
Dedicated commuters	6
Fair-weather commuters	7
Occasional shoppers	8
(Leisure)	
Weekend leisure adults	8
Budding young cyclists	16
Summer leisure cyclists	40
Other	6

Table 2 Segments of people cycling over 12 month period. (Cycling England 2011) – Utility and Leisure groupings added for this report.

The study highlights the relatively low number of people who 'cycle everywhere' and the relative dominance of cycling for leisure: only around 29% are defined by their use of a bike for utility.

By looking at the number of cycling trips alongside the number of people cycling, it found that 30% of those cycling accounted for nearly 80% of cycling trips. This enabled the authors to identify implications for each group and to recommend policies for increasing cycling.

Those that cycle a lot ('cycle everywhere' and 'dedicated commuter'), responsible for 38% of trips, and 'students going to school' and 'budding young cyclists', responsible for another 39% of trips, for example, are already cycling and are unlikely, they argue, to need more information about it. It cannot be assumed, however, that these younger participants will continue to cycle into adulthood.

People who cycle occasionally – about 70%, accounting for only 25% of trips – mostly for leisure and occasionally for utility appear, they argued, to be predisposed to the idea of cycling but encouragement, information and cycle training may help increase and broaden their participation.

Some 85% of Londoners, the study notes, do not cycle at all and it may be difficult to persuade these people to cycle – they may never have learned to ride, do not own a working bike or have a negative perception of cycling.

A report for British Cycling (Grous, 2011) looked at the impact of cycling on the British economy. It identified 13 million adults who cycle and classified these as frequent cyclists (26%), regular cyclists (33%) and occasional cyclists (41%). It should be noted that the bar is set quite low, with 'regular cyclist' implying some cycling 12 or more times in the past year: whilst this may be significant in terms of sport and leisure activity, it is not a high frequency for utility cycling. They found that these cycling frequencies were unevenly distributed across four types, as shown in Table 3.

	Occasional	Regular	Frequent
Family	30%	15%	2%
Recreational	70%	37%	5%
Commuter	0%	40%	43%
Enthusiast	0%	8%	50%

Table 3 Proportion of 'cyclists' distributed across sub-segments. (Grous, 2011)

Bergström and Magnusson (2003) group those who cycle by how often they cycle to work and account for seasonality: winter, summer-only, infrequent, never. They looked at the importance placed on different factors such as travel time and road conditions by these groups. Temperature, precipitation and road conditions were the most important factors for those who cycled frequently in the summer, but not in winter, whereas those who cycled frequently in winter valued exercise more.

These examples illustrate various ways of segmenting the current, and potential, cycling population. These could be by current living situation, level of cycling, purpose of cycling and frequency of cycling. Categorising people in this way can aid understanding of the different factors involved in facilitating cycling.

A truly sustainable transport system will require that people use a range of modes depending on the journey and context: from 'uni-modality', i.e. the current emphasis on the car, to 'multi-modality' (Schiller et al., 2010: 3). Cycling is likely to be an attractive option for relatively short journeys (under 5 miles), with public transport, car sharing and private vehicles completing the mix.

It is important, therefore, not only to challenge the dominance of the car in our culture but also to try to disconnect modal choice from identity: one is neither a 'motorist' nor a 'cyclist', but someone who needs to travel from A to B. Arguably in countries with much higher levels of cycling, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, there is a less direct link between 'mobility and morality' (Horton, 2006: 52), with transport choice likely to be dependent on weather conditions, length of journey and the number of people travelling.

In a UK context it is important not to underestimate the importance of identity in travel choices and in the dominance of the car:

> *'Reducing car-dependence is not just a case of providing better public transport and cycling facilities… It also requires the much harder job of unpicking the ways in which cars – far more than bicycles and other modes of transport – form part of the identities of individuals, organisations and indeed the wider culture.'(Skinner and Rosen, 2007: 95)*

Appeals to the 'cyclist' and the 'motorist' in popular media, and the pitting of the two 'groups' against each other, can limit the debate (Sherriff, 2013). As Vigar et al. (2011: 478) identified, 'the press resorts to a narrow repertoire of words and metaphors to define transport issues'.

This is important in the context of the promotion of cycling and cycle training. As evidenced above, not all people who make, or could potentially make, some of their journeys by bike would identify, or want to identify, with the label 'cyclist'.

The various methods of segmentation all suggest that those who cycle often and identify strongly with this activity are in the minority. If cycling and cycle training are to appeal to the majority then cycle training needs to avoid the implication that one has to become 'a cyclist'. As Horton (2007: 147) argues, people who might

consider cycling to work may be made as anxious at the thought of becoming a 'cyclist' as by the road safety implications. It therefore makes sense to refer to 'cycling', i.e. an activity separate from identity, rather than 'cyclists', i.e. people whose identity is connected with cycling.

For convenience, and as a piece of research, this report refers to cyclists, cycling and people who cycle. However, in promotional materials it makes sense to avoid the term 'cyclist' and favour forms of words that emphasise the activity, e.g. cycling and commuting, rather than the person, e.g. cyclist and motorist.

2.6   A Typology for Cycle Training

In developing a typology for cycle training the author and BikeRight! identified the following priorities:

- to identify similarities and differences with regard to confidence and skills, frequency of cycling, and on-road behaviour;

- to recognise the ways in which different groups can benefit from cycle training; and

- to be able to target communications most effectively.

The following typology was therefore devised:

Group 1: Utility Cyclists
This group see cycling mainly as a mode of transport and do not regularly engage in cycle sport. It is characterised by modest entry-level and mid-range bikes and a relatively cautious approach to cycling in traffic.

Whilst this group have some experience in traffic, cycle training could help them improve their confidence, reduce the number of potentially dangerous situations in which they might put themselves, and potentially enable them to make more journeys by bike (e.g. those that were previously considered too dangerous).

Group 2: Sporty Cyclists
This group make utility journeys by bike and also engage in cycle sport events. This group is characterised by expensive equipment, heavy participation in cycling as a weekend endurance sport and a confident, fast style of commuter cycling.

These cyclists are confident both in terms of endurance levels and being able to cycle in traffic. Whilst their confidence does not necessarily equate to 'safer' road positioning as measured by the National Standard, this group, it was assumed, is unlikely to seek out cycle training. However, the Focus Group discussions did suggest that some 'sporty' cyclists are potentially interested in cycle training.

Group 3: Traffic-free Cyclists

This group own a bike and can cycle but are wary of cycling regularly for utility journeys. Members typically own a bike and are able to ride but cycle predominantly as a leisure (as opposed to sport or endurance) activity. They rarely cycle as a mode of transport and will often cite barriers such as traffic levels and speeds.

Relative to the other two groups, cycle training is a big step for these people. The research into the impact of cycle training, however, does indicate that it could help these people to begin to cycle in traffic and to make cycle journeys to work, shops or social occasions.

These three groups, which form the recruitment strategy for the focus groups in this research, reflect the different roles of cycle training:

■ a way of improving the skills and confidence of those already cycling for utility (Groups 1 and 2);

■ a way of helping people make the first step to cycling in traffic (Group 3); and

■ a way of improving the standard of cycling among those who already cycle for utility and addressing some of the behavioural issues discussed in this section.

3. Methodology

The overall aim of this research is to contribute to the understanding of the barriers to adult cycle training and to develop recommendations for communication strategies that will help boost take-up.

3.1   Aim

This aim is supported by the following objectives:

- to improve understanding of the barriers (physical, emotional and psychological) to utility cycling;

- through background research, to identify issues in cycling promotion, including typologies and market segmentation;

- to identify challenges in the communication of cycle training; and

- to develop recommendations for communication strategies that will encourage adults to access cycle training courses that are designed to overcome some of these barriers.

The research comprised four stages:

- interviews with BikeRight! staff;

- a web-based survey of cycling in Greater Manchester;

- three focus groups; and

- qualitative and quantitative analysis of the survey data and focus group transcripts.

3.2   Stage 1: Interviews with BikeRight! Staff

Seven interviews were carried out with staff at BikeRight! These included cycle trainers, staff working on the coordination of the adult cycle training programme and administrative staff who deal with enquiries about cycle training from the public.

The interviews were helpful in informing the design of the research. In particular, they emphasised the importance of concerns and fears about the process and content of cycle training; the limitations of the term 'cycle training' in communicating the offer; and the wide range of people who seek cycle training, from absolute beginners to experienced commuters.

The interviews were also useful in understanding the different possible ways of segmenting the potential cycle training audience and in determining the three-way typology outlined in Section 2.6.

3.3   Stage 2: Web-based Survey

A web-based survey was carried out using the commercially available Survey Monkey service. This had three specific objectives:

- to provide a basis for sample selection for the recruitment of participants for the three focus groups;

- to establish quantitative data on reported levels of cycling activity, cycle training and confidence levels in Greater Manchester; and

- to explore the relationship between cycling confidence and characteristics such as frequency of cycling, type of cycling, gender, training level and reported cycling speed.

The survey questions are provided in Appendix B and +are structured around the following categories:

- demographic information including age group, gender and area of residence;

- frequency of utility, leisure and sport cycling;

- metrics on cycling designed to assist sample selection – distance cycled, furthest distance in one trip, fastest speed on the road, value of the bike;

- confidence in different configurations of infrastructure types and traffic levels; and

- levels of cycle training, reasons for taking or not taking training, and the impact of cycle training.

Category (c) was optional but was useful in identifying those people who placed importance on bike value and speed. Question 8 was based on the assumption that those respondents who know and wish to declare their top speed and the value of their bike are more likely to see these as important, not least because knowledge of top speed generally depends on the use of a cycling computer or mobile phone application, such as MapMyRide or Strava.

The survey was publicised via relevant email lists, relevant Facebook groups and Twitter. A total of 935 responses were received. The results of the survey are summarised in Chapter 4.

Table 4 shows the sources given by respondents when asked how they learned of the opportunity to participate in the survey. The majority of respondents (estimated at 60%) found out about it through cycling-related groups and it is likely that this figure is much higher, given that many respondents did not specify beyond the medium, e.g. email, Facebook or Twitter.

Source	% respondents
Websites – unspecified	1
CTC	1
Environmental organisations	1
Membership organisations other)	2
Facebook	2
Greater MCR Cycling Campaign	2
Cycling clubs	2
Cycle forums	3
Twitter	4
Browzer	4
Company email lists	4
Peloton	4
Unknown	5
BUGs	6
TfGM email list	8
Friend or colleague	8
BikeRight!	8
Love Your Bike email list	9
Email – unspecified	10
University of Manchester BUG	17

Table 4 Communication channels through which respondents found out about the survey. (BUG = Bicycle User Group; TfGM = Transport for Greater Manchester)

A potential limitation of the survey, then, is that the email lists and social networking groups through which it was promoted would tend to consist of those who are keener and more experienced in cycling. Several approaches were used to try to mitigate this limitation: invites were sent to email lists of several businesses; the invites were addressed to 'those who cycle, however much' rather than 'cyclists'; and general, rather than cycling-specific, shopping vouchers were offered in the prize draw.

3.4   Stage 3: Focus Groups

The survey was a starting point for sample selection. Three groups of respondents were selected for invitation to the focus groups. The groups were characterised as follows.

Group 1: Utility Cyclists

This group see cycling mainly as a mode of transport and do not regularly engage in cycle sport events. In terms of the data provided through the survey, it is characterised by

■ having modest-value bikes and maximum speeds (where provided);

■ cycling almost entirely for utility, rather than leisure or sport; and

■ expressing a modest level of confidence that reflects an ability to cycle commute but indicates scope for cycle training to boost confidence.

Group 2: Sporty Cyclists

This group make utility journeys by bike and also engage in cycle sport events. In terms of the data provided through the survey, it is characterised by

■ having higher-end bikes and high maximum speeds (It was assumed that this group are more likely to know and disclose these metrics);

■ cycling often for utility, and also often engaging in cycling as a sport; and

■ expressing high levels of confidence in relation to almost all configurations of road layout and traffic levels.

Group 3: Traffic-free Cyclists

This group own a bike and can cycle but are wary of cycling regularly for utility journeys. They are more likely to cycle for leisure on traffic-free routes. In terms of the data provided through the survey, it is characterised by:

■ having low-value bikes and low maximum speeds (where provided);

■ reporting low to zero levels of utility cycling and modest levels of leisure cycling; and

■ expressing low levels of confidence in all but the most basic situations (e.g. residential roads with little traffic).

Across the three focus groups, an even split was sought between those who had received cycle training and those who had not. Recruitment was challenging and the target of ten participants per focus group was not achieved. Group 3 was particularly difficult to recruit, and the session had to be postponed once due to lack of participants. This was to be expected: these were the respondents who cycled the least, whereas for Groups 1 and 2 cycling was a part of their routine and likely to be something they identified with.

Two of the sessions were held in November and the third in January. The attendance is summarised in Table 5. The sessions were held in a central Manchester location with cycle parking and public transport links to ensure accessibility. Refreshments were provided and each participant received a £20 shopping voucher as an incentive.

	Female	Male
Group 1: Utility Cyclists	3	3
Group 2: Sporty Cyclists	4	4
Group 3: Traffic-free Cyclists	3	2

Table 5 Attendance at the three focus groups.

Alongside the participants, the focus groups were attended by two members of BikeRight! staff. These staff members did not take part in the focus groups beyond their allocated roles, which were note-taking and providing factual information on cycle training.

On arrival, participants in Groups 1 and 2 were given diagrams of a road layout and asked to draw on how they would make a right-hand turn. These diagrams (see Appendix D) were used in focus groups as prompts for the participants to reflect on their own cycling confidence. Group 3 participants were given a task that was judged more suitable for them: they were asked to draw on a diagram where they would position themselves when riding normally along a road.

The three focus groups followed the same structure:

- introduction from the moderator, to explain the purpose of the session in the context of the research project and to set ground rules for the discussion;

- brief introductions from each of the participants;

- a factual presentation from BikeRight! about National Standard Cycle Training;

- discussion of and reactions to the 'right-hand turn' images;

- general discussion around a set of images (with prompts including: 'What is your reaction to these images? How do they present cycling? How do they make you feel about cycle training?'); and

- concluding points from participants to round off discussion.

The visual prompts were arranged in four collections. For copyright reasons these have not all been reproduced in this report.

- Images of sport and leisure cycling. (Used in all focus groups)

- Printed communications relating to safe cycling with emphasis on danger when cycling. (Used in all focus groups)

- Printed communications relating to safe cycling and cycle training. (Used in all focus groups)

- Printed communications relating to the financial and health benefits of cycling. (Used in groups 2 and 3)

The focus groups were transcribed, with the anonymity of the participants protected. The transcripts were analysed using NVivo qualitative analysis software to identify themes arising from the discussions.

4. Survey of Cycling in Greater Manchester

This survey of cycling in Greater Manchester was intended as a tool for selecting participants for the focus groups and to complement the qualitative research by providing more extensive, quantifiable information on levels of cycle training and confidence.

4.1 Introduction

The survey was aimed at those already cycling, however little, and was conducted via a web-based service and promoted through email, Facebook and Twitter, as detailed in Chapter 3. The questions for the survey are provided in Appendix B. Most of the charts in this section combine the results of two or more questions, and the question numbers are indicated in the captions.

This chapter provides the results of the survey and makes some observations that can be inferred from the data.

4.2   Survey Respondents

Information about the range of survey respondents is provided in Appendix C, Figures C1 and C2.

Of the 935 respondents, 379 stated that they were female, 551 male, and 5 selected 'prefer not to say'. Figure C1 gives the spread of residential locations, which is skewed towards Manchester, Stockport and Trafford. As shown, this broadly reflects the census data on cycling as mode of travel to work, which is taken as a proxy for the distribution of cycling levels overall. Figure C2 gives the age and gender distribution of the respondents.
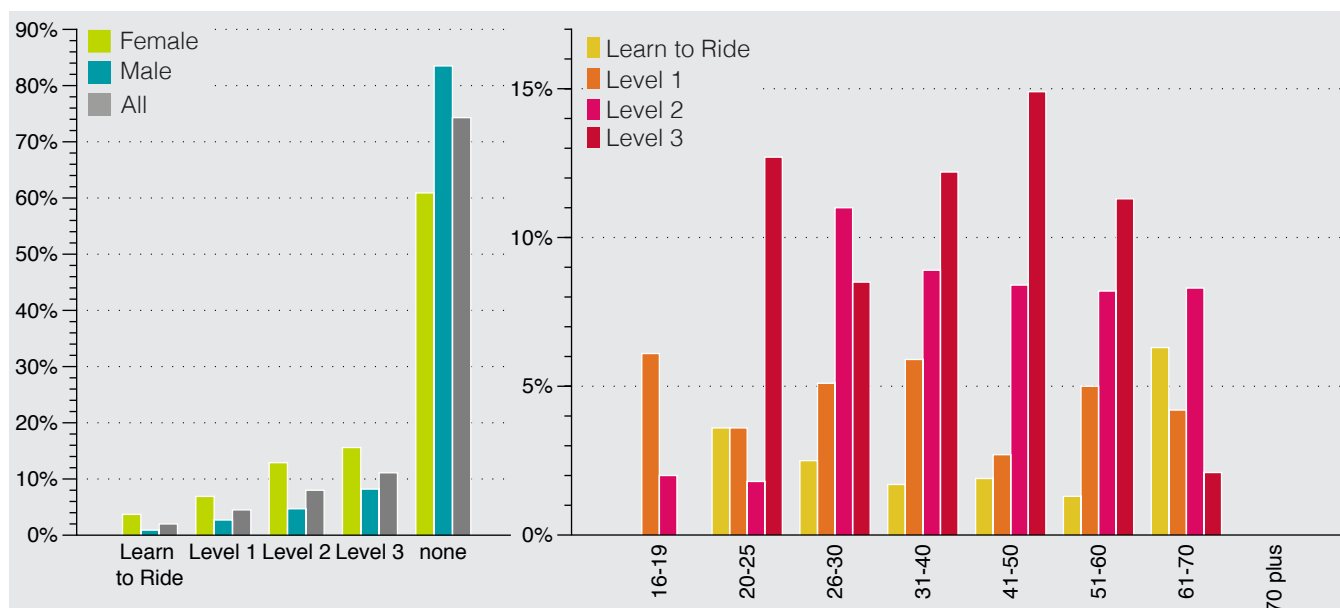

Figure 2 - Level of cycle training participants as a) % of gender with level and b) % of age group with level

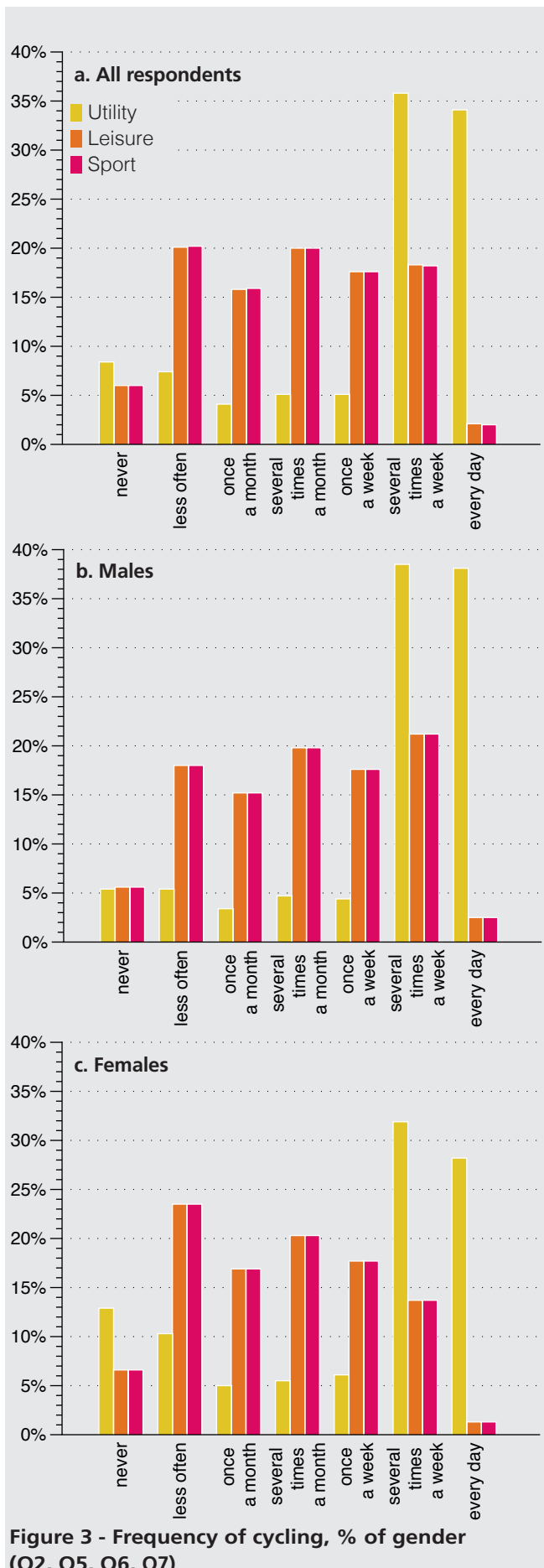**Figure 3 - Frequency of cycling, % of gender (Q2, Q5, Q6, Q7)**

Figure 2 shows the extent to which the respondents had received cycle training. A total of 25.7% (240, comprising 148 females, 91 males and 1 who preferred not to specify gender) had received cycle training at some level. This training was not necessarily provided by BikeRight!, as there are other providers in Greater Manchester. The chart is calculated from the maximum training level of each respondent, i.e. if the respondent had taken several levels, only the highest is included in the calculation: 2% Learn to Ride, 5% Level 1, 8% Level 2 and 11% Level 3, while 74% had received no training.

4.3   Frequency of Cycling

Figure 3 shows the reported frequency of cycling as three different types: utility, leisure and sport. The majority (75%) of respondents cycle for utility at least once a week, and 70% at least several times a week, while 9% never cycle for utility.

Figures 3b and 3c give these distributions for males and females respectively. The percentages of all respondents in that gender are given: e.g. 5% of all male respondents said they never cycle for utility.

Among the respondents, females were more likely to say they never cycle for utility (13% of females against 5% of males), and more male respondents cycled for utility at least once a week (81% of males compared to 66% of females).

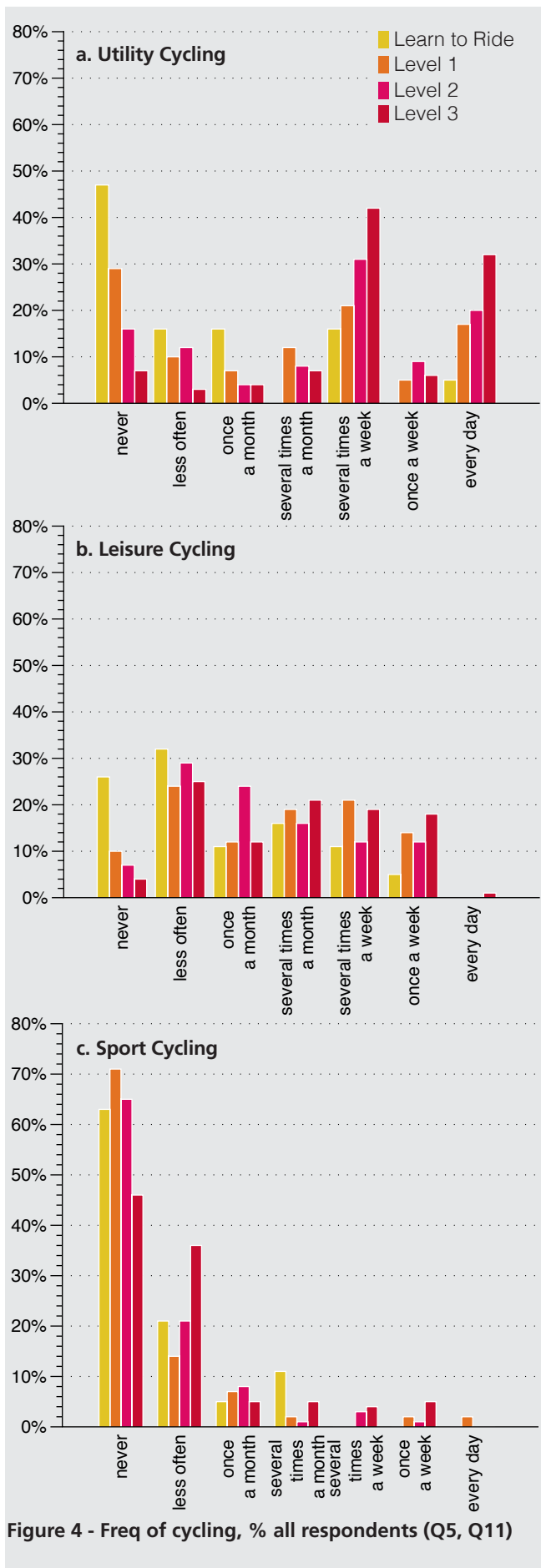**Figure 4 - Freq of cycling, % all respondents (Q5, Q11)**

Figure 4 shows frequency of cycling against level of cycle training achieved. The percentages for each training cohort are given: e.g. in Figure 2a 16% of all respondents whose maximum training level was Learn to Ride cycle for utility once a month.

Those respondents who had only taken Learn to Ride courses are more likely to state that they never cycle for utility, whereas those with Level 3 are most likely to utility cycle at least once a week. Figure 4a suggests a correlation between level of training and frequency of utility cycling. The causal relationship is, however, not clear: i.e. does training lead to more utility cycling, or are frequent utility cyclists more likely to seek out training?
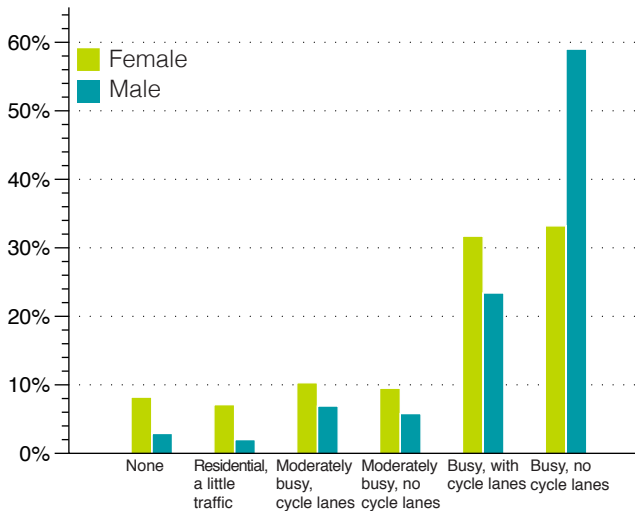
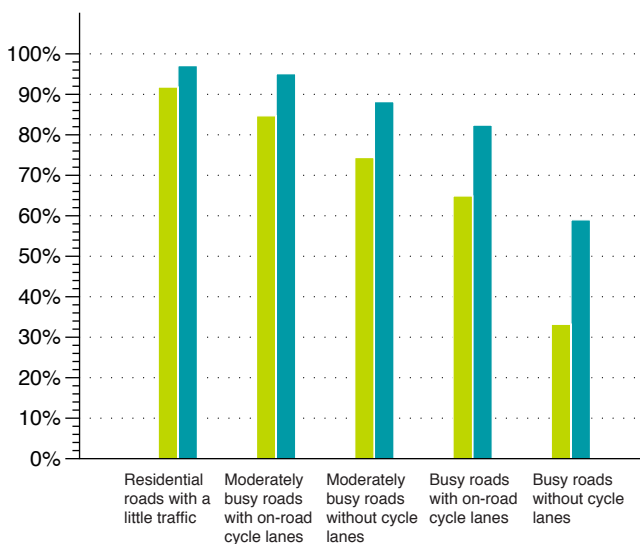**Figure 5 - Limit of cycling confidence, % gender (Q2, Q9)**

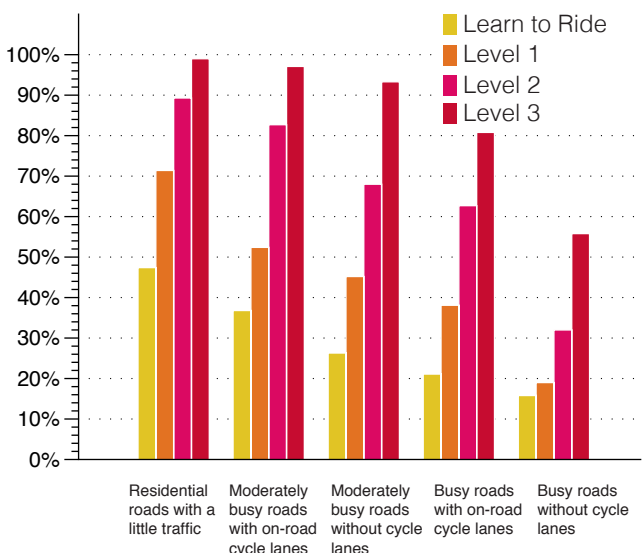**Figure 6 -Confidence (cumulative), % of gender (Q2, Q9)**

Figure 7 - Confidence (cumulative), % training cohort (Q9, Q11)

4.4   Confidence

Respondents were asked in which cycling environments they were confident to cycled. Figure 5 provides the 'limit' of confidence, i.e. the most challenging setting selected by each participant. Whilst there can be expected to be a degree of over-reporting by males, in comparison to females, the chart implies that the confidence of male respondents is more likely to extend to 'busy roads without cycle lanes'.

Figure 6 shows the cumulative reported confidence (the sum of the bars in Figure 5). It indicates that the difference between males and females increased as the setting gets more challenging. It also suggests that busy roads without cycle lanes was the setting most likely to be beyond the confidence levels of the respondents.

Figure 7 gives these cumulative confidence levels by training level. Those with Level 3 were consistently more likely to be confident in a given situation.

Those with only Learn to Ride training were more likely to report not being confident in any of these situations. The greatest difference between the levels, and the clearest evidence of a correlation, was in the case of busy roads without cycle lanes.

Figure 7 shows that some trainees at all levels, including Level 3, have low levels of confidence, and would not feel confident in the most challenging setting. This indicates that cycle training in itself is not sufficient to guarantee confidence and that other factors are influential.
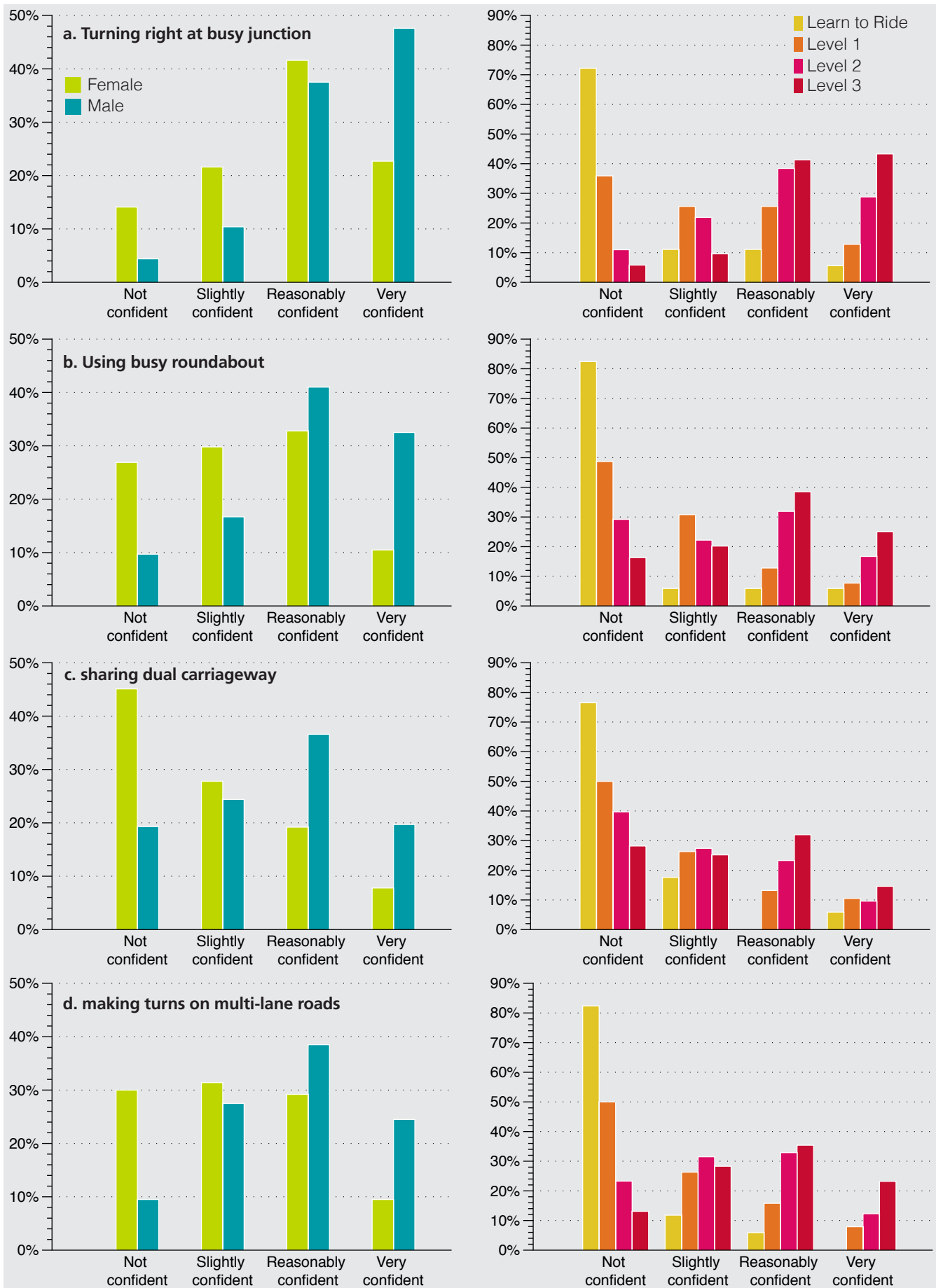
Figure 8 - Confidence in particular on-road situations by gender (Q2, Q10) and training level (Q10, Q11)

Figure 8 gives reported confidence levels in different situations related to how likely the respondent would be to avoid that situation when cycling. They give percentages of the gender groupings: e.g. in Figure 8a, 22% of all female respondents answering the question say they are 'slightly confident' when turning right at a busy junction.

The charts reveal a greater tendency for female respondents to report lower levels of confidence: 'not confident' and 'slightly confident'.

The differences in the genders for the 'very confident' column may indicate which situations most clearly differentiate the genders: for roundabouts, males were 3.3 times more likely to be very confident (comparing percentages), compared to dual carriageways (2.5), turns on multi-lane roads (2.8) and turning right at busy junctions (2.1).

Combining 'reasonably confident, would use' and 'very confident' as a representation of confidence indicates a slighter difference between the genders. The maximum difference is dual carriage ways, at 2.1 times, followed by rouandbouts and multi lane roads at 1.7 and busy junctions at 1.3.

For training cohorts, it can be seen that those with Learn to Ride tend to express low levels of confidence and those with Level 3 are likely to express higher levels. Again, this would be expected, and it is the differences between these cohorts that may be the most instructive.
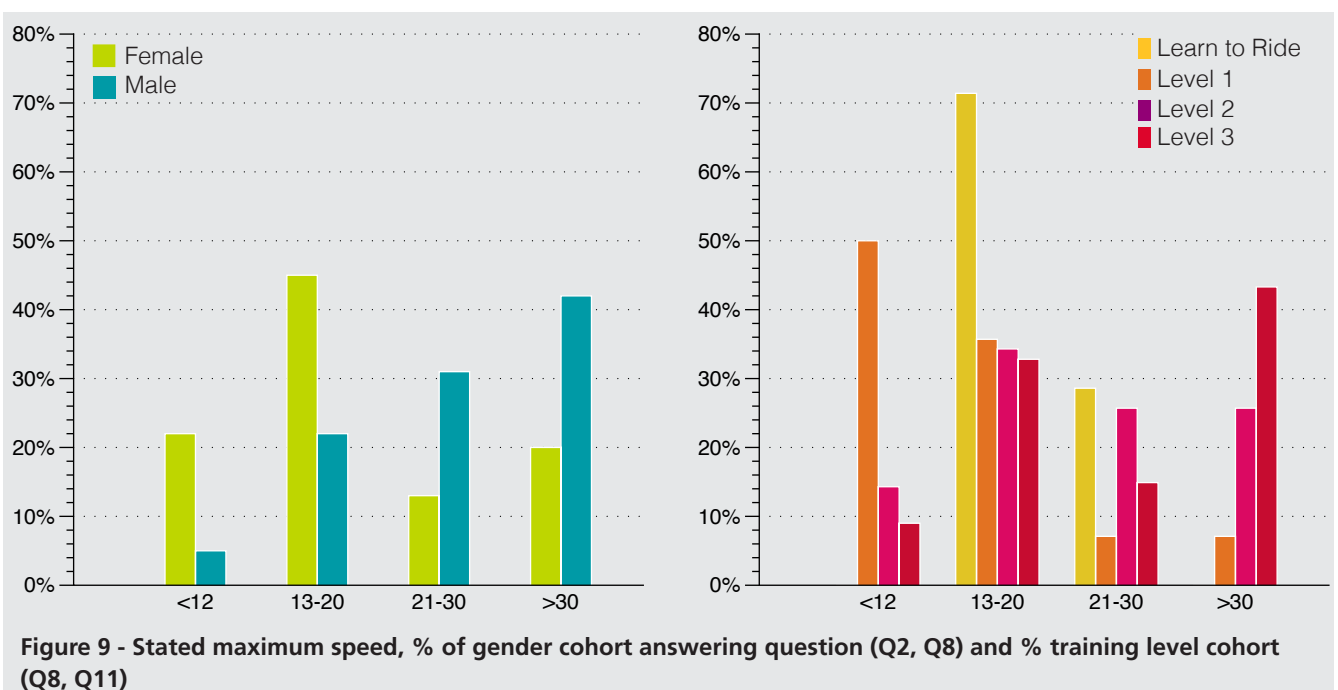
9.7 times more Level 3 trainees than those having taken Learn to Ride say they are either very confident or reasonably confident making turns on multi-lane roads. The figure is 7.8 for sharing a dual carriageway, 5.3 for a busy roundabout and 4.9 for turning right at a busy junction. This suggests that it is right turns on multi-lane roads that most strongly differentiate Level 3 from Learn to Ride in terms of confidence levels.

The difference between Level 3 and Level 2 is smaller and more consistent across these four situations (1.3 times for all, except for 1.4 for dual carriageways).

4.5   Cycling Speed

Respondents were asked whether they know their maximum speed and, if they do, what it is. Figure 9a indicates that, among those respondents who answered this question, males were approximately 2.7 times more likely to be in either of the higher groups, i.e. to have maximum speeds of 21 mph or above. Females were 2.1 times more likely to be in the slowest two groups.

Figure 9b gives maximum speeds across maximum training levels. Level 3 respondents are more likely to be in the highest speed group and the Level 1 group most likely to be in the lowest speed cohort.

Figure 9 - Stated maximum speed, % of gender cohort answering question (Q2, Q8) and % training level cohort (Q8, Q11)

4.6   Willingness to Take Cycle Training

Figure 10 indicates a slight decrease in willingness to take cycle training with increasing maximum speed (66% for the lowest maximum speed group compared with 46% in the highest).

Figure 11 presents the reasons given for not taking cycle training. The most common is 'I don't need it', with a substantial difference between males and females (49% compared to 23%, i.e. 2.1 times greater). For the other factors, there appears to be little difference between the genders.

Figure 12 gives these reasons distributed across the maximum speed cohorts. It indicates a correlation between higher maximum speed and stating 'I don't need it', whilst 'I intend to but haven't yet' is inversely correlated with speed.

4.7   Impact of Cycle Training

Figure 13 gives the reported impact of cycle training on the respondents. Although, there was little difference between genders, the main difference is that females are more likely to say it encouraged them to cycle more often. Figure 14 gives the impact of cycle training distributed across the training level cohorts.

4.8   Summary

The survey of cycling in Greater Manchester received 935 responses, 379 from females, 551 from males, and 5 respondents preferring not to specify their gender. Geographically, the respondent base was skewed towards Manchester, Trafford and Stockport. According to data in the 2011 UK census, this is broadly representative of levels of cycling to work.

Some 240 respondents had received cycle training (mostly Level 3), and for each level of training more females than males had received it. The majority of respondents cycled to some extent for utility: only 8% never cycled for utility, and 75% cycled for utility at least once a week.

Those who had only received Learn to Ride training were most likely to never cycle for utility, whereas those with Level 3 cycling were most likely to cycle every day for utility.

Males reported higher confidence levels overall, and this may reflect a tendency for males to over-report in terms of confidence. The extent of the difference in reported confidence across different cycling situations may be most useful in indicating the situations and cycling environments that separate males and females the most. The greatest difference in confidence between males and females relates to cycling on roundabouts.
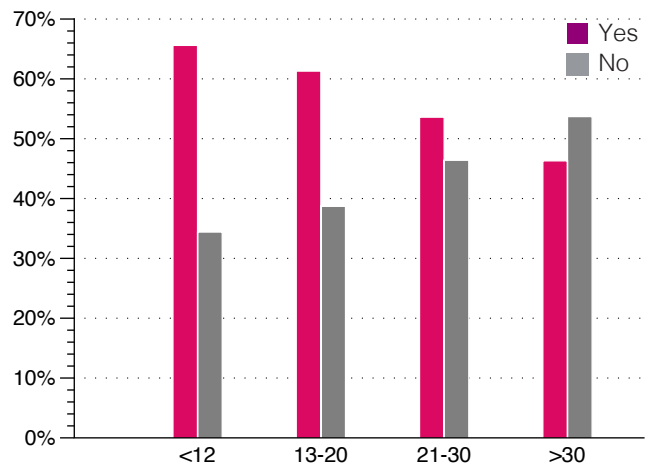

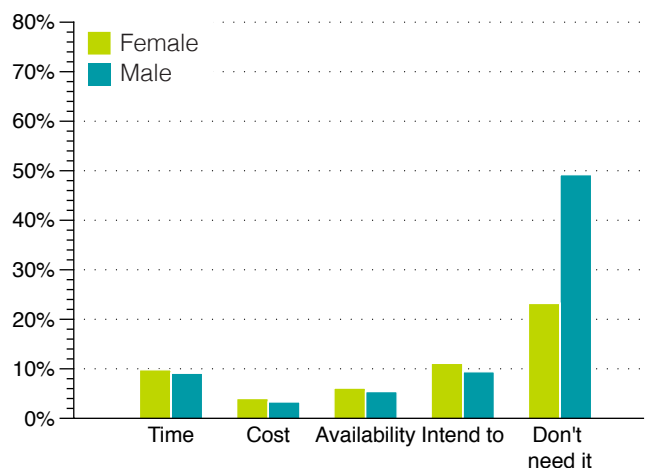**Figure 10 - Willingness to take cycle training, % speed cohort (Q8, Q14)**

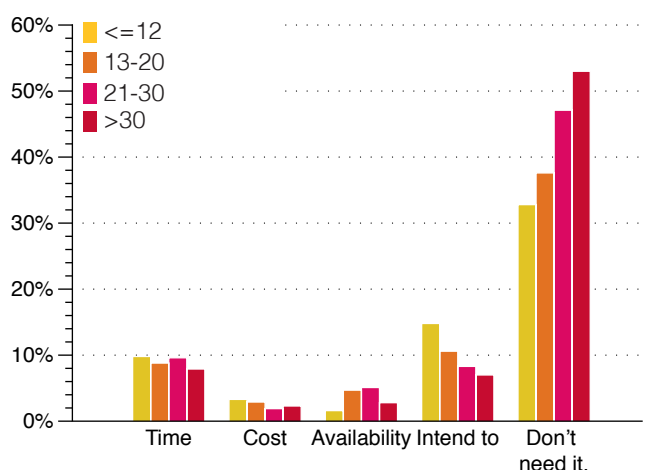**Figure 11 - Reasons given for not taking cycle training, % of gender (Q2, Q13)**

Figure 12 - Reasons given for not taking cycle training, % of speed cohort, mph (Q8, Q13)
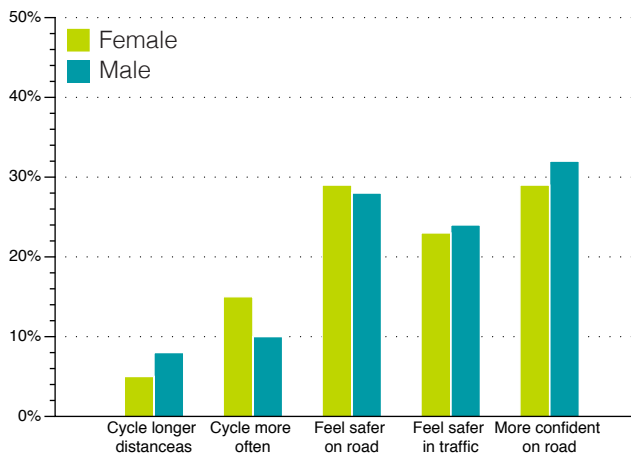
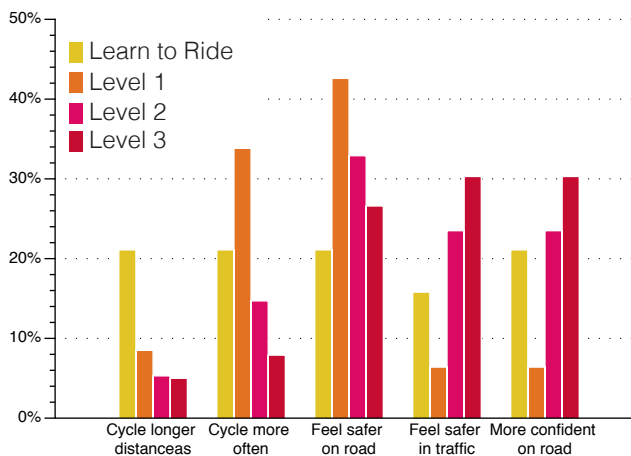**Figure 13 - Impact of cycle training, % of gender (Q2, Q12)**

Figure 14 - Impact of cycle training, % of training level cohort (Q2, Q12)

Confidence also varies by maximum training level achieved. Those with Level 3 were more confident in any situation. Making right turns on multi-lane roads was the activity that split the training levels most; i.e. the difference in confidence between Learn to Ride and Level 3 was greatest. Those with Learn to Ride were most likely to say that they were not confident in any of the situations given.

When asked to express confidence on a scale of 'not confident' through to 'very confident', males were 3.3 times more likely than females to say they are 'very confident' on a roundabout. Level 3 respondents were more likely to express higher levels of confidence.

The difference between Level 3 and Level 2 respondents is, however, much smaller and varies to a lesser extent for each of the four situations (multiples of 1.3/1.4). It is interesting that not all Level 2 and 3 respondents were confident on all aspects of road cycling, indicating that cycle training in itself is not enough to guarantee confidence.

Males were 2.7 times more likely to report being in the higher speed groups, and females 2.1 times more likely to be in the slower groups. Level 3 respondents were most likely to be in the highest speed group, and Learn to Ride respondents most likely to be in the lowest speed group.

Respondents were asked whether they would be willing to take cycle training. There was a slight decrease in willingness as maximum speed increased.

Those that were not interested in taking cycle training were asked why this was the case, and the main reason given was 'I don't need it', an opinion reflected by 22 % of females and 48% of males. There was also some correlation between maximum speed and interest in cycle training, with likelihood of stating 'I don't need it' increasing with maximum speed, and 'I intend to but haven't yet' decreasing with maximum speed.

5. Focus Groups

This section reports on the themes and issues identified through the three focus groups.

5.1   Introduction

As described in Chapter 3, the three groups were characterised by:

- Group 1: People who see cycling mainly as a mode of transport and do not regularly engage with cycle sport activities.

- Group 2: People who use cycling as a mode of transport but are also characterised by having expensive equipment and fast speeds and participating in cycling as a weekend sport activity.

- Group 3: People who can cycle but do so mainly for leisure and only to a moderate extent, their use of cycling as a mode of transport being minimal.

The sampling and recruitment process is described in Chapter 3. Anonymous quotes are used to illustrate points, and these are not necessarily representative of the group(s).

5.2   The 'Ice Breaker' Exercise

While waiting for the focus group to start, participants were asked to take part in an 'Ice Breaker' exercise. Groups 1 and 2 were asked to draw how they would make a right turn across a dual carriageway, and Group 3 was asked to draw where on the road they would position themselves when cycling normally.

The results of these exercises are shown in Appendix D. For each group, the approach recommended in the National Standard was given and was followed by a summary of the different approaches to positioning drawn by the participants. These results show that none of the participants put forward the National Standard method. This suggests that, even in the case of Groups

1 and 2, who were already confident utility cyclists, the participants could benefit from cycle training.

5.3   Perceived Limitations of Cycle Training

The premise of the focus groups was the challenge of increasing take-up of cycle training. Given the time constraints and the fact that not all participants had received cycle training themselves, the discussions were concerned primarily with perceptions, rather than direct experiences, of cycle training.

Participants tended to express a degree of scepticism about the potential for cycle training to equip them to cycle more confidently and safely. A number of reasons were given to support these concerns.

Cycling confidence, for example, was perceived to be something that is gained through experience, and training would therefore not necessarily be sufficient:

> *I've kind of had a couple of scrapes and one kind of minor scrape, and I think [I've] kind of [learnt everything] through experience, and I'm not sure a course would give me that experience – and for me it's kind of road experience which matters more. (FG2)*

In some cases this learned experience had involved adopting tactics for reducing risk that would not be compatible with the National Standard and there was an implication that having to operate within the confines of this and the Highway Code and to ignore these more 'informal' skill sets could be a limitation.

think an obstacle that you would face is… it's a nationally recognised training model, you can't on there advise people to do certain things which I personally would do on the roads, such as bunny hop on to the kerb if I think I'm going to go into a big pothole… You can't recommend or train people to do things that are strictly illegal, against the Highway Code (FG2)

Challenges presented by the cycling environment of Greater Manchester were mentioned, for example the behaviour of other road users and the quality of the road infrastructure, and it was recognised that cycle training itself would not be able to address these:

… so [you try to] get to the lights ahead of you and you're just put into conflict sometimes. Sometimes it's easier just to avoid those kind of roads and take back roads. So it doesn't matter how assertive you are, sometimes it puts you into a difficult situation. (FG2)

It is irrelevant, it was argued, how proficient the cyclist is if other road users put them in danger:

I agree with your points, I think for me it's [true that] you can be right and you can be dead right because it doesn't necessarily mean that people around you are going to treat you [with respect], even though you're in the correct position as per all recommendations. (FG2)

Negative perceptions of cycling safety were alluded to throughout the discussions, with the implication that even the most competent, trained cyclists must operate within difficult conditions in which the behaviour of other road users cannot be predicted, with the implication that this is not something that cycle training can address, and that it is something that is off-putting to those considering cycling:

…but I don't know what the angry person in the car's going to do… like recently you got the guy who jumped out of the Audi and just punched a cyclist in the face or something, and I think there was a thing on BBC, a documentary about cycling, [with] kind of all the horror stories of people just getting beaten up because, well a car's gone too close and they've knocked them – but the other person [sees] it the other way. (FG3)

There was a perception that there are skills and capacities that are needed in cycling in traffic that cycle training may not be able to provide. Some, for example, may relate to the physical fitness of the rider:

When I'm on a main road I just, I feel the need to go much quicker, like twice as quick as I would do on a, you know, a minor road and so if I was a slow cyclist, I would think I would find that manoeuvre really difficult to do. (FG2)

I think [with] the training, the thing that is missing out for me is… if you get a novice cyclist who is not a fit cyclist, who's going very slow… I could imagine that is a lot more dangerous because cars are not going to get past… whereas if you're a fit cyclist and a fast cyclist [you can] get out and weave stuff [so you're] very rarely holding traffic up. In the city it's hugely the other way round – so I'm usually there overtaking traffic – so I think… to me the component that's missing from it is speed-specific. (FG2)

This implies not only that individual cyclists may differ, but that the same cyclist will experience different challenges depending on the type of journey:

And your point about speed, I would second. I ride different bikes, a road bike, travelling with minimal luggage quite fast, and traffic's not a problem, [but with my] touring bike with panniers on, shopping, whatever, [I cycle] several miles an hour slower and it's completely different… [It's a] really different situation really; traffic does feel different. (FG2)

Having been introduced to the concept of primary and secondary positions when riding, one participant felt that applying this theory already demanded a level of confidence:

I think [you] need to be assertive… to take primary [position]. You've got to be quite [an] accomplished cyclist already. (FG2)

When you put yourself into the primary position, you're immediately, it might be the right thing to do, or the safest thing to do but you [are] immediately in conflict with drivers. (FG2)

Clearly, there is no reason why cycle training could not be flexible enough to accommodate different capabilities and journey types, but this was nevertheless highlighted as a concern in the discussions.

Participants referred to friends who had started cycling and not sought training because they perceived cycling as something that is easy to pick up. In this example, the participant had personally benefited from training but was often unable to inform their friends of its value:

I know a lot of people that have started cycling but never really cycled before and they just think you just get on your bike and go and I've always said, you know, have cycle training, make sure you do kind of get... There's little tips about how you can move in and out of traffic safely and that doesn't come intuitively... Well, for me it certainly didn't. (FG1)

Some participants – and this was limited to Group 2 – did not perceive a need for themselves to have cycle training, referring to their experience and exposure to advice in written materials:

Because I consider myself to [be] more than experienced... from the experiences of motorcyclist and cyclist... I would consider level three as pretty basic to be honest. (FG2)

So it hasn't really appealed to me, I do a lot of miles already and fitting that cycling in is hard enough so it's difficult to... I'm sure it may offer something that I don't do now. I'm not saying [I'm] perfect by any means but it's that balance of 'is it worth doing, is it going to offer me much more than, than I would get [elsewhere]?' I already read the Cycling Press, I already read Cyclecraft... (FG2)

Cycling can be perceived as something that is easy and natural and should not require special training. This is exemplified by this quote given in the survey in the response to Question 14:

(Question) Would you consider taking adult cycle training?

Cycling is natural to me. (Survey Respondent)

On the other hand, one of the participants knew someone with this perception who had received cycle training and had found they had benefitted from it:

I think my partner wouldn't even entertain [the idea of me] coming on a training course because I think people think I'm good enough already but one of my really good friends, who probably cycles seven, [maybe] eight hundred miles a week – and he doesn't have a car – he actually did do the training and he's quite an abrasive character so he went in with 'what am I going to learn?' And he actually did learn, particularly that secondary position on the road... and he cycles really differently... from me now. (FG2)

Implications

Some participants have preconceptions of cycle training that portray it as quite limited in terms of its ability to facilitate safe and confident cycling. It is important to recognise that not all cyclists believe they would benefit from training and some value experience and written guides over training sessions. It may be beneficial to provide clarity on what cycle training can offer and to position it in the context of other ways of learning and developing cycling confidence. Capitalising on 'success stories', making connections with the everyday experience of cyclists – e.g. dealing with aggression from other road users, and emphasising flexibility in dealing with a range of cyclists and journey types may help.

5.4   Other Road Users

Currently, cyclists must usually share the road with other road users, and the focus groups made clear the importance of understanding cycling skills and confidence in the context of the behaviour of other road users. There is a danger that an emphasis on cycle training can imply that the responsibility for their safety falls only on the individual cyclist, and the participants recognised this:

The point I was making at the very beginning is that if... there's a general sort of nationwide feeling that cyclists should take all the responsibility and train themselves up so that they then are the minimal users on the road and they make themselves as insignificant as possible, drivers can continue doing whatever they want, which is not what I'd like to see...(FG2)

Conversely, it was recognised that it is also important not to imply that cyclists are blameless as this encourages, or at least risks legitimising, careless cycling. It was recognised that cyclists do not always follow the Highway Code:

I've come very close to catching up with other cyclists who do red lights, because it's one of the things that really gets me... and sort of weaving through pedestrians or even just going for it if there's traffic going through... (FG1)

Participants generally agreed with the notion that training for all road users is important:

… it's about everyone on the road being considerate and you using the road appropriately and… it's not about training for cyclists necessarily, it's about training, appropriate training, for everyone. (FG2)

There is a danger, then, that materials promoting cycle safety can imply that the responsibility rests solely the cyclist's. For example, these participants were reflecting on information posters advising cyclists to leave room for doors opening when overtaking traffic:

Except it suggests to me, the message is that a cyclist should take all the responsibilities. (FG2)

An implication of these discussions is that knowing that training is being directed at other road users affords cyclists a sense of reassurance:

(moderator) It's interesting because obviously we're focused on cycle training but what we're talking about now is driving training, driver information.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

(moderator) But I'm getting a sense of that gives you a sense of, of reassurance.

It would be, yeah.

(moderator) Would you all agree with that? Like a few of you have said.

Should be part of, should be part of the driving test, much more emphasis on the driver's test, all of it, and theory. (FG3)

This driver training envisaged by the participants would relate not only to safe training but would also benefit from an understanding of why cyclists make the manoeuvres they do.

Because I wonder when I'm on a bike do drivers know why I'm doing what I'm doing and is it annoying them and [do] they think I'm doing it to get in their way? Like if I am turning right or if I'm moving round a parked car and I'm going in front of them. I don't know how much they understand about why I have to do that. (FG3)

Another concern is the ability of drivers to accurately estimate the speed at which a cyclist is travelling and what this means for them when pulling out.

I think you make an interesting point about drivers not appreciating the speed of cyclists, because they do generally expect you to be ambling along.

When I'm on my fast bike I'm going twenty-five miles an hour, as fast as a car and they don't really make the right judgment. (FG1)

This relates to the concern, noted above, that using primary position requires the confidence to put yourself in potential conflict with fast-moving traffic: this can be less daunting if drivers at least understand why the cyclist is doing this, but this is not something that cycle training per se can address.

Implications

It was important to the participants that communication about cycle training does not imply that safety is purely the responsibility of the cyclist. Participants wanted not only to see that the behaviour of other road users was being addressed but also that these road users understood why they were cycling the way they were and implied that this would give them more confidence in implementing what they learn in cycle training. It was implied that communication about cycle training could be more effective if presented in the context of other training and awareness-raising: i.e. that the responsibility does not fall solely on those cycling.

5.5   Terminology – What's in a Name?

The participants felt that the term 'cycle training' may be limiting in its ability to describe and promote the training offer.

One issue raised was the potential for it to be associated with fitness, rather than cycling skills.

> *As someone interested in… advertising I can tell you may be in danger of making that mistake though of, say, cycle training; people think it's for fitness. (FG1)*

Additionally it could be understood to imply special skills such as fast cycling or BMX riding:

> *[There is] a bit of a danger… that people might think it's BMX or something like that. (FG1)*

Figure 15 - Cycle training advertisement used in focus group. Bristol Design / Bristol City Council

Conversely, it can be perceived as simply learning to ride a bike, raised by this participant who ran a bike hire scheme:

> *I think most people I've spoken to – because I run a pool bike scheme – …and most people think the cycle training is actually how to get on a bike and be able to not fall off. (FG1)*

> *Because it, there is a very particular set of skills that you need for [urban] cycling that you wouldn't perhaps need… for sport on kind of country routes. (FG1)*

This idea of evoking the urban nature of cycling was mentioned by several participants. This would be, it was suggested, a way of communicating the importance of skills for urban cycling as opposed to simply learning to ride or, at the other end of the spectrum, training for endurance events or BMX competitions.

A poster from Bristol City Council (Figure 15), which was well received in the focus groups for its positive design, presented the cycle training offer as 'urban bike skills'.

Whilst the meaning of 'cycle training' may be sufficiently clear for policy and academic work, it may not be so useful in capturing the imagination. It is descriptive rather than motivational:

> *I think adult cycle training is, if you like, an industry, or what you call it for the purposes of a Government-approved scheme but it, we've already established it doesn't really tell people what it is or what they'll learn, 'urban bike skills' I think is quite good. (FG1)*

There was some discussion about presenting cycle training as being for 'beginners', which, whilst avoiding the implications that trainees should already be highly experienced, was open to interpretation. One FG3 participant, for example, was an overseas student and cycled extensively in his home country. However, living on Manchester's Oxford Road, a busy traffic corridor, had made him conscious of the higher levels of traffic in Manchester and deterred him from cycling. Whilst he would benefit from cycle training and learning more about how to cycle confidently in Manchester traffic, he would not see himself as a beginner to cycling. A cyclist could therefore be 'experienced', but not in urban traffic.

Similarly, the word 'advanced' may be off-putting because it might imply a high starting standard or levels of athleticism.

Although if it said advanced cycle ride from x to x then you'd think you had to be really quick on the bike. (FG3)

'Experienced' is also problematic as a term, since it could relate to different aspects of cycling, whether fast endurance rides or city cycling.

And you might be experienced but not quick… (FG3)

Implications

It was felt that the term 'cycle training' may not be experienced as inspiring or motivational and could have misleading connotations. In particular, it does not connect with the urban situation within which the participants cycled. 'Beginners', 'advanced' and 'experienced' were also seen as problematic, as it was not clear which aspect of cycling they refer to. The implication is that reference should be made to the specifics of what cycle training offers, to ensure there is no ambiguity. Terms such as 'urban', 'traffic' and 'skills' were preferred by the participants.

5.6   Packaging Cycle Training

The exploration of the communication of cycle training was not limited to the concept of 'training' per se but included other aspects of communication that could build confidence and skills among cyclists. The visual prompts included not only promotional materials for cycling but also materials with tips for safer cycling and those raising awareness about shared responsibility on the roads.

Whilst the rationale for the research is the communication of cycle training, the participants were allowed to talk more generally about skills and confidence and it was clear from the discussions that they located these within a broader promotion of cycling rather than of cycle training per se.

The participants suggested components of a campaign to promote skills and confidence, and these included:

■ Information campaigns outside cycle training – for example, the blind spots of lorries and leaving space for car doors to be opened.

■ Specific activities tied to particular types of cycling – for example, cycle to work rides.

■ 'Personal training' type processes, where goals such as 'riding to work on my own' are set and seen as part of an on-going process.

■ 'Buddying', whereby people accompany cyclists on their routes.

■ Specific cycling events, such as the annual Manchester Sky

Ride, to provide a traffic-free space to try cycling.

■ Demonstrations – e.g. demonstrating the blind spot of an HGV by letting cyclists sit in the driver's cab.

■ Route advice, to enable cyclists to understand the safest way to make a particular journey.

The concept of providing route advice was expanded upon by this participant, who emphasised the importance of knowing that their route was a good balance between distance and safety:

And also knowing that my journey is the best compromise between safety and not [going] three extra miles because I might plan it and then think 'am I taking unnecessary risk with myself every day by doing this route that I planned when I'm not very good at knowing which is the best route?' So, because like, it's like the same as if you're following advice about how not to get mugged, you just feel better because you're following it… (FG3)

There was some disagreement over the social aspect of cycle training. Although some did express concern about attending a class with a group, for others the idea of learning together was attractive. It seemed to give a sense of 'safety in numbers' and cohort learning:

I suppose you get there's [a] kind of camaraderie factor of it. We can probably talk a bit as you go along, feel you've done a kind of collective enterprise and it gets, if you're regularly meeting up with that group it's going to [be a] collective achievement, isn't it? (FG3)

Some of the comments related to cycling more generally, suggesting concerns about cycling alone:

You know, like the Fallowfield Loop or somewhere, if it was the evening… and I wanted to go to Stockport and I looked at it and it looked great and I realised I'd have to come back and it was dark and I'd be on my own, but if there were a lot of people going and they all set off at the same time and went through together it'd be fine. (FG3)

Social events, such as meeting up as a group in a park to cycle to a café with guidance and tips en route were attractive to some.

In comparison, cycling alone can be 'quite a lot of pressure' (FG3) as it is helpful, at least initially, to be able to learn the route with others and not feel vulnerable having to stop and seek directions:

If there was a route that went back somewhere that I might actually want to travel to from somewhere near where I am and I could say 'I'm going to go join this group, I'm going to follow this route and then I'm going to know the way by sight rather than having to follow directions and get map out my bag'… I would probably do that but the chances of there being the routes that I want offered is probably low. (FG3)

Implications

To the participants, there was no need to restrict cycling skills and confidence to stand-alone 'cycle training' sessions. That is, there are a range of ways to facilitate learning outside a training session. The social aspect was clearly important to at least some of the participants and clearly the idea of learning together attractive to some. It was also clear that tailoring learning to a specific route was considered valuable, a discussion that was specific to Focus Group 3 and therefore something likely to appeal to the least confident cyclists.

5.7   Targeting Cycle Training

Participants suggested some specific 'trigger points' at which the cycle training message might have most impact. These were the point of purchase, when the (new) cyclist is making other decisions relating to cycling and may be unaware of the possibility of taking training:

Something that could be done to link it, I mean with… the bike retailers or something, maybe it's in their interests [for] people to use their products responsibly. (FG1)

Other examples were at times when a cyclist is stopped by traffic police for illegal or unsafe behaviour, such as not having lights or running a red light, and at times when a cyclist has been involved in a collision or near-collision. Going into workplaces and talking about travel to work was also suggested:

If you had unlimited money, going into every organisation in the city centre and not necessarily going in as somebody but sending a questionnaire, an email or something… (FG1)

Implications

There are clearly occasions at which cyclists may be more open to the idea of cycle training and there are opportunities to target promotion to these points.

5.8   Messaging for Cycle Training

The participants were given sets of images to consider as prompts for the discussion. This section considers specific aspects of these images and what they suggest about an effective approach to the promotion of cycle training.

5.8.1   Sporty Images

One set of images, the first set seen by Groups 1 and 2 and the second seen by Group 3, was a selection of images from sport cycling, including images of well-known sport cyclists in competitive situations (See Figure 16 for example).

Generally the groups did not warm to the images of sport cycling, and felt that they did not connect with their experiences of cycling in Greater Manchester.

Some, however, and particularly Group 2, did say that these sporty images partly reflected their reasons for being interested in cycling and for wanting to cycle in a particular way, in this case fast.

Cycling as a sport rather than an activity. (FG2)

Yeah, for me it's, that's what inspires me to, you know, to want to go really fast… (FG2)

You know, in world cycling we've got some of the most… successful cyclists at present here… [it] makes you quite proud to say that those people are British. (FG2)

Not all participants, even in Focus Group 2, shared this view with this, however, with several of the participants pointing out that these had little connection with their day-to-day experiences of urban cycling.

I wonder if he's, I'm sure he's [an] incredibly proficient as a sports cyclists but I wonder if he's ever had any training to cycle on the road, on busy roads in a town. (FG1)

In Focus Group 3 a participant recalled that Bradley Wiggins had been injured in a collision with a car and that this had been in the news. This seemed to be her main association with the image, and highlights that otherwise positive images can have negative connotations:

I know number three is Bradley Wiggins. He got knocked off his bike quite recently and was quite injured I think actually. (FG3)

An interesting part of the conversation in Focus Group 2 that was prompted by these images was the idea of a person being 'two cyclists' and that training had a different resonance for each 'cyclist':

Figure 16 - Example sport cycling image. Andy Tucker, BikeRight! (Not the actual image used in focus groups)

…Just reflecting on it and it might be just that I'm going much faster and therefore I can be, but I'm just thinking I'm probably two different cyclists actually – interesting.

(Moderator: That seems to resonate with people.)

Yes.

Yeah, think so, yeah.

(Moderator: You're all two different cyclists?)

…Oh I see, yeah, I do see there is a difference… I have two bikes, I commute on one bike… so yeah, there's very, there's two separate …

Actually it's really vital that as well, I didn't really think about it actually but yeah… (FG2)

Each component 'cyclist' might have different images and different skills associated with it.

… because I mountain bike as well….

That's a, you know, there are different mountain bikes…

That would inspire it and the kind of mountain bike riding then… I suppose obviously you can commute on a mountain bike but… technical off-road riding is a different kind of riding altogether. (FG2)

Implications

The images from the world of sport cycling were generally not well received. They had a weak connection, if any, to the experiences of the urban commuter cyclist. Focus Group 2 were the most ready to suggest that these images could foster interest in utility cycling. Conversely, a participant in Focus Group 3 remembered Bradley Wiggins' collision and therefore the images had negative connotations. The focus groups suggest, then, that the sport cycling images have limited application in promoting cycle training, but that where they do have value it is most likely to be in communicating to faster, more confident cyclists.

The 'two cyclist' identity is interesting and would benefit from further research. It would imply that some communications may reach only one of the 'cyclists' within a cyclist – the weekend cyclist or mountain biker rather than the commuter cyclist – and therefore make connections with, for example, their weekend activity rather than their commute to work.

5.8.2   Recreational Images

A second set of images comprised promotional materials characterised by photos of people cycling for leisure in parks or roads with no traffic (see Figure 17, for example). Whilst being better received than the sport images, these were also not felt to connect with the urban cycling experience of the participants:

Yeah, I think it's the aspiration, it's all great fun and it's nice fresh air and clean and relaxing and so on, but the reality is that in urban cycling it's different… (FG3)

The whole myth of the open-road thing, whereas actually… if you live in the middle of Manchester the primary advantage of commuting to work on a bike is being able to go up the middle of a row of stationary cars. (FG1)

My predominant use of my bike is for commuting as a practical thing and that's not reflected here, is it? (FG3)

It makes me think I should get the train or drive to Lancaster and cycle along the canal. (FG3)

It was also noted that not all residents of towns and cities have access to large parks and that 'the urban person that can just pop down to their local park' (FG3) may experience such images differently to those whose access to green space is more limited.

In this sense, whilst portraying positive images of cycling, the images were felt to be potentially misleading, not just in terms of safety, but the whole experience, giving an impression of cycling as an easy and carefree activity that seems to contradict the daily experience of utility cycling:

They kind of give the impression that cycling [is] safe and you don't need to worry, it's carefree … it gives this impression that it's really easy to do, you can wear a dress when you cycle, go barelegged. I don't, it's not practicable. It's not what… the reality is of cycling in a city. (FG1)

And the image therefore called into question the need to obtain particular skills or confidence to cycle:

(moderator) And what, if anything, do they say to you about cycle training?

That we don't need it, [for] cycling. (FG1)

It was noted, however, that images such as these had a positive role in promoting cycling, even if they only showed part of the picture. A balance, it was argued, needed to be struck between communicating the need for cycle safety and putting people off cycling:

I don't think they'd show like a picture of cycling on Oxford Road because I think it'd look terrifying to people. (FG3)

Moreover, it was felt important to capture the appeal of cycling and participants talked about retaining the romance and the sense of pleasure and escape to counteract some of the negative images of cycling:

Figure 17 - Better by Bike advertisement used in focus groups. Bristol Design / Bristol City Council

I absolutely love cycling and I feel like a kid when I'm on my bike sometimes and there is a romance involved with cycling and if, when I said that sometimes I feel saddened by an encounter with a dangerous driver, it does take some of that away and what you don't want is people to be put off by such negative experiences… If they think well 'I'd like to know what that romance is', or 'I'd like to really enjoy my cycling and feel like I can escape'… maybe… have something like that and you could learn much more about being safe, you know, that sort of thing. (FG2)

(moderator) So the idea of escape is still a useful one?

A lot.

For some people.

Yeah, I think that, yeah, definitely.

You've got to associate the pleasure of cycling with this somewhere.

Yeah.

Because it is …

You don't cycle in Manchester in all weathers if you don't enjoy it. (FG2)

Participants referred to the social side of cycling, and felt that these images helped to portray this.

I mean for me it's more the stuff down at the bottom [of the page] that, you know, going out, having fun, socialising and try[ing to] get my wife to do more and my daughter so, and, go out with friends. (FG2)

Implications

Whilst the scenic recreational images do not connect with the urban cycling experience, there is a need to retain some of the romance and sociability in cycling communications.

5.8.3   Shocking and Negative Imagery

Materials that used shocking imagery were generally not well received in the discussions. A particular example was a poster that featured a cyclist having fallen onto a hard road surface with his head smashed open at the top like an egg, complete with yolk spilling out onto the road (Figure 18). A number of issues were raised with this.

It portrayed, it was argued, a very negative image of cycling. In stark contrast to the images of leisure cycling in the park discussed above, it shows only negative aspects: the risk of head injury.

The squashed head and white bike, it's, it's just too far, it's just going to frighten people. (FG1)

I, no, I would think that would [make people think] 'oh my head, I must wear a helmet'. (FG1)

Just makes me… well it's horrible.

(moderator) The one with the egg.

It's horrible but it just makes me think yeah, heads are really fragile, they need protecting. (FG1)

This is more like dis-encouraging instead of encouraging.

[Yes].

(moderator) Why do you say that?

Because all those accidents… [it's] more discouraging. (FG3)

These seem like sort of shock adverts, that I think don't really do much other than desensitise people to things. (FG1)

Another image featured a 'ghost bike'. 'Ghost bikes' are bikes that are painted white and positioned at or near the location of a recent collision resulting in a cyclist fatality as a memorial. Some of the participants (around half) did not know the meaning of this, but after others explained that these are memorials to other cyclists, participants felt that they do not necessarily help promote responsible cycling:

It just makes me sad so it's … I have days, you know, even last week I had a run-in with a danger[ous], with a psychotic driver, and I would consider myself to be a very experienced cyclist and I got home and I just thought is it actually worth it?   (FG2)

In emphasising negative aspects of cycling, they risk exaggerating the problem:

I think for me they probably show the problems worse than it is, because, yeah, cyclists die… that happens and obviously a lot in London recently but more pedestrians die and you don't have them on for pedestrians… [Cyclists are] quite vocal minority in a lot of respects and there's a lot in the media and I think these often show the problem to be more prevalent than it actually is. (FG2)

Another image in the same set drew attention to the blind spot of a lorry (Figure 19). It shows an HGV turning from a side road into a main road with cyclists lined up

along its left, none of whom would be seen by the driver in their mirror.

On the one hand, this prompted some of the same comments about highlighting the dangers of cycling but, on the other, it was recognised that this poster was less sensationalist and more informative. In contrast to the 'egg head' poster, it offered information about what to do to avoid danger. It was also something that the participants could relate to from their own experience:

I think the most powerful one for me would be the one with the lorry, because I think that's actually really informative, I've seen some of the buses have now got that on the corner, saying, you know, I can't see you at a certain point. (FG1)

Figure 18 - Cycle safety information campaign image used in focus group. Scholz & Friends, Germany. Permission sought.

The poster also had value in terms of providing a snippet of information about safe cycling and therefore implying that there is more to learn: the cyclist does not necessarily know everything. In this sense, it helps make the case for cycle training:

I think that, I mean this actually made me want to go do some cycle training and that was the question posed to me, as opposed to a piece of information, like how do you do this? (FG2)

This was in contrast to the 'egg head' image which simply aimed to raise awareness about helmets, which is a more familiar issue.

You go 'oh I don't know, clearly I need some training'. Whereas maybe, I mean for me I'd wear a helmet, I'd never do that, you know, so I just thought, you're relatively ambivalent about having training looking at these sorts of things because I feel like I know it, but if you presented [with] something that people didn't know and I, maybe that would motivate them more to go and seek out information and training (FG2).

And it's all implied, which I think is quite good and you could link that to the message around, you know, we'll show you why it's dangerous to do that, and other little tips and hints and whatever, whereas the squashed head and white bike it's just too far, it's just going to frighten people. (FG1)

<div style="background:#e63946;color:white">Implications</div>

Participants felt that negative images connected to cycle safety do not necessarily encourage safe cycling and could in fact deter potential cyclists.

The example of the poster showing the blind spots of a lorry, however, was viewed more positively as it was less sensationalist and provided practical advice. Importantly for this research, it was felt that this could act as a 'teaser' for cycle training by showing that cyclists have something to learn.

5.8.4   Careless Cycling

Several of the images implied that cyclists could put themselves in danger through their own behaviour. Participants did not seek to deny that some cyclists put themselves at risk through their actions but they felt that these particular images went too far in targeting individual cyclists:

Don't be an idiot but, and I think that I see plenty of moronic cyclists, I see people at night dressed in black with no lights, wearing a hood, you know, that kind of thing. (FG2)

Well it's like, [the] same issues I had with some of the previous ones that we've discussed where – and I think there is a difference between the Think [campaign] images here and this image of the bus – it's like the articulated lorry, those seem to be saying that cyclists should be aware and that there is some shared responsibility, whereas this seems to be basically saying that some cyclists are idiots. (FG2)

Figure 19 - Think! cycle safety information campaign poster used in focus group. Transport for London. Permission sought.

Figure 20 - Promotional material used in focus group. Image courtesy of State of Queensland (Department of Transport and Main Roads) 2010, Share the Road: It takes two to tango brochure

5.8.5   Images Reflecting Shared Responsibility

Connecting with the importance placed by the participants upon drivers and other road users receiving training that includes their actions around cyclists, it is not surprising that adverts that emphasised shared responsibility were well received (see, for example, Figure 20).

> And I think they're great, they're simple, not too much information to take in and I like that it's directed at by both drivers and cyclists, I think it does need to be …
>
> Yes.
>
> On the road. (FG2)

Some images were directed at both and these were positively received:

> [I like the fact] that they're directed not just at cyclists important. (FG1)

If the images were aimed purely at drivers, one participant argued, this might absolve cyclists of their responsibilities, which would not be appropriate:

> Just [to] add some criticism to these Australian ones, because I do think they're good, but I think that one of the things that it picks up on is that someone may be considering cycle training [and] they may look at that and go 'ah well I can cycle probably just as well, everything else that's bad about cycling on the road is probably the car's fault'. (FG1)

There was general agreement around the concept of equal rights and equal responsibility, as this participant illustrated:

> Which is why they're on this one, equal rights, equal responsibility. I think that's got to be the key when you're advertising. (FG2)

Implications

The participants responded positively to the idea of sharing the road and want to see that the 'blame' is not being attributed entirely to the cyclist.

5.8.6   Cycling Promotion Images

Groups 2 and 3 (time limitations meant these images were not shown to Group 1) were shown some images representing more general cycling promotion connected with the health and cost-saving benefits of cycling. Overall, the participants did not feel these were relevant to them. They felt that they already knew the benefits of cycling, and that these were fairly well known in the general population:

> *…I was reading these [and] unless you're really, really stupid, you know that cycling saves you money and gets you fit and it's clean, but you don't need to be told that that's the case do you? So I don't sort of, but it's true isn't it? (FG2)*

This participant continued, arguing that more specific information is often needed. Whilst it may be generally known that cycling is health-promoting, people have questions about the practicalities, like how much training would be required and how long it could take.

> *… what I'm saying is our question's right at the beginning about the course, how long it's going to take, what are you going to do to us? It's almost like you don't need to be told you're going to get fit. You know that. It's about the kind of confidence. It's about knowing how much time it's going to take. I think it's, I suppose it's, it's that kind of information. (FG2)*

Crucially, these health messages need to be understood within the context of existing negative perceptions of cycling. As one participant pointed out, promised health benefits may be overshadowed by fear of injury:

> *It's like looking to long term isn't it? I know that I'd probably be healthier in a year if I cycled to work every day but each individual day it's not much fun to be the first day when you're cycling, and also there's that fear of like dying as well, by being hit. (FG3)*

Implications

Where health messages are used to promote cycle training, there is a need to counter concerns about injury. For established cyclists, these images were unnecessary, and for those who did not currently cycle for utility they were insufficient. There is the potential to promote cycle training as something that enables people to enjoy the benefits of cycling whilst 'managing' the risks.

5.8.7   Helmets

There is an on-going debate on cycle helmet use in practice and legislation. There are a range of views, and it is beyond the scope of this research to discuss them. Due to concerns for safety, some organisations have policies of compulsory helmet wearing in the photos they use to promote cycling. It is interesting to note the reaction of some participants to the prompt images in which not all cyclists have helmets.

In each focus group there were comments about images with non-helmeted cyclists, with participants reacting almost in disgust, as if the lack of a helmet detracted from the rest of the leaflet or poster and led the participants to question the authority of the message.

> *Still noticing a distinct lack of helmets on these people… (FG1)*

> *These, these aren't on the roads.*

> *Not on the road.*

> *And they don't have helmets on which is a… (FG2)*

> *Helmets. See it, sorry, just, it does get me with cycling, is the idea behind advertising cycling sort of, well encouraging people to do it but also be safe and why do a lot of adverts not have people with helmets on? (FG2)*

Implications

Whilst helmet wearing is not compulsory, the focus groups suggest that it is sufficiently in the consciousness of the participants that the presence of non-helmeted cyclists can, in some cases, devalue promotional materials or lead to their authority being questioned.

5.9   Characteristics of the Three Groups

The focus groups were similarly structured and considered similar issues, prompted by the same sets of images. It is therefore possible to make some observations about the ways in which the three groups differed.

5.9.1   Utility Cyclists

The utility cyclists did not identify with the recreational or sport images. They saw cycling as an urban activity and were concerned about safety in this environment, but not enough to be put off cycling in traffic. It is clear that this group were open to and interested in cycle training and felt that they had more to learn.

5.9.2   Sporty Cyclists

This group responded to the sporty images more positively than the other groups, but did not connect them with their commute. It appeared that going fast was part of their identity as cyclists, and seemed in agreement that they were each 'two cyclists': a commuter and a sport cyclist. This group emphasised their personal experience over and above formal training and several felt they did not need any training. Despite this, the group as a whole were, to some extent, open to the idea of training.

5.9.3   Traffic-free Cyclists

This group seemed to be concerned with their own limitations as cyclists, reflecting the view that, however good the training was, they may not be able to cycle confidently. Whilst they knew about the health and financial benefits of cycling, these were insufficient to counterbalance their fears of cycling in traffic. They emphasised the social side of cycle training and tended to favour 'hand-holding' approaches such as Sky Ride-style road closures and guided routes. Their reaction to the images of Bradley Wiggins, with the negative associations of his collision, highlighted the extent to which safety issues were present in their minds.

6. Conclusions

This study has explored attitudes to and experiences of cycling, with specific reference to skills and confidence and with a view to improving understanding of how the concept of cycle training can be effectively communicated and promoted.

6.1   Introduction

The research has comprised two components, a web-based survey of cycling in Greater Manchester and a set of three focus groups with a sample of respondents to the survey.

6.2   Survey of Respondents

The survey had 935 responses, which were well distributed between males and females. The distribution of respondents across Greater Manchester reflected that of those citing cycling as their main mode of travel to work in the UK 2011 census. Some 240 of the respondents had received cycle training, ranging from Learn to Ride through Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3, with Level 3 the most popular among the respondents. The majority reported to cycle for utility at least once a week, and a minority of 9% never cycle for utility and 70% cycle for utility at least once a week.

The survey indicated a relationship between training and frequency of cycling, with those with only Learn to Ride training more likely never to cycle for utility and Level 3 cyclists most likely to cycle for utility every day.

The survey indicated a relationship between training level achieved and frequency of cycling, with those with only Learn to Ride less likely to cycle for utility and Level 3 cyclists most likely to cycle for utility every day.

Across the different scenarios listed in Question 9, the difference in confidence between those with Level 3 and those with only Learn to Ride training was most pronounced in relation to making turns on multi-lane roads. The answers on confidence also highlight the limitations of cycle training: even cyclists with Level 3

training would say they were not confident on certain types of infrastructure.

Male respondents were 2.7 times more likely to be in the highest two (of four) speed groups, and females 2 times more likely to report being in the slowest speed group.

There was a slight indication that willingness to take cycle training decreases as maximum speed increases.

Those respondents that indicated that they would not be interested in training were asked why. The most common reason was 'I don't need it', with males more likely to give this. There was some correlation between this answer and high maximum speed and, conversely, a negative correlation between low speeds and 'intend to but haven't yet'.

6.3   Focus Groups

Three focus groups were carried out, and were defined by the following characteristics:

- Group 1: Utility Cyclists – People who see cycling mainly as a mode of transport and do not regularly engage with cycle sport activities.

- Group 2: Sporty Cyclists – People who use cycling as a mode of transport but are also characterised by having expensive equipment and fast speeds and participating in cycling as a weekend sport activity.

- Group 3: Traffic-free Cyclists – People who can cycle but do so mainly for leisure and only to a moderate extent, their use of cycling as a mode of transport being minimal.

One prominent theme related to the perceived limitations of cycle training. Those who were not very confident on the road, for example, do not accept that cycle training would necessarily give them the confidence they need:

whilst it might tell them what to do, they may still be 'afraid' to do it. Some aspects of cycling confidence, for example, may depend on personal cycling ability and athleticism rather than skills that can be learnt. There is not necessarily a link, then, between knowledge and confidence: a cyclist can know how to use a busy roundabout but not feel confident in doing so. Cycle training therefore has a role in providing an opportunity to practice and gain confidence.

The more confident cyclists, particularly in Focus Group 2, were more likely to say that they did not need cycle training since they had already learned what they needed through experience and reading. Furthermore, some of the 'good practice' they had learned, such as hopping onto the pavement, was illegal and could therefore not be expected to be included in cycle training. However, one example was given of a very confident cyclist who had had training and found that they had benefited from it. Such personal 'case studies' may prove powerful in promoting cycle training to the highly confident.

The context of cycling was also important to the participants. This included the physical environment and the behaviour of other road users. Not only was it seen as important that drivers, in particular, are well informed about how to give cyclists the space they need on the road, it was also considered important that drivers understand why cyclists make the manoeuvres they do. This was implied in the discussions: that the participants wanted to see that other road users were also being informed and trained, to the extent that this would give the participants reassurance when cycling. It was felt that an emphasis on cycle training risked implying that cyclist safety is purely the responsibility of the individual cyclist, but that knowing that other road users are also being targeted for training would help give reassurance that this was not the case. There was a sense, therefore, that being able to 'see that something was being done' about other road users would make the participants more predisposed to seeking cycle training.

It was felt that the term 'cycle training' isn't that helpful in promoting training. It is, the participants discussed, uninspiring and perhaps more suitable as a term for policy and research than for capturing the imagination of cyclists and potential cyclists. It had certain 'unwanted' connotations such as connections with sport training, and did not connect with the situation of the urban commuter. Even words like 'beginners' or 'advanced' were seen to be problematic: someone could have cycled for years on quiet roads but still be a 'beginner' in terms of urban commuting. Other terminology was explored, and words such as 'urban' and 'skills' were favoured: they were more accurate descriptors and connected more closely with the cycling experience of the participants.

To an extent, the discussions transcended the issue of terminology. In discussing ways to promote skills, confidence and responsible riding, the imaginations of the participants were not limited to 'cycle training' per se. That is, gaining skills does not necessarily require a cycle training course. Ways of 'packaging' cycle 'training' include information campaigns, demonstrations, social events and buddying. 'Trigger points', points at which cyclists and potential cyclists were more likely to be open to the idea of 'training', were also identified and included the point of bike purchase, enforcement programmes, and after a near miss on the road.

In the focus groups, a range of images were used as discussion prompts and these were useful in gaining an understanding of the different approaches to messaging that may be powerful in promoting cycle training. Photos of sport cyclists, for example, were generally not well received: they did not connect with the urban commuter experience and potentially created ambiguity in terms of what 'training' means. Group 2, the fast cyclists, warmed to these more, and recognised the high-profile sport cyclists as being part of their motivation for cycling; despite this, they did not see a strong connection between these and their commute.

Adverts featuring recreational cycling in city parks and open spaces were also seen not to connect with urban cycling. It was recognised, however, that it is important to show the fun, social and romantic side of cycling: there is a risk that cycle training images can characterise cycling as something dull and dangerous.

Shocking and negative images were also not well received. These, it was feared, would discourage cycling. This was especially the case with the 'smashed egg head' image and the 'ghost bikes', when the images gave no advice on how a cyclist should behave to avoid danger or reduce risk. In contrast, the advert relating to the lorry's blind spot, whilst also highlighting dangerous aspects of cycling, provided clear information on what the cyclist could do differently to mitigate the risk. This image also provided a 'teaser', a sense that there is more to learn, and this was felt to be something that could entice people, even those who 'already know everything', to consider cycle training.

Given the emphasis on improving the behaviour of drivers around cyclists, it is unsurprising that images emphasising shared responsibility on the road were well received. Conversely, adverts portraying 'stupid cyclists' and seemingly placing responsibility purely on individual cyclists were not.

More general cycling promotion images, related to health and financial benefits, were also discussed. Those cyclists who were already cycling for utility journeys were already aware of these. Group 3, who rarely cycle, were also

aware of the benefits but felt that these were insufficient to counterbalance their fear of cycling in traffic. There was no evidence from the discussions that these promotional materials motivated the Group 3 participants to seek cycle training, which may reflect the wider barriers to cycling.

There was some evidence that the absence of helmets on cyclists in promotional materials can detract from the authority of those images. Some participants reacted negatively, almost in disgust, when seeing non-helmeted cyclists. This does not imply that materials should only feature helmeted cyclists – there is significant research that questions the value of helmets in safety and highlights the risks that, by making cycling appear dangerous, an emphasis on helmets could lower cycling levels. However, the discussions do suggest that, such is the extent to which helmets have been established as part of 'essential' cycling equipment, promotional images featured unhelmeted cyclists may detract from the authority of the images and their creator.

6.4   Recommendations for Communicating Cycle Training

A set of recommendations arises from this study and reflects its findings.

Cycle training in the context of cycling promotion:

- The benefits of cycle training should be recognised and valued. Fear of traffic, and lack of confidence around other road users, is one of the major barriers to utility cycling. Cycle training has a role to play in building knowledge of good cycling and creating opportunities to develop skills and confidence.

- Cycle training should be promoted in the context of other efforts to address the behaviour of other road users and measures to improve the cycling environment (and there should be genuine improvements to report). Funding cycle training in isolation risks implying that the responsibility lies solely with the cyclist, rather than that safety is the responsibility of all road users and that quality infrastructure is essential.

Communicating cycle training:

- Communications need to explain to target audiences what cycle training can offer and why it is relevant to them.

- The diversity of the potential audience for cycle training promotion should be recognised and materials should be targeted. The research suggests that the three segments around which it is structured (Utility Cyclists, Sporty Cyclists and Traffic-free Cyclists) are valuable in understanding differing requirements of and attitudes towards cycle training.

- In promoting cycle training, existing skills and knowledge should be recognised and valued. These may have been gathered from experience, reading or skill-sharing. It should not be assumed, however, that existing skills and practices are appropriate – existing cyclists may have developed techniques that contradict those taught in cycle training.

- Cycle training promotion should emphasise the shared responsibility of all road users towards each other.

- New ways of describing and presenting cycle training should be considered and these should be motivational and aspirational. They should reflect the emphasis on skills in traffic and on the experience of urban cycling and be wary of unwanted connotations of the term 'training' with sport cycling.

- Responsible cycling should be promoted in ways that connect with the fun and relaxing elements of cycling and reflect the fact that not everyone is a serious 'cyclist' or sees this as part of their identity.

- Shocking and negative imagery should be avoided in promoting responsible cycling; where it is used it should be complemented by clear advice that presents an 'alternative'.

- The potential of 'teasers' and 'sound bites' in promotional materials should be explored. There is an opportunity to show potential trainees that there is more they can learn about cycling and to entice them to take cycle training.

- Creative ways to package cycle training should be explored; for example, by including it with, or as elements of, events and social occasions. Whilst it may not apply to everyone, there is a suggestion that 'learning together' is attractive.

- In order to appeal to a wide audience, a balance of helmeted and non-helmeted cyclists should be included in promotional images.

6.5   Practical steps for BikeRight! and other training providers

Messages

- It is not only those who lack that confidence who stand to benefit from cycle training.

- All people who cycle can benefit from cycle training - challenging the perception that it is 'not for them'.

- Cycle training has an important role to play alongside the development of better infrastructure, road design and other factors. It is part of a package of measures aiming to improve the experience of cycling.

- An emphasis on cycle training does not imply that the responsibility for safety falls only on the cyclist. It is being delivered alongside programmes aimed at other road users.

- On the one hand, existing cyclists already have a range of skills and practices that should be recognised and valued. On the other, these are not necessarily conducive to 'good' cycling.

- Cycle training is about equipping people to cycle confidently in traffic; it is not training for endurance or sport cycling.

Presentation

- Avoid imagery that doesn't connect with the urban cycling experience. Show cycling as something that can be relaxing and enjoyable.

- Avoid negative imagery, particularly relating to vulnerable and reckless cycling, unless combined with clear advice on how dangerous situations can be avoided.

- Teasers – that is, snippets of information that imply that the audience has more to learn – are ways of communicating good practice and prompting cyclists to consider whether they might benefit from training.

- Explore creative ways to package cycle training, e.g. as social events and fun rides.

- Use of mixture of helmeted and non-helmeted cyclists in materials.

- Avoid the word 'cyclist' in promotional materials, referring instead the activity 'cycling'.

The groups

- 'Traffic-free' cyclists may be aware of the health and wider benefits of cycling but lack confidence in cycling on the road. They do not necessarily accept that cycle training will give them the skills needed to overcome this.

- 'Utility cyclists' stand to benefit from increased confidence in their day-to-day cycling that may enable them to cycle in more challenging situation and tackle longer distances.

- 'Sport cyclists' may be open to the idea of cycle training whilst also being confident and valuing the skills they have gained through personal experience.

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Appendix A: The National Cycle Training Standard

The National Cycle Training Standard was developed by over 20 cycling and road safety organisations and is maintained by the professional body for cycle training, the Cycle Training Standards Board (CTSB). All members of the CTSB, including BikeRight!, are the UK's leading bodies in cycling.

By establishing the National Standard curriculum, the Government has set out a nationwide, uniform programme of formal cycle training which will reassure those wanting to cycle that they have been instructed in the essential skills and procedures wherever they live in England.

The National Standard is based upon 4 main principles:

1. Cycle training should be delivered in realistic conditions

This means delivering cycle training on the road. In the late 1990s research instigated by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) suggested that cycle training undergone primarily on the road gave better results than trying to duplicate this training in a traffic-free location.

2. Train people in such a way that they can understand the parameters of cycling in traffic and make the decisions themselves

The training takes place in real conditions with the instructor presenting the parameters and guiding the trainees to make the correct decisions regarding positioning and how and when to cycle.

3. Increasing complexity both of outcomes, training venues and environment

The cycle training must be delivered mainly on the road but, as the skill of the trainee progresses, individuals must be moved to more demanding situations, both in traffic conditions and manoeuvres performed. This change in conditions is needed to continuously test and improve skills.

4. Not to give strict guidelines on how to perform manoeuvres

As the road environment changes, so should a cyclist's road positioning and movement change. The basis of

high-quality cycle training is to give trainees the skills to decide how to perform each manoeuvre or part of a trip, dependent upon the parameters that trainees can observe and assess.

Three levels of training

National Standard Cycle Training is available at three levels as well as Learn to Ride courses:

Level 1

A Level 1 course is for those who can ride a bike but are not very confident about their cycling abilities. A Level 1 course is delivered in a safe traffic-free environment. Trainees pick up the skills and knowledge needed to go down to the local park or to take a trip out in the countryside with friends and family.

Level 2

Level 2 courses boost confidence, skill and cycling technique for today's traffic. This training is delivered on quiet roads with some traffic, where trainees have the opportunity to practice the theory of on-road cycling.

Level 3

Level 3 is often delivered as a one-to-one course to teach how to tackle busy roads and junctions with ease and confidence.

This summary was provided by BikeRight!

Appendix B: Web-based Questionnaire

Survey on Cycling in Greater Manchester win - £100 voucher!

Thank you for visiting this survey. It is being conducted by Graeme Sherriff at the Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit in association with BikeRight!

This questionnaire is for people who cycle in Greater Manchester, whether occasionally or everyday and whether for work, fun or sport.

Participants get to enjoy the warm glow of knowing they are contributing to getting more people cycling confidently, and the even warmer glow of being entered into a prize draw to win an £100 shopping voucher.

The questionnaire should take you no more than 15 minutes. At the end of the questionnaire, you are given the opportunity to volunteer to take part in a focus group to discuss adult cycle training further.

The survey is part of a study that aims to

a) improve understanding of the barriers to utility cycling and to the take up of adult cycle training; and

b) develop recommendations for communication strategies that will encourage adults to access cycle training courses.

If you have any questions concerning this survey, please contact Graeme on g.sherriff@salford.ac.uk

The deadline for responses is 27th October 2013.

Thank you.

1. In which age group are you?

■ 16-19, 20-25, 26-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 70+

2. What is your gender?

■ male, female, prefer not to say

3. In which area do you live?

■ Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan, Outside of Greater Manchester

4. How did you find out about this survey? (If via an email list, please mention which one if known.)

5. Approximately how often do you cycle for utility?

■ every day, several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less often, never

6. Approximately how often do you cycle for fun or leisure?

■ every day, several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less often, never

7. Approximately how often do you cycle for sport?

■ every day, several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less often, never

8. In relation to your cycling activity, do you know any of the following?

■ How far you cycle, on average, in total over a week, in miles.

■ The furthest distance you have cycled in one trip, in miles.

■ Your fastest speed on the road, in miles per hour.

■ The value of your bike, in pounds. (If you have more than one, please choose the most expensive.)

9. Thinking about safety around traffic, in which of the following environments are you confident to cycle at busy times? (Please tick all that apply.)

■ Residential roads with a little traffic

■ Moderately busy roads with on-road cycle lanes

■ Moderately busy roads without cycle lanes

■ Busy roads with on-road cycle lanes

■ Busy roads without cycle lanes

■ None of the above (i.e. not confident cycling on roads)

10. How confident are you in dealing with the following situations when cycling?

■ Turning right at a busy junction

■ Using a busy roundabout

■ Sharing a dual carriageway with fast traffic

■ Making turns on multi-lane roads

Options given for each of these:

■ Very confident – no need to avoid

■ Reasonably confident would use, but prefer an alternative

■ Slightly confident – tend to avoid

■ Not confident – always avoid

■ Don't know

11. Have you received cycle training as an adult (over 16) in the last five years? If yes, which level(s)? (Please tick all that apply)

For more information on what Adult Cycle Training is and what is available, see the BikeRight! website.

■ Learn to ride

■ Level 1

■ Level 2

■ Level 3

■ No, I have not received cycle training as an adult.

12. If you have had cycle training as an adult, would you say it has influenced your cycling? (Please tick all that apply.)

■ Not applicable (I haven't received cycle training as an adult)

■ Encouraged me to cycle longer distances

■ Encouraged me to cycle more often

■ Helped me feel safer when cycling on the road

■ Helped me feel more confident when cycling on the road

■ Other (please specify)

13. If you haven't had cycle training as an adult, which of the following statements best describes your reasons why not? (Please tick all that apply.)

■ I do not have enough time.

■ I could not / cannot afford to.

■ It is not available to me.

■ I intend to but haven't yet.

■ I don't need it.

■ Other (please specify)

14. Would you consider taking adult cycle training, or more advanced training, if it were freely available to you?

■ Yes / no

15. If you answered 'yes' to question 14, what would convince you to do so?

16. If you answered 'no' to question 14, why not?

17. Would you be prepared to take part in a focus group on cycling and cycle training? It will take up to two hours and take place in Manchester City Centre in late October or early November. A shopping voucher will be provided as a reward for participants.

■ Yes/no

18. Would you like to receive a copy of the results by email?

■ Yes/no
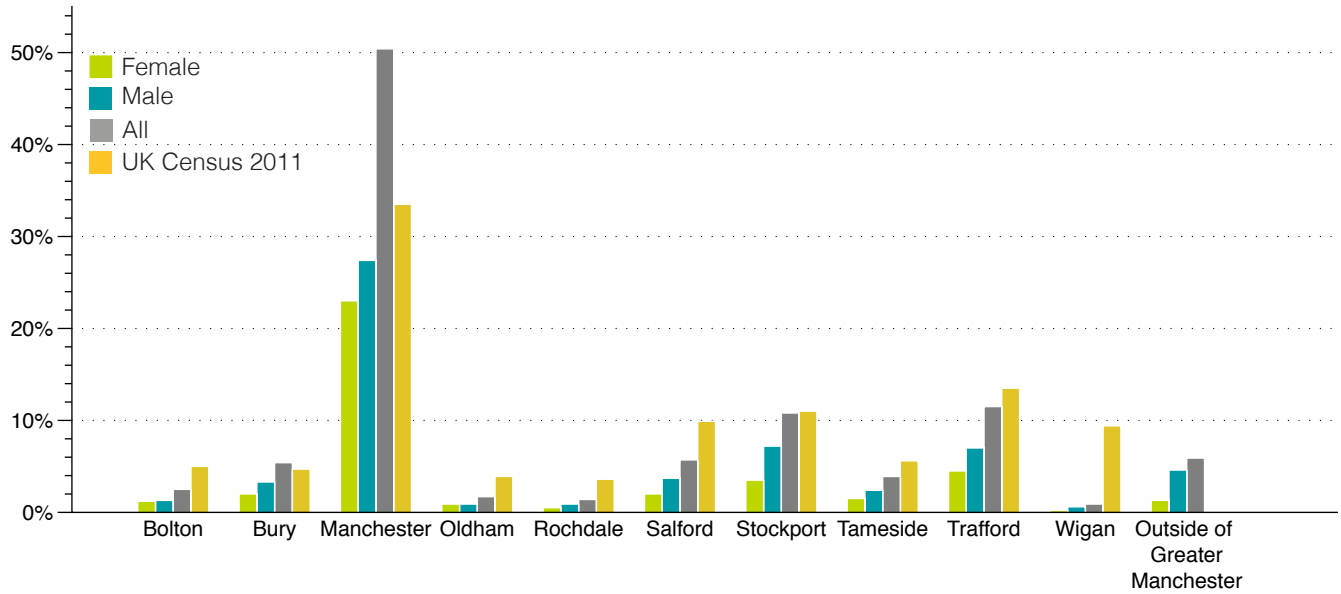
Appendix C: Survey Respondents

Figure C1 - Place of residence of respondents, as % of gender, together with % distribution of people giving cycling as main travel to work mode in UK Census 2011.
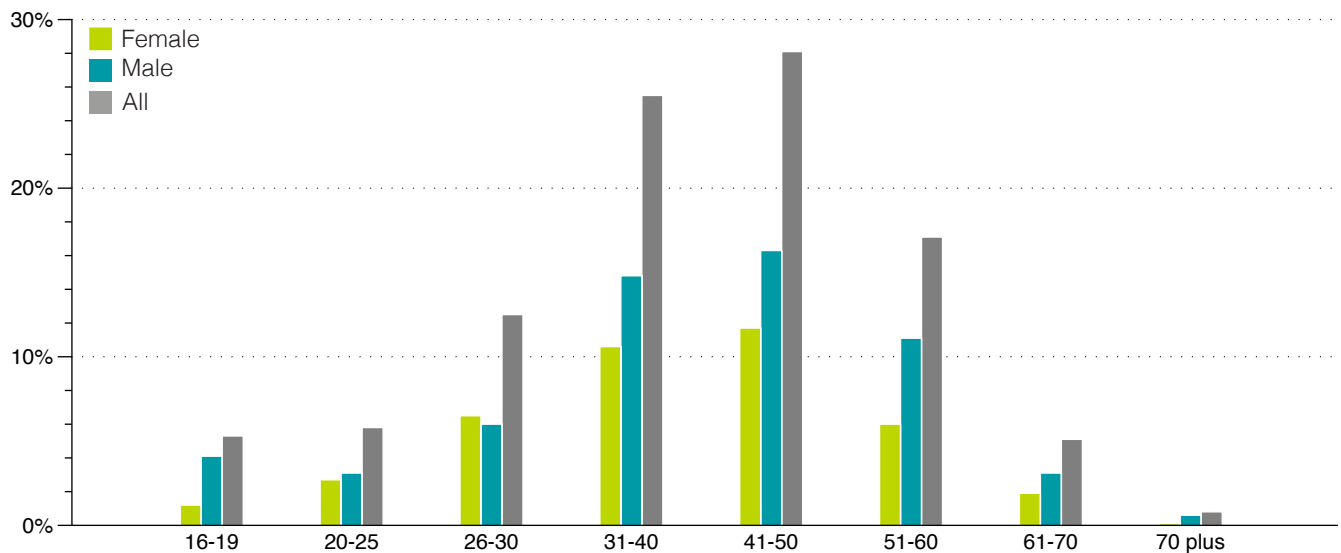

Figure C2 - Age and gender of respondents

Appendix D: 'Ice Breaker' Drawings

In this appendix, reproductions of the images drawn as part of the 'ice breaker' exercise in the focus groups are presented, together with a commentary on how they would be interpreted by a National Standard instructor.

The reproductions of the participant drawings and the interpretation of their manoeuvres have been provided by BikeRight! trainers.

Focus Group 1 – Utility Cyclists

Figure D1 gives the National Standard guidance on making a right-hand turn. In these diagrams traffic is moving from left to right. Focus Group 1 participants each drew how they would make this turn and these approaches can be grouped into two options, as shown in Figure D2.

The National Standard advises the cyclist to establish primary position in the nearside lane before moving into primary position in the outside lane and then making the turn.

Figure D2 (top) presents one of the approaches to turning right suggested by the participants in Group 1, the 'Utility Cyclists'. The difference between this manoeuvre and that recommended in the National Standard is that the cyclist does not establish primary position in the nearside lane before moving into the outside lane.

In the other approach suggested by the participants, Figure D2 (bottom), the cyclist puts himself or herself into a 'no man's land' position where they are vulnerable to being passed by traffic on both sides, possibly at speed and possibly intending to turn right across the path of the cyclist. Establishing primary position earlier, in the nearside lane, would make it clearer to other traffic that the person intends to make a manoeuvre, in this case turning right.
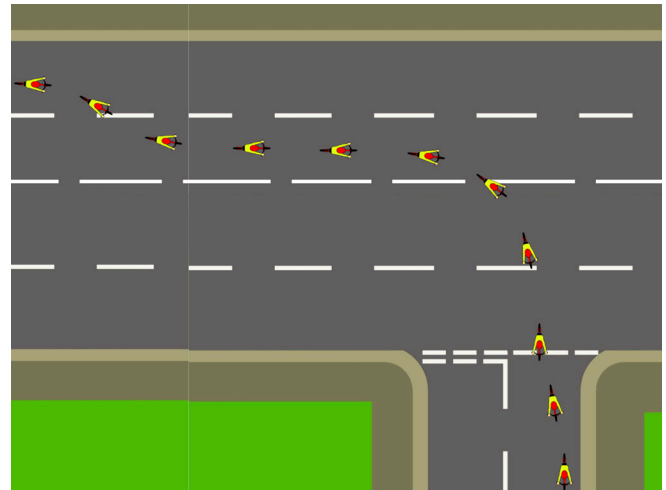

Figure D1 Making a right turn, as set out in the National Cycle Training Standard.
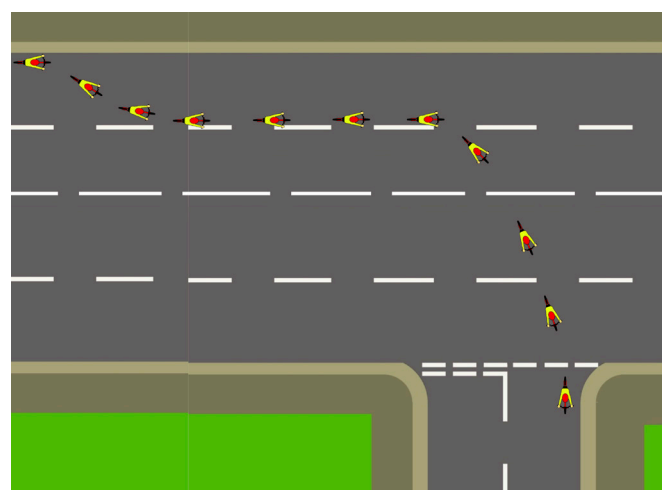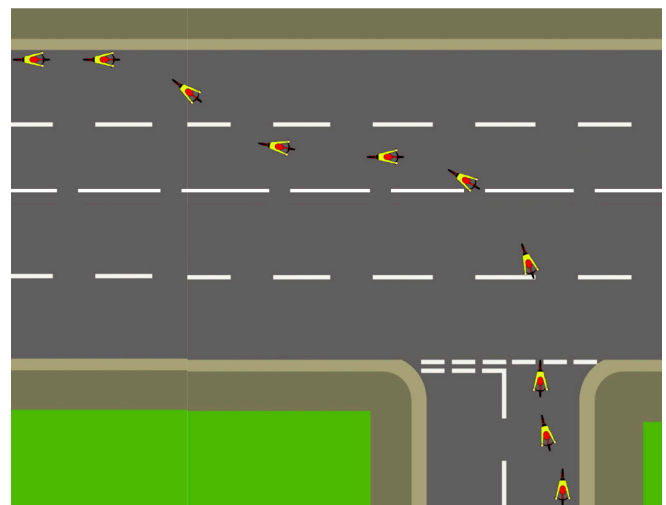

Figure D2 Making a right turn, as drawn by Focus Group 1 participants.

Focus Group 2 – Sporty Cyclists

Focus Group 2 participants each drew how they would make this turn and these approaches can be grouped into two options, as shown in Figure D3.

These images indicate that they are not 'controlling' the traffic around them on the road and could be putting themselves in positions of vulnerability, and that they would therefore benefit from training in how to use assertive road positioning at junctions.
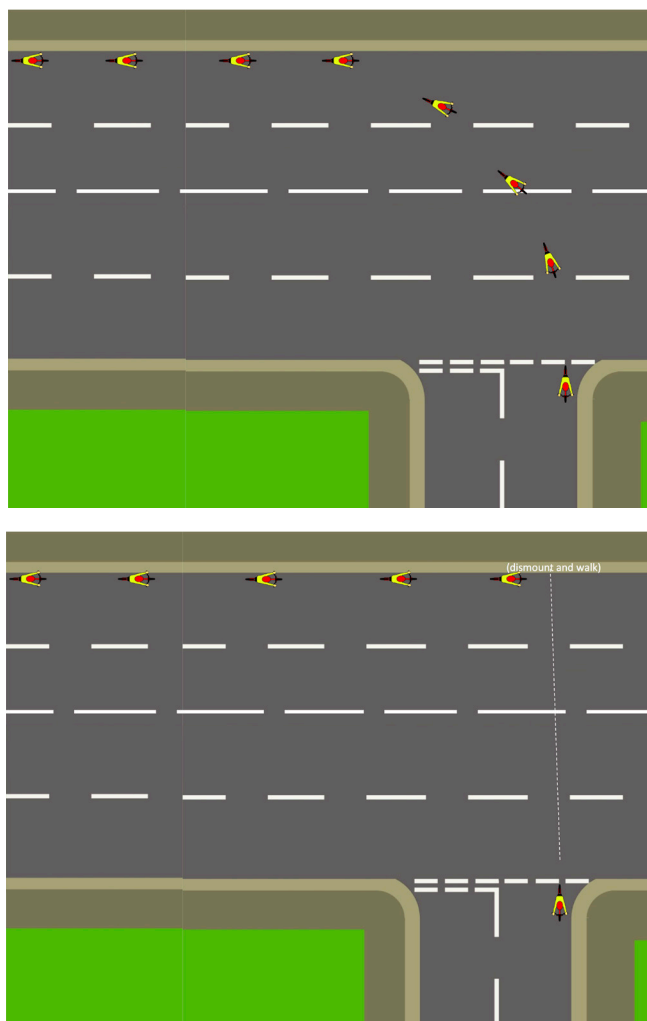

Figure D3 Making a right turn, as drawn by Focus Group 2 participants.

Focus Group 3 – Traffic-free Cyclists

Focus Group 3 participants were asked to indicate where they position themselves on the road when riding normally.

Figure D3 depicts secondary position, as described in the National Standard. Group 3 participants, the 'traffic-free cyclists', indicated that they would tend to cycle so that they were 'hugging the kerb', as shown in Figure D4. It is likely that traffic will simply drive past, often at speed, without changing its 'line' or position on the road, and that this would result in the cyclist being passed by vehicles that are too close.
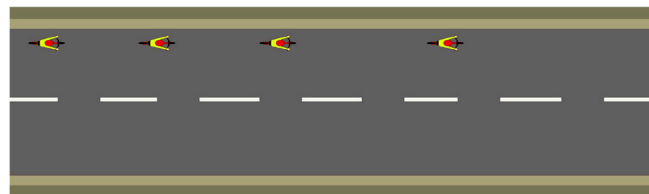

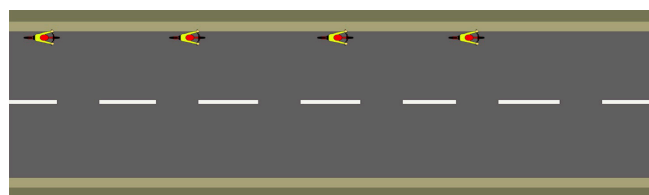**Figure D3 National Cycle Training Standard guidance on road positioning.**

Figure D4 Road positioning when cycling normally, as drawn by Group 3 participants.

For more information about this study please contact the author.

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