

LEARNING VISIT REPORT
Bikeworks CIC 12235

<p>1.1 Date of visit: 25 January 2017</p>	<p>1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer: Tim Wilson and Alison Gowman (Chairman)</p>	<p>1.3 People met with: Ben Preston (Development Director)</p>
<p>1.4 Programme Area & Outcomes: Making London More Inclusive</p>		
<p>1.5 Purpose of the award: £90,000 over three years (£38,500; £31,000; £20,500) for the cost of a Training Coordinator (37.5hrs per week) and a contribution to the costs of a disability cycling programme.</p>		
<p>MONITORING INFORMATION</p>		
<p>2.1 Project Outcome 1: Achieve a demonstrable positive improvement in the physical health and well-being of at least 80% of participants = approximately 800 disabled people per annum</p> <p>Progress made: From an initial base of 600 participants, City Bridge Trust funding supported Bikeworks to extend its reach to 1,000 people within 12 months to over 1,400 by the end of the second year of the project. This growth comes from the 5 new clubs opened by the CIC across London. Having begun work in Little Wormwood Scrubs Bikeworks has now developed activities in Victoria Park and the Olympic Velodrome. Whilst many participants are regular attendees there is scope for drop-ins and taster attendance. Participant progress (5,500 sessional users took part in the second year) is routinely monitored with records stored in a newly developed database. As well as regular clubs the organisation's "Cycling for Health Festival" promoted the physical and mental health benefits of cycling, using competitive and fun events to engage a wider audience.</p>		
<p>2.2 Project Outcome 2: Establish quality benchmarks in all ability cycling provision & professionalism (which will also inform other fledgling all ability cycling programmes)</p> <p>Progress made: From the beginning of the Trust's grant Bikeworks has developed its All Ability instructor and volunteer training programmes, preparing structured course materials and (by the end of year 1) gaining City and Guilds accreditation. Bikeworks offers a wide range of adapted cycles to suit participants with varying degrees of physical and learning disabilities. As well as standard cycles, there are also trikes, recumbents and wheelchair-carrying bikes, all available in sufficient numbers to minimise waiting times for participants looking to take their turns. Instructors provide advice on bike selection and cycling technique. The session which we observed emphasised fun, but it was clear that instructors knew the participants well and encouraged progress.</p>		
<p>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</p>		

Establish pathways to competitive cycling for disabled people (especially learning disabilities) which will continue to enable more disabled cyclists to engage in and benefit from competitive cycling.

Progress made:

Bikeworks runs Adult Cycle training both at its clubs and through outreach to venues such as day centres in order to provide introductions for prospective participants in its All Ability cycling. These clubs are currently the main focus of the work funded by City Bridge Trust and offer participation tailored to the needs and interests of each user. Whilst many can and do attend simply for fun (as well as the associated health benefits) Bikeworks has run competitive events at the Olympic Park for both its regular club members and new participants. The use of the Lee Valley Velopark has helped provide inspiration to riders not only for its setting but also through the challenge arising from negotiating slalom courses. Bikeworks has run some events alongside British Cycling and continues to develop pathways to competitive cycling for those who are interested to pursue this.

GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS

The Victoria Park club event which we saw was well-attended despite the cold weather and highlighted the excellent relationship between staff, volunteers and participants. A steady flow of people arrived during the hour we were on site and the bikes were in use throughout with minimal waiting time for the club members. Bikeworks has promoted its services via local partners such as day centres, and taken care to monitor the extent to which participation is reflective of the local community. For example, in East London, recognition that few Muslim women attended the clubs led Bikeworks to recruit a new volunteer who could lead female-only cycling session, leading in turn to an uptake in participation from this community.

Bikeworks wishes to extend its operations to other venues, and did (thanks to an introduction made by the Trust) work with the International Centre for Social Franchising's Scale Accelerator programme during the second year of grant. The biggest impediment to growth is finding secure storage for the, often large, bikes needed to run All Ability cycling clubs. Bikeworks is exploring a mobile delivery service that would allow easy transport of its equipment from the Bethnal Green base, but this will require an upfront investment in adapted transport. The idea was presented to City Bridge and UBS' Stepping Stones Fund in a recent round without success, but feedback was given on how the model could be developed and it is to be hoped that Bikeworks can realise its ambitions given not only the number of people it has supported through the current grant, but the evident enjoyment of the participants we saw in Victoria Park.