



Liverpool on the Move!

Summary and Evaluation Report

Organised by The REACT Project and Liverpool Sport Action Zone,
with Heal 8, Cycling Projects, Liverpool City Council
and The Mersey Forest

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Background to REACT Nationally

The national REACT programme comprises seven projects developed by The Countryside Agency, and rigorously monitored by them. Termed REACT (Regeneration through Environmental ACTION), the aim is to integrate community forestry and its approach into existing area based initiatives. The seven initiatives are funded for three years.

Background to REACT in Liverpool

The REACT project in Liverpool is a partnership between Central Liverpool Primary Care Trust (CLPCT), The Countryside Agency and The Mersey Forest Project. It aims to minimise the risk of cardiovascular disease and obesity within three high-risk communities in five wards in the Central Liverpool area by involving them in community forest type projects that will also raise their awareness of, and interest in, The Mersey Forest.

The target communities are black and minority ethnic groups, young people and disabled people. By working with people to overcome their barriers to engaging in physical activity, it is hoped that a more diverse range of people will participate in activities appropriate to their individual interest and level.

“My kids had great fun and want to take part in afternoon cycles.”

All partners accept that community forestry has a role to play in reducing health inequalities and this innovative intervention may have an important role in combating the UK's current 'inactivity epidemic'.

The promotion of cycling is one of a small number of themes chosen to deliver the REACT in Liverpool work programme. Cycling was identified as being a suitable activity to promote for the following reasons:

- It is suitable for people not used to high levels of activity, as the individual sets the pace.
- It is a relatively cheap activity to sustain, once the initial purchase of the bike has been made. (Cheap bikes – stolen and not reclaimed – are available at a fortnightly auction in Liverpool City Centre.)
- It is a suitable activity to promote to the three REACT target groups (a low cost bike rental scheme exists using specially adapted bikes and Liverpool Voluntary Society for the Blind do escorted tandem rides.)
- It is an activity that could get more people out into the green spaces within their local area – and this may be the first step toward getting them involved in community forestry.



Cycling and Health

The problems of inactivity and obesity are currently top of the agenda, and both are linked with poor health.

The number of adults who are classified as obese in the UK has roughly doubled since the 1980s. Nationally, 63% of men and 75% of women do not meet the recommended guidelines on physical activity, (levels recommended to improve cardio respiratory fitness and decrease the risk of coronary heart disease.) Deprived groups are twice as likely to be sedentary as the most affluent communities. (Health Development Agency – online 12/05/04)

The World Health authority states

“there are major opportunities for achieving large health gains for the European population by increasing levels of routine physical activity. Walking and cycling as means of daily transport can be a most effective strategy to achieve these gains.”

(World Health Organisation, Regional Office for Europe 2002)

The Local Authority Performance on Cycling produced by the English Regions Cycling Development Team (2003) details the situation in Liverpool:

“Any culture of cycling has been lost and currently about 90% of cyclists are adult males... Liverpool needs to nurture a cycling culture... The City Council needs to engage with Health Bodies.”

*“Good day,
friendly and informative,
like to see more of.”*

Rationale behind ‘Liverpool on the Move!’

Against this background, the REACT project proposed a small series of bike – based schemes intended to encourage more people, especially those from black and minority ethnic communities, to increase their physical activity, and thereby their health, through cycling.

A multi-agency networking group was formed consisting of representatives from the following organisations:

- CLPCT’s Bicycle Users Group
- Cycling Projects
- Heal 8
- Liverpool City Council
- Liverpool Sports Action Zone
- Local residents hoping to set up a community transport initiative
- The REACT Project

In discussions, it became clear that for the majority of the population, cycling was not on the agenda. A decision was taken to put on a community event to raise awareness of the health benefits of cycling and physical activity in general, and to help people overcome some of their barriers. The REACT project officer led, with support given by the individuals and organisations listed in the Appendix 4.

A bid was submitted for the Primary Care Trust’s Community Chest Fund, however this was unsuccessful. All funding was therefore provided by The REACT Project, but with many organisations supporting by giving their time or skills.

“Love these events.”

Publicity and Promotion

A PR Agency (Olivia Assheton PR) was recruited to manage publicity. A press release was written and this was circulated widely to local press. From this, the REACT Project officer was invited to do a live interview on Radio Merseyside on the 'drive time show'.

Additionally, one thousand colour A5 leaflets and 300 A3 posters were produced with the graphic design work provided free by Liverpool Health Promotion Service and translations into five languages were provided free by Mr Sam Semoff of Toxteth Health and Community Care Forum. These were circulated to:

- Twelve bike shops in the area.
- All Practices and Health Centres in Central Liverpool PCT (62).
- Shops and businesses on Smithdown Road, Aigburth Road, Lark Lane and Lodge Lane.
- All schools within the three key wards.
- All community groups and individuals with which either REACT, SAZ or Heal 8 have worked (Total 108).

Finally, a list of people was drawn up to receive a personal invitation (Total 32).

"This was a fab day – kids have fun, Mum and dads have fun – thank you."

"Very good, useful and fun, thank you!"



Aims and Objectives



Aim

To promote the health benefits of regular physical activity, especially cycling, to communities within the CLPCT area, in particular to those most at risk of health problems due to inactivity, in a way that emphasises use of local green spaces.

“Good fun. Entertaining and educational.”

Objectives

1. To raise awareness of the health benefits of physical activity by:
 - Providing a range of staffed, interactive stalls where health information is available.
2. To remind people that cycling is a fun way to increase physical activity by:
 - Providing a range of taster activities, such as the compu-trainer, tandems, group cycling, cycle based quizzes, etc.
3. To highlight existing opportunities to cycle within the CLPCT area by:
 - Providing free cycle maps of Liverpool and information about Merseyside Cycling Campaign.
 - Promoting Merseytravel ‘Bike Time!’ escorted rides.
 - Providing information on existing bike clubs.
4. To encourage people to cycle as safely as they are able by:
 - Promoting safe cycling routes in Liverpool and support from Liverpool City Council’s Cycling Officer.
 - Providing free bike tagging from Merseyside Police.
 - Introducing people to Merseyside Police’s bike based officers.
 - Providing free bike doctoring and advice on repairs.
5. To make people aware of the availability of affordable cycles by:
 - Advertising the fortnightly bike auctions.
 - Raising awareness of the Homeground bike-recycling project.
 - Raising awareness of the bike hire scheme based at Greenbank Sports Academy.

The Event

'Liverpool on the Move' was held at the Greenbank Sports Academy, just outside of the target wards and was chosen for its proximity to Sefton Park (for led rides and health walks) and for its accessibility for disabled people. It also allowed for temporary bike parking in the car park, use of the on-site café for refreshments and lunch for participants (via a voucher system) and use of the outside areas for Tai Chi.

The day ran from 10.00am until 4.00pm and was fairly busy the whole day – without either lulls or rushes. Approximately 350 people attended the event, many in family groups and the high level of attendance from BME groups was noticeable.

The majority of stalls and activities were located in the large sports hall, and were divided into two sections: 'bike-based' and 'other'. Activities that took place elsewhere were bike tagging by Merseyside Police (due to the use of acid in the process of marking the bikes), the Tai Chi and Chi Kung demonstration (in the Courtyard, away from potential noise distractions) and the escorted rides and walks in the park.

People were free to wander around and look at the stalls and to take part in any of the following activities, some of which were timetabled:

1. Health stalls

- Building Bridges
- Five a Day (North Liverpool PCT)
- Glaxo
- National Blood Transfusion Service
- REACT/SAZ/Heal 8/Liverpool Health Promotion Service
- The Dental Service
- Toxteth Health and Community Care Forum and Multicultural Diabetes Forum

2. Health activities

- Absolute Harmony – reiki and massage taster sessions
- Tai Chi and Chi Kung taster sessions
- Blood pressure monitoring (Cardiac Advisory Nurse – CLPCT)

3. Bike stalls

- Homeground (Bike recycling project)
- Liverpool City Council – Cycling Officer
- Merseyside Cycling Campaign
- Merseyside Travelwise

4. Bike activities

- Bike doctor
- Chevron – taster of four wheeled bikes etc.
- Computrainer (Sefton MBC's virtual 'Tour de France')
- Escorted bike rides in the park
- Tandem rides
- Bike treasure hunt

5. Other stalls

- Liverpool City Council Ranger Service
- The Mersey Forest Project
- St John's Ambulance

6. Other activities

- Bouncy castle
- Face painting
- Visits by Merseyside Police
- Vegetarian Society food tasters

Financial Report

Income

A bid was submitted for PCT Community Chest funding to cover 50% of estimated costs. However, this was unsuccessful.

Two organisations generously jointly funded an interactive workshop from Squash Nutrition:

- Liverpool City Council (Highways Management Dept.) £700
- Heart of Mersey £600

The remainder of costs were covered from The REACT budget.

In-kind contributions

Many other organisations donated their time to attend the event and to support with planning. Many also brought freebies to hand out on the day. These have not been listed due to the difficulties of making an accurate estimation but the main supporters were:

- Cycle Projects
- Greenbank Sports Academy
- Heal 8
- Liverpool Sport Action Zone
- The Mersey Forest Team
- Toxteth Health and Community Care Forum

"I enjoyed it and would like to come again."

Expenditure

Workshops:

Bike doctors	£170
Bouncy castle	£35
Cycle Projects	£715
Cycle simulator	£150
Face painting	£80
Five a day	£10
Massage and reiki	£250
Rickshaw	£260
St John's Ambulance	£47
Tai Chi	£60
Vegetarian Society	£100
Subtotal	£1877

Other costs:

Venue hire (Greenbank Academy)	£464
Publicity (leaflets and posters)	£255
Public Relations	£790
Hire of tables, seats etc.	£253
Lunch for participants	£252
Subtotal	£2014

TOTAL COST OF EVENT (ex. officer time) £3891

Outcomes

The total cost of the event was just under £4,000 excluding 'in kind' contributions, and project officer time. Against this, the health and other outcomes were as follows:

- 300-400 people attended event – all of whom were exposed to a variety of health information etc.
- 24 people had their blood pressure monitored, three of whom were advised to see their GP, one as a matter of urgency.
- 30 bikes were tagged by Merseyside Police at the event, with many more taking bikes along subsequently for tagging. This may result in more people cycling.
- Approximately 30 bikes were repaired by the bike doctors, around half of which were unusable beforehand. This will almost certainly result in more people cycling.
- 141 people participated in the 'Spring Up' stall held by Squash Nutrition where they stated what they do to keep their heart happy and healthy, planted a pot of herb seeds to take home and received a healthy recipe card.
- Nine people took a step-o-meter (pedometer) on loan and all have been contacted since this to encourage them to keep walking. This may result in more people being aware of the level of daily activity they do, and possibly increasing this.
- One person's evaluation form was randomly drawn to win a bike and this has been awarded to a young resident from Liverpool 8, along with information on where to cycle locally.
- One person chose the name of our logo (Buzz) and won a goody bag from The Mersey Forest.



Pledges

As a way of measuring change in behaviour, people were asked to record what they were planning to do differently following the event. Obviously this does not measure actual change in behaviour, only stated intent, however it is an indication of impact. To keep things simple, people were asked to put stickers next to a list of statements grouped under four headings. A full list of results is listed in the appendices. The summary is as follows:

There were:

- 17 pledges to do 'something around bike safety' (ie wear a helmet)
- 49 pledges to do 'something active' (ie cycle to work)
- 22 pledges to do 'something practical' (ie buy a bike)
- 40 pledges to do 'something social' (ie join a bike club)

There were 128 pledges in total.

Evaluation

A summary of all evaluation forms is given in Appendix 1.

All of the 84 people who filled in an evaluation form said that they had enjoyed the event, with the most commonly chosen two reasons being 'It was fun' and 'It was a good way to find out about keeping healthy' (63 and 62 people). Nobody ticked the box marked 'I did not learn anything new'. The split between those who felt that they would cycle 'more as a result of the event', and those who thought they would cycle 'about the same amount' was fairly even – possibly as lots of people cycled fairly regularly already.

The main reason given by people who stated that they did not cycle as much as they would like was 'being afraid of the traffic' and there 'not being enough cycle lanes'. When asked if they would consider taking part in local cycle rides, 59 people ticked 'yes' while 12 people ticked 'no' – presumably, some of those who were not interested are cycling already. The 'Comments, compliments and complaints' section where people were able to add any comments at all, is reproduced in full in Appendix 2.



Learning Outcomes

Reaching target groups

Of the 84 people who completed a feedback form, 25% self classified their ethnicity as being other than 'White British'. Although this is quite high, underreporting may have occurred due to language difficulties. This high level of participation by BME communities is probably attributable to the involvement of the local Health Forum who ran a front page feature, translated into five community languages, in their newsletter advertising the event.

Just under 10% of respondents self classified as 'disabled', and this figure seems a little low given the venue, and the effort made to advertise the event to various disability support groups. In the future, other strategies will need to be adopted to ensure that disabled people are made aware of events, feel that they will be welcomed and have to opportunity to discuss any concerns that may keep them from participating.

The same percentage were under 18 years of age – however this does not accurately reflect reality as many people came in family groups with just one adult completing a form for the whole group. If the event were to be repeated, a wider scope of activities for younger children would be needed, such as a mini trike track.

The other main group that the event was targeted at were inactive people (of all types) and to attempt to evaluate this, people were asked to define themselves in terms of their activity. According to the feedback, around a third said they were doing 'less physical activity than is recommended', a third thought they were doing 'the right amount' and a third thought they 'exceeded the recommended levels'. According to research carried out by the Walking the Way to Health Initiative, 80% of both men and women of all ages believed themselves to be fit and the majority incorrectly believed that they did enough exercise to keep fit.

So generally, people tend to over-estimate how much physical activity they do. In this case however, overestimates may only partly explain the results – another factor was that the event had actually attracted a high number of cyclists who were generally fairly active.

This is disappointing as a lot of effort had been put into making the event attractive to non-cyclists (new cyclists, potential cyclists, and people who hadn't cycled for a long time) and this had obviously not worked as well as had been expected. If the event were to be repeated on an annual basis, the ratio of cyclists would probably reduce, as word of mouth helped to promote it as a fun, family day out.



Organisation

The organisation of the day went as planned despite a few setbacks (neither the PA system nor temporary marquee worked). In future, more effort will be put into recruiting volunteers, and this should help with smooth running – as people could then be allocated a series of tasks for the day. Further zoning off of areas within the hall may have minimised the risk of accidents, and several stall holders requested that in future the bike based activities and stalls be mixed with the 'general health' ones. Other stall holders requested a floor plan to help with locating their space upon arrival.

Evaluation

Feedback forms – were very useful, but omitted to include a question on how people had heard about the event, and a question about whether they had heard of The Mersey Forest. Both questions have since been included and will be useful for planning the promotion of future events to specific groups, and for measuring awareness levels. Having a prize was also a useful incentive to fill in the forms, but the main thing that would have encouraged more people to complete the forms would have been having a person at the evaluation table all day actively encouraging people to do this and helping those who needed it.

Dictaphone – was also a good idea but would have been better implemented if volunteers had been specifically allocated to the task, rather than only being able to do it when time allowed.

Pledges – as a measure of intent, this was very valuable, and the way that the pledges had been divided down into four themes worked very well. More use could have been made of this if the pledge wheels were located somewhere more prominently and a member of staff had been allocated to encourage people to participate. If there had been a way for people to have kept a copy of their pledge, then this may have encouraged them to carry it out.

Feedback from stallholders was something that was not carried out other than informally, and this may have been useful for planning future events – however, it feels slightly onerous at the end of a hard day's work.

Promotion

Promoting a cycling event to non-cyclists was always going to be difficult, but 300–400 people did actually attend. However, despite writing to the twelve most local bike shops and also sending copies of the poster, none showed any interest in the event either as a sponsor or a stall holder and the lack of retail opportunities was something that people commented on during the day. Following the success of this event, they may be more interested in attending future activities, and this is something that should be encouraged.

The interest shown by the local press was disappointing too. Although the PR company promoted the event heavily to the local media, only one free local newspaper mentioned the event, (and gave incorrect details too.) The feature on Radio Merseyside attracted some participants, but the best publicity came from the local Health Forum. One stall holder suggested advertising future events at local Slimming Clubs – a strategy that had not previously been considered. The marquee that should have been in the adjacent park would have greatly helped with promoting the event to park users, and if the event were to be repeated this should be considered as an option.

*"I am going to buy a bike
and ride it in the park
and along Otterspool."*



Conclusions



This event was designed and held to assess the scope for using creative methods to improve the physical health of participants. Previously, the Primary Care Trust had not used the theme of cycling to promote active lifestyles and cycling organisations had not overtly used health as a way to recruit new cyclists. In order for the event to be a success, there had to be a level of attendance that would ensure the event was 'value for money' and participants should value the health and leisure (and other) benefits of cycling.

Judging by the evaluation forms, many people did benefit from the day (no-one said they hadn't learned anything new) and the qualitative feedback backs this up. The event cost around £4,000 and was attended by 300-400 people, or £10-13 per person. This seems a little high, but from talking to people at the event and also the comments they added to the evaluation forms it would appear that this is the kind of thing that would grow, and become better attended due to word of mouth.

As a health event, it appears to have succeeded, but as an event to promote increased physical activity, it was less successful, as so many people were already physically active. Again, word of mouth may ensure that future events are more widely known as 'fun, family' events rather than events 'just for cyclists'. Accurate promotion to the specified target groups will be key.

As an event to remind people of the benefits of using local green space, it was successful as many people took the Liverpool Cycle maps away with them (This map indicates safe, green areas suitable for cycling), and The Mersey Forest staff were able to speak to 'hard to reach' sectors of the community about the Project. Many people came by bike to the Greenbank Sports Academy which is on the edge of Sefton Park, and may have been reminded of opportunities here. If the temporary marquee had been useable, many more people may have participated on the escorted bike rides (and many other users of the park may have attended the event.)

To summarise, there does appear to be potential in using activities such as cycling to promote health, and there also seems to be benefits to both the environmental and health sectors in joint working, as both 'reached new audiences'. The main limitations appeared to be that such innovative events are more difficult to promote accurately and to those who will benefit most.

"Great day! Very useful!"

To ensure that our projects are open to everyone, we would appreciate it if you could tell us about yourself. This will tell us if we are missing anyone out!

How old are you?

Younger than 18	[8]
18 – 60	[69]
Older than 60	[2]

Are you male or female?

Male	[32]
Female	[47]

Please self classify your ethnicity:

White:	British	58
	Irish	2
	Other	10
Mixed:	White/Black Caribbean	
	White/Black African	
	White/Asian	
	Other	
Asian/Asian British:	Indian	1
	Pakistani	
	Bangladeshi	
	Other	
Black/Black British:	Caribbean	1
	African	7
	Other	
Chinese:		
Other:	Please specify	

Do you have a disability?

Sensory	1
Mobility	2
Learning	
Debilitating long term illness	
Mental health	2
Other	3

What is your postcode?: L_ _ _ _ _

How would you describe your fitness?

I do less than five 30 minute sessions of brisk exercise every week	23
I do around five 30 minute sessions of brisk exercise every week	28
I do more than five 30 minute sessions of brisk exercise every week	26

Postcode summaries:

L1	1	L7	4	L8	21
L9	1	L12	1	L13	3
L15	12	L16	3	L17	13
L18	7	L19	2	L23	2
L25	1	L26	1	L36	1
CW6	1	WA7	1	WA8	2

Appendix 2:

Comments, compliments and complaints

Summary of all responses:

- Excellent event.
- Love these events.
- Excellently organised and brilliant venue. Not too much/busy but relaxed and easy going.
- It was an excellent event, well done.
- Bit more for little ones – i.e. more bikes to try with stabilisers.
- Good fun. Entertaining and educational.
- New to Liverpool and interested in learning what is available locally.
- Very good, useful and fun, thank you!
- Now I have picked up some great info about where to cycle, but I don't like the idea of putting the bikes on the back of the car to get to somewhere nice to cycle.
- My kids had great fun and want to take part in afternoon cycles.
- Good day, friendly and informative, like to see more of.
- Very good day – lots of freebies which is good.
- I enjoyed myself until a boy started calling me names.
- I enjoyed it and would like to come again.
- It was a nice and enjoyment day.
- Good – found out what I came for! Recently had stroke and wanted to know if I could still ride a bike.
- I think today was great. Me and my dad really enjoyed it!
- Great day! Very useful!
- This was a fab day – kids have fun, Mum and dads have fun – thank you.
- I am interested in off road cycling.
- Many thanks for giving me and my little friends James and Danny a great time.
- It was brilliant – please do it again.
- Good, well arranged event. Perhaps it could be better advertised.
- It was great, thanks.
- I was surprised that no retail outlets were involved or second-hand bikes; parts and safety add-ons.
- It seemed strange/sad that there were no commercial aspects to today's event. I was hoping to buy a child's seat for my bike and get some advice about child safety whilst riding.
- This was a very enjoyable event.
- Cycle lanes in Liverpool are practically non-existent and full of pot holes. There is no commitment by council to improve cycling in Liverpool.
- I am going to buy a bike and ride it in the park and along Otterspool.

Appendix 3

Qualitative Evaluations

To try to assess what people gained from the day, people were 'interviewed' about what they thought of the event and the conversations recorded on a Dictaphone. The following comments are taken from the transcribed notes:

Interviewer: Can I ask you what you thought of today?

Rachel: It's really good.

Interviewer: Have you got a bike at home?

Rachel: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you ride it quite often?

Rachel: No because it's broke, so I brought it here.

Interviewer: Is it all fixed and ready to go?

Rachel: Yes.

Interviewer: Have you had a good time?

Mum: Had a lovely time, really enjoyed it the children are reluctant to go home, they've had such a good time.

Interviewer: What's been the best thing about today?

Little girl: When I was on the bicycle thing... the computer thing, I won three times!

Interviewer: What have you thought about today?

James: I think it was great.

Interviewer: What was your favourite part?

James: I think planting my herbs.

Interviewer: If you enjoyed today's events can you tell us why?

Paula: Information about healthy living.

Interviewer: Following today's event do you think you'll be getting on your bike at all, or more often?

Paula: I would if I had one! I've come with my children – they will be doing more cycling.

Interviewer: What was the best thing about it?

Paula: Everything! The information and the people.

Appendix 4

Summary of Organisations Involved

- Absolute Harmony
- Aries Marquees
- Assheton PR
- Building Bridges
- C & L Leisure
- Central Liverpool Primary Care Trust
- Charles and Gina Tsang
- Chevron
- Cycle Projects
- Cycling Solutions
- Don Thomson
- Glaxo Neurological Centre
- Greenbank Sports Academy
- Heal 8
- Heart of Mersey
- Homeground Bike Workshop
- Lisa Dewhurst
- Liverpool City Council
- Liverpool Health Promotion Service
- Liverpool Sport Action Zone
- Merseyside Cycling Campaign
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Travelwise
- Multicultural Diabetes Forum
- National Blood Transfusion Service
- North Liverpool Primary Care Trust
- Pedal Power
- St John's Ambulance Service
- Sam Semoff
- Sefton MBC
- Squash Nutrition
- The Countryside Agency
- The Mersey Forest
- The Vegetarian Society
- Toxteth Health and Community Care Forum