

# FREE BIKES PROGRAMME CO-DESIGN PANEL FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MAY 2023



# INTRODUCTION

**Young Scot** is the national youth information and citizenship charity for 11-26 year olds in Scotland. We have over 30 years' experience in providing young people with high quality information, opportunities and experiences. For more information about #YSHive, other Young Scot services and case studies, please visit: [www.youngscot.net/YSHive](http://www.youngscot.net/YSHive)

Transport Scotland is the national transport agency for Scotland. The agency aims to deliver a safe, efficient, cost-effective and sustainable transport system while playing a key role in the Scottish Government's Purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth across Scotland.

The Free Bikes Programme Co-design Panel was established in April 2022 in collaboration with Transport Scotland's Sustainable and Active Travel team and Young Scot. The project was aimed at engaging young people in Transport Scotland's Access to Bikes programme. This programme is committed to providing free bikes to school aged children who cannot afford them. Between 2021-2022, Transport Scotland (TS) ran ten pilots for The Free Bikes Programme, aimed at trialling delivery with a variety of local authorities, local partnerships and local communities.

Introducing The Free Bikes Programme Co-design Panel into this wider work provided the opportunity for young people to inform and influence the future delivery and development of this programme. The Panel were tasked with exploring Transport Scotland's ambitions for the programme, the pilot work and the practicalities involved throughout this project. Their purpose was to provide feedback, share concerns, identify potential solutions and test these out to inform the development of a national Access to Bikes policy. The work of the Panel will support Transport Scotland to ensure they gather valuable information, views and ideas from young people directly to inform the future delivery of this work.



# MEET THE TEAM

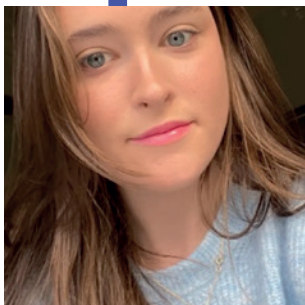
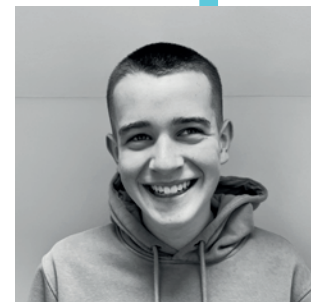


## Farrell, 16, Edinburgh

I joined the Free Bikes Panel because I love cycling and want to enable everyone to enjoy cycling as much as I do. I met some great people and have had my eyes opened by really interesting consumer research. The biggest challenge we faced was presenting to a panel of experts who scrutinized our ideas at every turn. I hope everyone can become more active and I think bikes are a great way to encourage people to do so.

## Blake, 15, East Renfrewshire

The Panel gave me the chance to do something completely new and not like anything else I've done before! I am involved in lots of different sports and have an interest in physical wellbeing and the project was a chance for me to share my own ideas about how everyone, no matter where they live and what their personal circumstances, can be active, and enjoy the benefit of sport. Through being on the Panel I have met new people, visited the Young Scot office, been involved in workshops and online presentations (which were by far the most challenging part!). The highlight has been learning directly from officials about active travel policy, and my hopes for the project are that children across the country, including those that live in rural and remote areas, can benefit from what it offers.



## Lexi, 16, Midlothian

I joined the Free Bikes project to help make a positive, tangible impact on young people throughout Scotland. I know myself, the benefits that cycling has brought me and wanted to ensure that other young people would have access to the same opportunities. Through the Free Bikes project I have had the opportunity to work with other young people and professionals who share the same passions as me. Additionally, the opportunity to creatively apply my knowledge to design a programme pushed me outside of my comfort zone but in the end gave me something to get excited about and be proud of. I truly hope that Free Bikes Programme becomes a long-running, sustainable programme that fulfils the needs of young people across Scotland. I think it has the potential to become an integral aspect of local communities, that can fully support and help those who use the scheme.



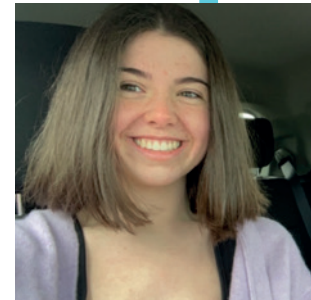


### **Remi, 17, Aberdeenshire**

I joined the Free Bikes Panel because I'm passionate about reducing car use in Scotland, particularly by getting more infrastructure built for cycling. More people cycling could encourage Government and Local Authorities to make more infrastructure, further increase the number of cycle trips. The first in-person meeting was one of the first times I had been in Edinburgh without my family. My favourite part of this was meeting more people from across Scotland. My hopes for the future of The Free Bikes Programme are that the recommendations get implemented, and that Scotland gets onto the same league as the Netherlands.

### **Grace, 16, East Ayrshire**

The opportunity to have a real impact on such an important, exciting scheme is what at first drew me to the Panel. Through the Panel, I've had the opportunity to meet and discuss with important people, such as partners and Lee Craigie (the Ambassador for Active Travel), which has greatly improved my confidence and given me a taster for what the professional environment is like. For me the Panel's ability to work as a team has been my favourite part of the Panel. We collectively would work together to explore our ideas which created an incredibly positive atmosphere which I will miss.



As the scheme is still in its early development, I think it was hard to fully know if we were making the right decisions in our recommendations, however I am confident that as a Panel we have produced recommendations that can really help young people across Scotland!

In the future I hope to see that the scheme earns the respect and value that it deserves. Young people across Scotland could greatly benefit from this scheme and therefore it should not only be protected by the Scottish Government but also fully encouraged and even further developed.

### **Archie, 14, Highlands**

I joined the Panel because I enjoy cycling and I think all young people across Scotland should have the opportunity to have a bike and be able to go places without restrictions. I've enjoyed meeting new people and especially meeting everyone in person. It was challenging meeting new people online for the first time but now I've made new friends on the Panel. I hope that the programme runs for as long as possible and that lots of young people benefit from it.

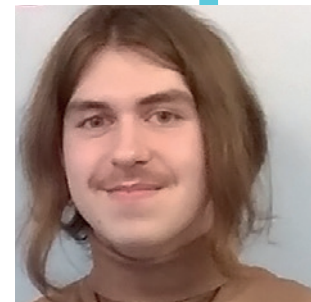


### **Fatimah, 18, North Lanarkshire**

I wanted to join the Free Bikes Panel because it sounded like an initiative that would make a positive change for thousands of young people across Scotland. For me, cycling has always been a way to take a short break, whether from my studies or my caring role, and I wanted to help make a difference to those who don't have that opportunity. In the Panel, I've had the chance to meet a huge variety of people from all over Scotland, which has helped improve my confidence and teamwork skills. I really like how our views and opinions as young people are taken into consideration and the way we are empowered to share our opinions within the group. The most challenging part of the Panel was looking into each intricacy surrounding free bikes, be it the infrastructure of the roads or accessing cycling lessons. It has led me to appreciate how much planning goes into proposals like these. From making a positive impact on mental and physical health to taking one step towards becoming a more eco-friendly nation, free bikes can benefit all young people across Scotland and should be implemented.

### **Marcin, 17, Aberdeen**

I joined the Panel because I enjoy riding bikes and want to encourage other people to enjoy it too. I wanted to help other people have access to a bike when they need or want it. While being on the Panel I've worked with people I didn't know and had fun with them too. I've also needed to use a critical mind while trying to combine different thoughts and ideas. The best bits have been meeting new people. Coming up with ideas on how the Panel should be and working as a team while being in a positive atmosphere. It's been a challenge to think critically on the key aspects of the project. I've also had to go out of my comfort zone and community with new people who have eventually become friends to me. I hope that more young people get free bikes and learn new skills and experiences with their bikes that will be useful throughout their life or at school. It would be great to see the programme being done across Scotland and extended to other age groups too.



### **Ala'a, 13, Glasgow**

I took part of this great opportunity because I thought it would be interesting and I could provide helpful information for Young Scot and Transport Scotland. In this opportunity I got to know lots of nice, new people. I learned more about Young Scot and the free bikes scheme, and the best thing is I grew my confidence at speaking to new people. The challenge was my language because I did not understand everything I was hearing, but after I attended this opportunity, my language has improved. I wish to see everyone who can't get a bike right now, because of whatever problem they were facing, are now able to get one. I would like also to thank all Young Scot's staff for being nice and helpful to me :)



### **Malikah, 15, Renfrewshire**

I wanted to join the free bike project to learn new things, meet new people, and test my confidence. I have grown my confidence and the experience has helped me with my stutter. As someone who has a stutter, I couldn't always participate in activities because of it but this project made me feel good about myself and everyone didn't mind my stutter. The best thing about being on the Panel is that everyone was nice and accepted each other for who they are. We also had a lot of fun making friends together. What challenged me the most was my stutter and that stopped me speaking sometimes or saying specific words but being on the Panel helped me and everyone let me take my time. I hope our report is given a proper chance to be recognised and that everyone who is eligible for a free bike gets one no matter what their barriers are, and that the application process is really simple. I just hope that our recommendations are given their full potential.

### **James, 16, East Lothian**

I wanted to join the Free Bikes Panel because my experience cycling to school has been valuable and has allowed me to cycle places such as work or rugby. I think everyone should have the chance to have that freedom. I've had fun meeting up in person with the rest of the group, meeting new people and everyone has been super nice. The in-person meetings have meant I've taken a longer distance trip on the train by myself for the first time too. I hope that The Free Bikes Programme receives enough funding to implement even the most expensive recommendations and is long lasting. I hope it will have a big effect on young people's lives.

### **Andrew, 15, Aberdeen**

I joined the Panel to implement change, make a difference in Scotland, support young people on a local and national level and make a meaningful difference to young people across Scotland who are in need of free bikes. On the Panel I've met a varying group of different young people, developed my personal confidence and travelled across Scotland, exploring new and unfamiliar places. The best thing was having my own input in the development process of the group and meeting new young people. It's sometimes been a challenge to stay firm on our ideas, even though they can be perceived as too expensive or impractical to successfully implement. My hope for the future is that our views and opinions are meaningfully taken on board. I hope The Free Bikes Programme successfully delivers and implements change for young people and I hope it's sustainable and lasts a long time.

**Howie, 16,  
East Lothian**

**Luke, 13,  
Edinburgh**

**Joseph, 16,  
West Lothian**

# #YSHIVE AND THE PANEL'S JOURNEY

The Free Bikes Programme Co-design Panel consists of **16** young people aged between 11-17 years old, with a variety of gender identities, ethnicities and life experiences represented.

The Panel worked together between July 2022 and April 2023. During their time together to date, the Panel volunteered **233** hours on the project and attended seven #YSHive sessions including three day-long workshops delivered in-person at Young Scot's office in Edinburgh.

The Panel employed the #YSHive Co-design model throughout their project to learn about The Free Bikes Programme, discover the opportunities for development, generate ideas together and test these out before creating their final recommendations in this report.



The [Young Scot #YSHive](#) service empowers young people to be system changers and influencers by sharing power with organisations and tackling society's toughest challenges. Co-designed by young people, Young Scot supports organisations like Transport Scotland to partner with young people to define, design and deliver of new policies and improvements to services. The range of engaging and ethical design models create conditions, discover insights, and shape ideas for improvement to unlock culture and system change.

Using our in-house skills, design models and tools, Young Scot staff have supported the Co-design Panel throughout their #YSHive journey with Transport Scotland. On the next page is a summary of the activity which took place during each phase of the #YSHive process.



## EXPLORE

**The Explore** phase invites young people to explore their understanding of the issues involved in their project, frame the project's vision, probe at problems they have identified and question the bigger picture.

During this phase the Panel met each other for the first time and used their time together to establish and develop strong team bonds, a core relationship with Young Scot staff and begin getting to know Transport Scotland staff and the Ambassador for Active Travel.

The team increased their knowledge of The Free Bikes Programme, what it aims to achieve, who is involved and how the pilots are currently being delivered. They reflected on this learning and identified gaps and opportunities they wanted to address in The Free Bikes Programme. The Panel established key themes emerging from their work and drafted a vision statement for their project.



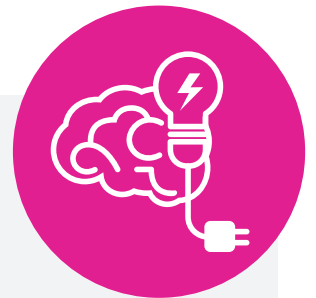
## CREATE

**The Create** phase allows young volunteers to seek opportunities to prototype and play with their ideas and take a deeper dive into the issues identified along the way.

During this phase the Panel created and evaluated their final vision statement for the project which framed their overall aspirations as a team and what they hoped The Free Bikes Programme would achieve. The team used their knowledge and awareness gained during Explore to create multiple ideas on how The Free Bikes Programme could be improved.

They themed and refined these ideas to help them identify their priorities and establish which ideas had the most potential impact on young people.

Having established their first draft of the recommendations, the Panel planned how they wanted to test these with others, establishing which groups they wanted to gain feedback from and how they intended to gather this feedback.



**“VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT YOUR FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS ARE HELPING TO DELIVER THEM.”**





## DISRUPT

**The Disrupt** phase allows young people to test out their ideas with others, learning how realistic their ambitions are in the real world and which ideas have the greatest value.

During this phase the Panel planned and delivered an online testing workshop with a variety of professionals connected to the active travel sector. The young people were joined by 14 attendees representing the following organisations and local authorities:

- Bike for Good
- Carers Trust
- Cycling Scotland
- East Dunbartonshire Council
- High Life Highland
- Inverclyde Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- Scottish Borders Council
- sportscotland
- Sustrans

The wide variety of organisations represented meant the Panel received expert feedback, comments and advice from youth workers, active schools co-ordinators, sports hub officers, Free Bikes Programme pilot leads and cycle enthusiasts working with communities around active travel.

The Panel received constructive, informed feedback on their ideas, allowing them to understand their ideas in the context of the real world and see how they could be refined going forward into the final Act phase of their project.



**“THE PANEL HAVE DONE A TERRIFIC JOB TO DATE. I’D LOVE TO BE PART OF THE TEAM TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.”**

**“I FEEL EVERYTHING WAS VALUABLE ENOUGH TO STAY IN ITS PLACE.”**

**“ALL IDEAS ARE INSIGHTFUL. THOSE LINKING TO EXISTING SUPPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COULD HAVE IMMEDIATE IMPACT WHILST WORK INCLUDING ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT COULD DEVELOP THIS AND ATTRACT MORE FUNDING.”**



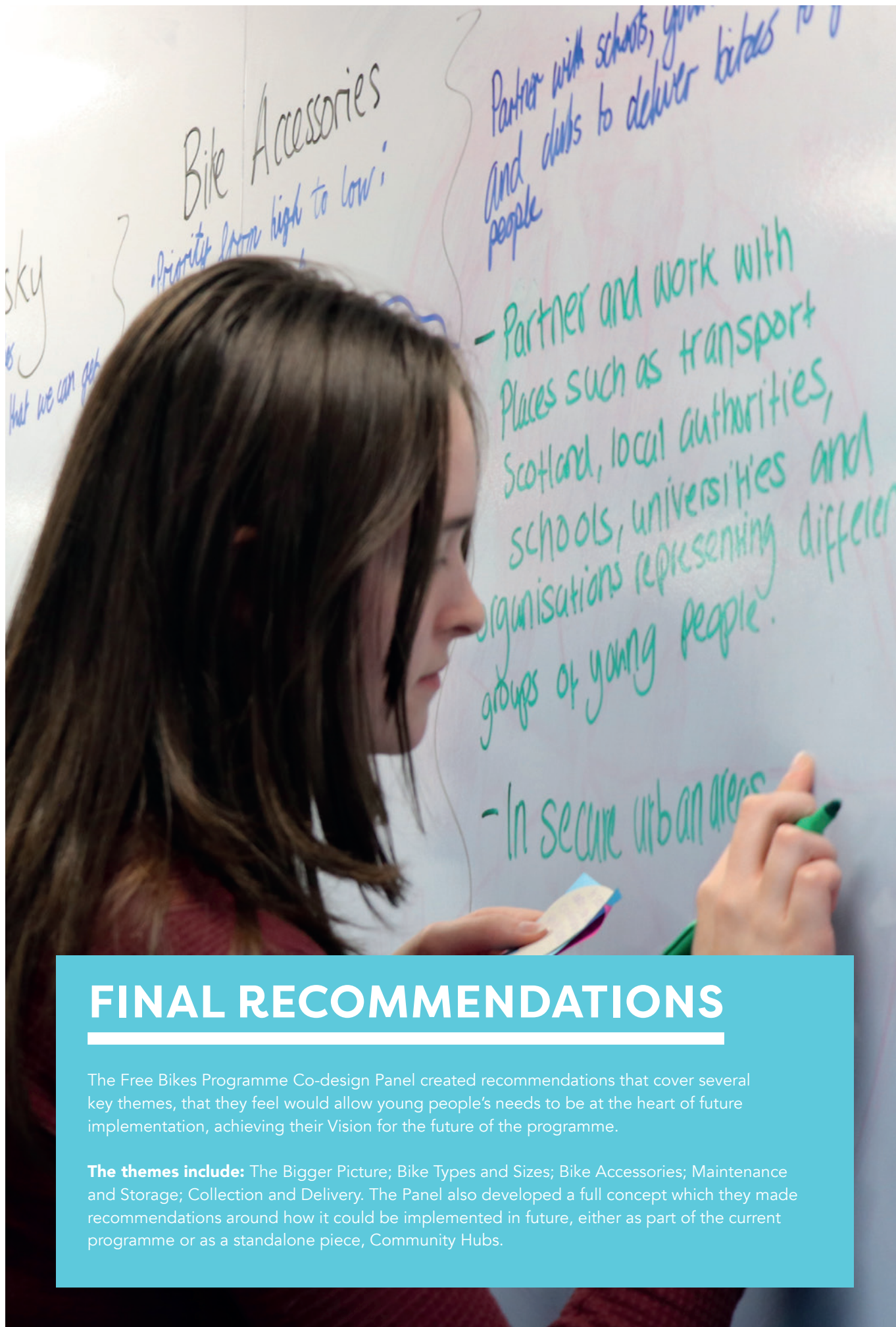
## ACT

**The Act** phase is the final stage in the #YSHive process which allows young people to pitch their final bold ideas to challenge decision-makers and influence system change.

So far during this phase the Panel have reflected on the invaluable feedback they received during Disrupt, revisited and refined their ideas from Create and ensured they honoured their knowledge of the programme from Explore in their final recommendations detailed in this report.

The Panel are reflecting on their learning experiences during the project and continuing to seek opportunities to collaborate with Transport Scotland and the Free Bikes Programme going forward in its implementation.





## FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Free Bikes Programme Co-design Panel created recommendations that cover several key themes, that they feel would allow young people's needs to be at the heart of future implementation, achieving their Vision for the future of the programme.

**The themes include:** The Bigger Picture; Bike Types and Sizes; Bike Accessories; Maintenance and Storage; Collection and Delivery. The Panel also developed a full concept which they made recommendations around how it could be implemented in future, either as part of the current programme or as a standalone piece, Community Hubs.



## THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Panel believe a gift model for The Free Bikes Programme will have the most impact on young people. This model allows young people to take pride in ownership over their bike, while enabling them to receive long term support and contact with the programme as well as connections with training, clubs and opportunities involved. This model also links directly with the Panel's ambition for the programme to deliver local community hubs which will act as a basis for all of their recommendations to work together (see page 18).

- **The Free Bikes Programme needs to be easy to understand, easy to access and flexible to suit all young people's needs.**

The Panel want The Free Bikes Programme to be easily accessible to those young people most in need of it. They believe the best way for this to happen is to ensure the marketing, communication and logistics of the programme is straightforward and youth friendly, allowing young people from a variety of ages and backgrounds to understand its purpose and who qualifies for it. The group are passionate that the programme supports those young people with more complex needs, or situations, as these young people deserve to benefit the most from the programme.

- **Key contact information should be given for the programme so young people can ask questions about the programme, adults can enquire about referrals and people can report lost or stolen bikes.**

Ideally, a dedicated team of staff or volunteers should exist in each Local Authority, allowing young people to easily access support around the programme, reducing their barrier to engagement as a result. The Panel suggest this is one name, email and telephone number for young people or adults enquiring about the programme to contact. This contact information could be for the team running the local Community Hub (see page 18). If a local contact is not possible, the Panel want a central contact system in place that is accessible and youth friendly.

- **A simple and easy referral processes should be in place alongside clear guidelines on how to identify young people for the programme.**

The Panel want a variety of people to be able to refer young people to the programme. This includes young people themselves, school staff, youth workers, sports club staff and family members. The group think a simple referral system should be available online, connected to a dedicated local team who deliver the programme. They think those young people living in homes already in receipt of some form of state benefit should automatically qualify for the programme. However, when testing their ideas with others, they came to understand that often there are other young people who wouldn't qualify in this scenario but would benefit significantly from the programme. During the Disrupt phase, the Panel discovered that those adults working directly with young people in schools, youth work or sports are often best placed to identify young people who would benefit most from the programme.

**The following groups should be being given a free bike if they don't already own one:**

- Those who can't afford to buy a bike and/or are from deprived backgrounds
- Young carers
- Care experienced young people
- Those with disabilities
- Those with additional support needs
- Those who are struggling with mental health
- Those wanting to get active
- Those who wish to pursue careers in related fields e.g. fitness, active travel, engineering



These groups should be given priority when delivering The Free Bikes Programme as the Panel have identified these young people are those who would benefit the most from a free bike. The group are particularly passionate that young people with all types of disability have access to a free bike that is suitable for their needs. During the Disrupt phase, they learnt how expensive adaptive bikes can be and that expertise is needed to understand what each person needs from their adapted bike and a specialist company to purchase this bike from. However, the Panel think this is worth investing in because they believe disabled riders should be given as equal access to the programme as able-bodied riders.

— **All young people should have access to training, toolkits and manuals so they can make the most of their free bike.**

In order to have the greatest impact on young people and ensure the programme is sustainable, the Panel recommend every young person involved has the opportunity to learn how to care for their bike and understand how it works.

— **The Free Bikes Programme should inspire young people to pursue active lifestyles and careers in related fields.**

The Panel think the programme has a greater potential than simply giving out free bikes. They want it to become an inspirational opportunity for young people to be involved in active travel, sports, community networks, and new career aspirations.

— **Young people should be given the opportunity to learn transferrable skills as part of the programme.**

The group think it's important that young people learn new skills with their free bike, allowing them to build up their confidence, increase their skillset and improve their CVs for future education or job applications. In particular, the Panel are keen that free bikes riders understand how their bikes work and how to repair them. For more detail on this, see Community Hubs recommendations.

— **The programme should work with existing community social enterprises, charities and projects focused on increasing cycling, active travel and sustainability in the local community.**

There are existing community social enterprises, charities and projects focused on increasing cycling, active travel and sustainability in the local community that The Free Bikes Programmes should make connections with. For example, Recycle-a-bike in Stirling offers work experience

and training while upcycling bikes to sell locally. This example demonstrates how aspects of the Panel's Community Hubs concept already works successfully.

— **The Free Bikes Programmes should continue to collaborate with young people so it's inclusive and fair for all.**

The Panel believe that the only way to ensure the programme is truly successful, is to continue to seek the engagement of young voices in the programme. This would allow Transport Scotland to have an accurate evaluation of the impact the programme is having and also where opportunities for improvement exist that would have the greatest impact on young people.

— **The Free Bikes Programme should run as long as there are young people in need of bikes.**

Overall, the group hope to see the programme running for a long time because they believe the programme will have significant impact on young people's lives. They understand that this will be dependent on funding available but hope decision-makers will provide long-term, 'safety-cushion' funding for it.

— **The programme should impact the wider policy and decision making around transport infrastructure in Scotland.**

The Panel are concerned that current infrastructure across Scotland could have a challenging effect on young people using their free bikes. They understand this is not within the scope of this project but want it to be addressed in wider policy and decision making around transport infrastructure in Scotland.

## BIKE TYPES AND SIZES

The Panel think the following options and accessories relating to bike type and size should be available within the programme:

- **The programme should use refurbished and refitted bikes as much as possible.**

The group are passionate that the programme focuses on sustainability and re-uses, refits and refurbishes second-hand bikes as a priority. They understand that new bikes will still need to be purchased and hope each local area provides a mixture of new and refurbished bikes for young people. The Panel also want the programme to accept donations of bikes, equipment and accessories from the general public to help boost the programme.

- **All bikes in the programme should be high quality and long wearing.**

To ensure the free bikes can be reused in the long-term and to provide a quality experience for riders, the young people think it is essential that all bikes given out are of a high quality, whether new or second-hand.

- **Adaptive bikes should be available to suit the needs of disabled young people.**

The Panel learnt more about the practicalities involved in providing adaptive bikes during the Disrupt phase of this project. They understand that each rider will need a 1:2:1 assessment with a specialist who understands their needs and therefore the needs of the bike. They also know that adaptive bikes are expensive, and expertise is needed to manufacture them. However, the group are passionate that those with disabilities have equal access to a free bike. The Panel want funding to be set aside specifically for this, dedicated to staffing costs involved in assessments and specialist manufacture. Transport Scotland should therefore partner with any established companies or organisations creating or delivering adaptive bikes to get advice on how to approach this.

- **Different sizes should be available for young people, and they should be able to swap bikes when they've outgrown them.**

The group want bikes to be gifted to young people in need of them. However, they also want young people to swap their gifted bike for a larger one as they grow, until they reach a full sized bike. The programme should have a selection of bike sizes available, and staff or volunteers should be available to help them choose the right bike for them.

- **A selection of mountain and hybrid bike types should be available.**

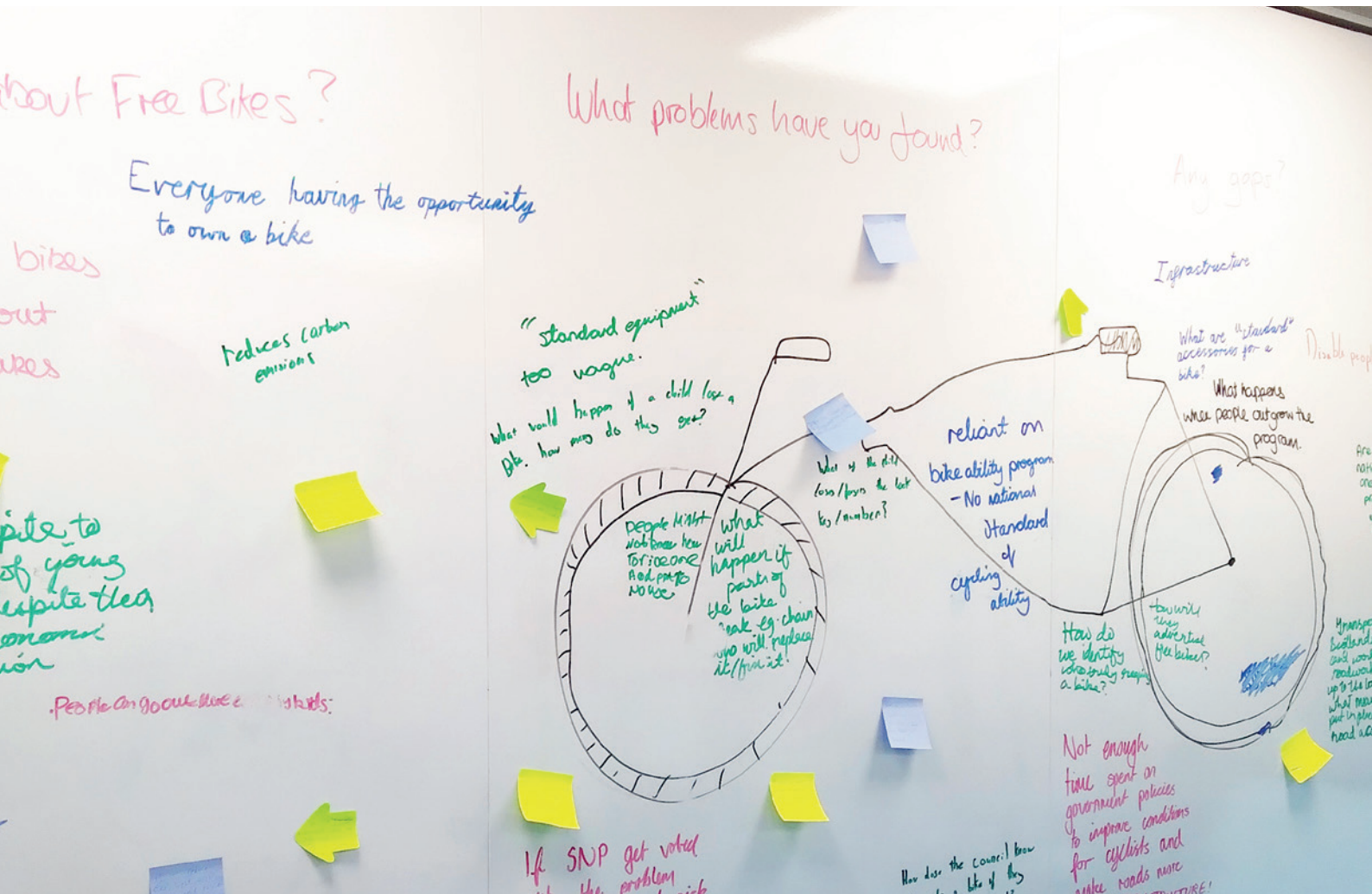
The local terrain for free bikes riders will vary significantly, so young people should be able to choose between mountain and hybrid bikes to best suit the areas they will be cycling in. The programme should provide free access to staff or volunteers with expertise to help young people make the right bike type choice for them.

- **Young people should be able to choose from a selection of basic additions advance - stabilizers, choice of grips, choice of tyres, choice of colours, bike saddles.**

To ensure young people take pride in their bike and have a bike that works for them, the Panel think it's important they be given as much choice over their bike as possible. This includes allowing them to choose basic fittings before they take their bike home.

- **There should be extra accessories available and young people should be given the opportunity to learn how to add these in maintenance lessons.**

Ideally, the young people think extra accessories should be available to free bikes riders so they can personalise their bike even further. They feel this would be a great opportunity to develop young people's skills too, by inviting them to take part in maintenance lessons which show them how to accessorise their bike. However, the Panel don't think this should be an initial priority for the programme but suggest it's offered once the essentials of the programme has been established.



## BIKE ACCESSORIES

Every young person who receives a free bike should also receive a Free Bike Box with the following essential accessories:

- Basic repair kit
- Tyre pump
- Helmet
- Bike lock
- Repair kit including a video manual with instructions on how to use the kit and how to do basic repairs
- Lights and reflectors

It's important to the Panel that each young person on the programme gets the best possible start with their bike. They want riders to feel safe and comfortable when riding on the roads as well as feeling empowered to maintain and repair their bike on a daily basis.

The following accessories would be useful to have in stock at the community hubs, allowing young people in need of them to have access to them:

- Hi-vis jacket
- Clip-on tandem attachment to cycle with younger riders
- Panier rack and bags/basket for storage options
- Water bottle holder and tyre pump holder
- Saddle cover and mudguard
- Gloves

The group don't think this should be a priority over essential funding for other aspects of the programme, but they would like to see these accessories available in the long-term.



## MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE

- **Young people should have access to regular bike check-ups to check if the bike needs repairs, if the rider needs a larger bike and if they have the basic accessories they need.**

Regular bike check-ups will allow the programme to remain sustainable, accessible and engaging for young people. The check-ups will allow the bikes to last longer and get recycled back into the programme more successfully. Giving the young people chance to meet someone with expertise will also allow them greater access to community support, confidence building and greater buy-in to the programme overall. The Panel want check-ups should be regular, consistent and free to free bikes riders.

- **Everyone should have access to local, secure storage.**

The Free Bikes Programme should fund community storage programmes so young people have a safe place locally to store their bikes. If residential cycle storage-charities, organisations and initiatives are already in place for this, they should be linked up to the programme.

- **Maintenance training should be available for all young people receiving a bike so they can learn new transferrable skills.**

In addition to the team's recommendation that a video manual should be given all free bikes riders, they want maintenance upskilling lessons to be available to riders free of charge. This would allow young people to build up their confidence and skillset and use these transferrable skills in education or work prospects. During this training, young people should be given the opportunity to replace any broken or old accessories from their Free Bikes Box in exchange for participation in training. If possible, the Panel would also like riders to be able to learn how to personalise their bike with extra accessories available too.

- **All bikes to be logged on Police Scotland registry database in case they're stolen.**

The Panel want to prevent bikes being stolen or sold on which would negatively affect the young people involved in the programme. They think one way to do this would be to give the bike a fingerprint, tracker, number, sticker or code so bikes can be reported lost or stolen and prevent bikes being sold on. However, in the first instance they want every free bike to be registered on the National Cycle Database to help recover any bikes if they go missing.

- **In the long term, each young person should be able to personally identify their bike in some way - e.g. colourful bike lock, seat cover, stickers.**

The Panel recognise that this should not be a priority for the funding of this programme. However they do believe that allowing young people to accessorise and personalise their bike as much as possible will allow them to take pride in being part of the programme and take care of their bike long-term.

- **Ideally, the programme should develop an app for free bike users.**

Again, the group recognise this should not be a priority for the funding of this programme. However, an app for free bikes riders would open up new possibilities for the programme. It could allow family members to track young riders on their cycles, create local cycling groups for young people and include the resources included in the free bikes manual.





## COLLECTION AND DELIVERY

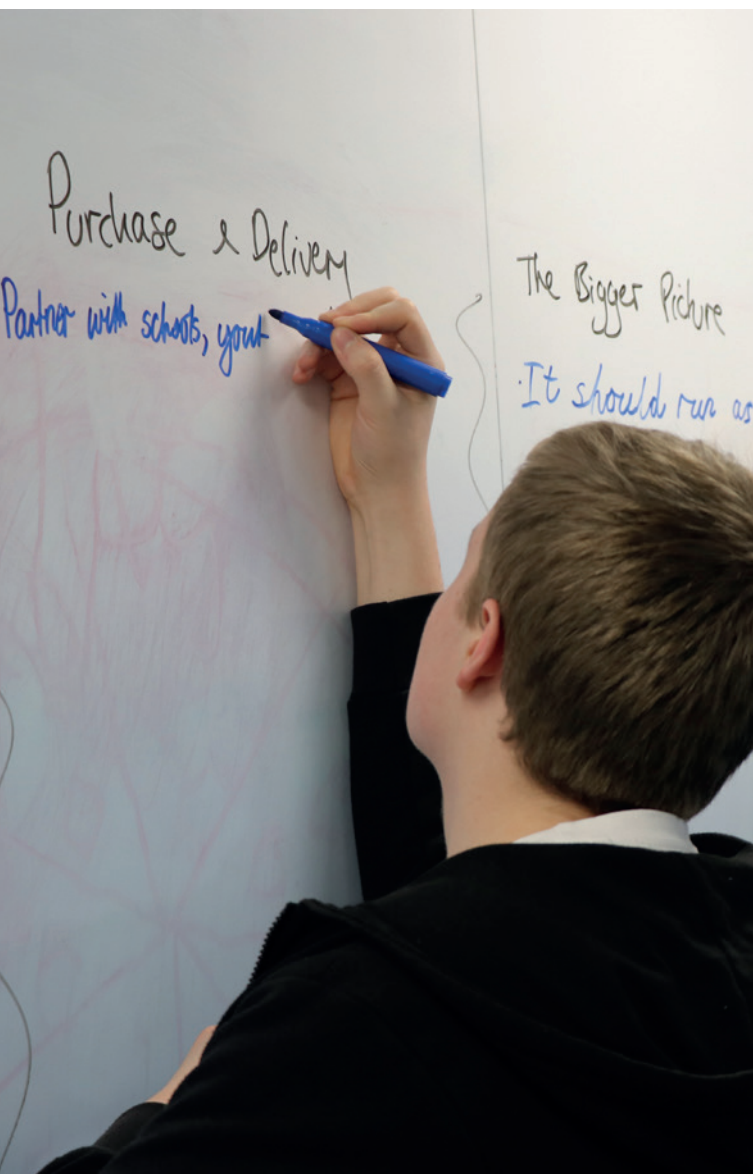
- **Partner with those working directly with young people in schools, youth services, local authorities, youth organisations and clubs to find out how and where to deliver bikes.**

During the testing phase of this project, the Panel learnt that those working directly with young people understand their needs best and therefore are best placed to make decisions on how and where their free bikes should be accessed. The Panel understand that the needs of each local area will be different and that is why these partnerships will be so important. Expertise from these contacts will also help inform choices on collection and delivery that will allow the programme to be as free as possible from stigma.

- **Provide both fixed and mobile collection point near schools, community centres, youth clubs, youth hot spots and parks.**

Local expertise will guide decision making on the method of delivery or collection and the locations for this, however the Panel recommend that one local, dedicated place for collection is essential. Collection points could be either fixed or mobile, depending on the needs of the local area. The Panel are keen that rural communities have greater access to mobile collection points and every collection point provides an option for delivery, therefore each point should have access to a delivery van. This will allow the programme to be accessed easily and remove any barrier to engagement such as the cost of transport to a collection point or the stigma involved in having a free bike delivered to your home.

If the Panel's Community Hubs concept is not possible, they hope small scale collection points are and regular bike check-ups, cycling expertise and donations are made available through these points instead.



**THE PANEL UNDERSTAND THAT THE NEEDS OF EACH LOCAL AREA WILL BE DIFFERENT AND THAT IS WHY THESE PARTNERSHIPS WILL BE SO IMPORTANT.**

## KEY CONCEPT: COMMUNITY HUBS

The Panel believe that the best way to achieve a successful Free Bikes Programme that young people feel empowered by, is to create local Community Hubs to deliver it.

Each Hub would act as the central core of the group's recommendations, bring each piece of puzzle together to ensure the programme is sustainable, providing expertise, incorporating learning and development opportunities as well as bringing the wider community together around The Free Bikes Programme.



### Key benefits and specifications for the Community Hubs are as follows:

- A local community hub should be available in every local authority. Some places may need more dependent on population. The Highlands and Islands would need to have their own mobile community hub to suit their needs.
- The Hub acts as a bike collection point and/or delivery service and provides space for safe bike storage.
- Key staff or volunteers run the hub, allowing young people to have a dedicated place and group of people to ask questions about the programme and ask for help with their bikes.
- The Hub manages referrals to the programme, by providing information and support.
- Staff or volunteers at the hub provide regularly bike check-ups for young people on the programme.
- Run maintenance classes with the potential to have a qualification connected with this too.
- Have maintenance staff or volunteers available to support young people, inviting older generations to volunteer to share their expertise with young people.
- Provide job opportunities for young people at the Hubs in the form of apprenticeships
- Provide volunteer opportunities for young people in the hub, allowing them to connect with their local community while achieving volunteer hours
- Invite young apprentices to work in the hub to give more young people paid learning opportunities.
- The Hub would be capable of taking donations of bikes, equipment and accessories to make the scheme more sustainable. This may also include developing partnerships locally to take 'waste' bikes from companies, councils or lost property departments.
- The Hub would provide bike services and/or maintenance classes for adults at paid rates to generate money for the programme. This would provide a source of income for the programme and continuous work for the volunteers and/or maintenance team at the Hub.
- Hubs should link into spaces, places and people that are already running something similar or utilise unused community spaces. This could be activity already happening in schools or local active travel hubs.
- If the widescale delivery of community Hubs isn't possible due to funding, partnerships should be made with existing support in the area. This could be through active travel hubs, community or sport groups or local repair shops to provide free support for young people on the programme.
- A social media platform could be set up for each Hub to encourage social groups for young people to cycle together more often and get to know each other.

## NEXT STEPS

The Panel are excited to see what happens next with The Free Bikes Programme as it moves from its Pilot phase into a national roll-out. While recognising that funding restrictions may prevent all their recommendations being implemented in the near future, they hope to see as many as possible used in the next stage of the programme.

The Panel have been inspired by the enthusiasm in the wider education, sports and cycling sectors for The Free Bikes Programme and aspire for Transport Scotland to deliver significant impact on young lives especially considering the impact the cost crisis is having on young people.

The Panel are already having an influence on the current and future decision-making around the programme with the partnership Young Scot has developed with Cycling Scotland who are due to carry out the next phase of the programme on behalf of Transport Scotland.



**The Panel shared some of their feedback throughout the project:**

**“I ENJOYED ALL OF IT TO BE HONEST. I LOVED HEARING OTHERS’ IDEAS THAT I HADN’T THOUGHT ABOUT.”**

**“I ENJOYED BEING INVOLVED IN THE CONVERSATION.”**

**“I ENJOYED EVERYTHING! AND MEETING NEW PEOPLE TOO.”**

**“I ENJOYED ASKING QUESTIONS AND THE SLIGHT BITS OF HUMOUR SNUCK INTO THE IMPORTANT THINGS.”**

**“I LEARNED A LOT.”**

**“SHARING OUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS TO EVERYONE WAS GREAT.”**



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