



Public Health Network Cymru
E-bulletin

September 2022

Physical Activity and Active Travel



In this issue...

Welcome to the September edition of the e-bulletin.

Regular physical activity has many benefits to health, including mental health and well-being. Physical activity refers to all movement including walking, cycling, wheeling, sport, active recreation and play. Active travel can improve physical activity levels as well as having positive impacts on our environment.

This e-bulletin includes national, regional and local initiatives and programmes which encourage and promote physical activity and active travel.

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We would love to hear about any additional information, case studies or tips to share with the wider public health community in Wales in future e-bulletins and our website so please get in touch with us.

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Headlines

Keeping Active in Later Life

 **Authors:**

Professor Diane Crone, Dr Chris Pugh, Dr Zsofia Szekeres – Cardiff Metropolitan University



A multi-centre project is underway to promote active ageing and prevent decline in physical function amongst older people. South Wales is one of three pilot areas, along with the West Midlands and Greater Manchester

Helping older people to maintain greater levels of physical activity is a key factor to help break down the spiral into disability, a characteristic of old age. Slowing this spiral has considerable benefit for the individual in terms of health and wellbeing, and to the economy, savings in social and health care cost. An older person who is fit and active is more likely to have better physical and cognitive function, enjoy independence, positive mental wellbeing and have a higher quality of life (UK Chief Medical officer, 2018). Yet, nationally and locally resources to support active ageing programmes are scarce.

The Active, Connected and Engaged project (ACTIF), is a randomised controlled trial of a peer volunteer-led programme. It aims to explore to what extent volunteers can help to maintain activity in older adults and whether investment in such a programme can bring about recognisable and justifiable benefits.

Eligible participants who are 65 years and at risk of declining mobility are invited via their GP or self-refer into the project. They are randomized into a social, Healthy Ageing group or the intervention Active Aging group. The Active Ageing group members are matched with volunteers aged over 55 years, (recruited via our volunteer partner, Sport Cardiff) who support them to get out and about and enjoy taking part in local activities. Volunteers are also participants! They receive one day of training then are introduced to their matched participant and help them find a local activity that they would like to try out together (anything from joining a choir or a walking group or trying out short mat bowls). Volunteers and participants are assessed over time. These measurements include tests of mobility, physical activity and questionnaires of mental wellbeing, quality of life and how much people use health and social care services.

Between February and September 2022 over 110 adults were recruited from the three sites. In Cardiff, participants were recruited from GP surgeries in Llandaff, Llanedeyrn and Whitchurch. The initial response rate was slightly lower than anticipated as patients might have been significantly impacted by ongoing concerns about COVID-19 and the Omicron wave at the beginning of the year. Despite this however, the initial target for the pilot phase was achieved and currently 45 participants and 23 volunteers are taking part. The Healthy Ageing group had their first social session where they could learn about healthy eating. The Active Ageing group members are supported by trained volunteers to be active, connected and take part in community-based exercise or social activities.

The study in Cardiff is run by Prof Diane Crone, Dr Chris Pugh and Dr Zsofia Szekeres, of the Centre for Health, Activity and Wellbeing Research at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The study is funded by the National Institute for Health Research - Public Health Research Programme.

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https://www.activeageingresearch.org/about-ace?utm_campaign=North%20Staffs%20News&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20newsletter

E-Move

 **Author:** Sustrans

Image credit: Jonathan Bewley/Sustrans



Welsh Government-funded electric cycle loan project, E-Move, is providing an opportunity for active travel to people across Wales. The pilot project, which is delivered in partnership with Sustrans, is helping people who may find the cost of e-cycles a barrier to using them. E-Move aims to reduce carbon emissions by replacing some of the journeys usually made by car, supporting people across Wales to take up active travel.

The project operates in Aberystwyth, Barry, Newtown, Rhyl, and Swansea. E-cargo bikes are also available to businesses and organisations in Aberystwyth and Swansea. In its first year, e-cycles were loaned to 130 people across five locations in Wales. Active travel trips increased by 25% while car trips dropped by 39%. People spoke of how benefits to their health and wellbeing included improved fitness, reduced isolation, and increased independence.

By offering an alternative means of transport, this project aims to improve local air quality and encourage active travel. One year in, there are encouraging signs that underline the importance and benefit of active travel to our health.

Neil Canham, Head of Happier Lives at Sustrans Cymru, said: “It’s really encouraging to hear the positive feedback from participants. Even though the bikes are electronically assisted, 70% reported that they felt riding the e-cycles had a positive effect on their health.”

“Clearly the e-cycles have helped some participants overcome their concerns about not being fit enough to ditch the car and travel actively.”

81% of loans in the first year were in urban areas and 19% were rural. 79% of participants intended to cycle more regularly after the loan while 49% said that e-cycles enabled journeys that they otherwise would not have been able to make.

Recent examples of beneficiaries include a community training bakery in Rhyl, a family from Barry whose travel behaviours have changed as a direct result, and a community-supported agricultural project in Swansea.

The access that the project offers people through use of the e-cycles has also been positive – just under half of participants said that e-cycles enabled journeys that they otherwise would not have been able to make.

People felt that access to work and green spaces was helped as a result, too. E-cycles facilitated travel for participants whose mobility was limited by poor public transport, lack of access to cars, and age and health conditions.

57% of participants intended to buy an e-cycle, or bought one, during the loan period. 67% said they were likely or very likely to choose to cycle for some journeys that they previously made by car.

All of this makes for promising reading and marks a very encouraging start to this pilot project, made possible thanks to Welsh Government support.



What we learned from the Wales Active Travel Conference 2022

Article taken from: [Sustrans](#)



Sustrans Cymru's Policy and External Affairs Manager, Joe Rossiter, recaps on some of the highlights of the recent [Wales Active Travel Conference](#), delivered in partnership with Welsh Government.

We were proud to host this year's Active Travel Conference in partnership with Welsh Government.

Our theme was Delivering Active Travel for Everyone, enabling us to bring together an excellent group of speakers to discuss how we can collectively be more inclusive in our industry.

Sustrans Cymru passionately believes that everyone should have equal access to transport.

It's vitally important to access needed services in the places we live.

We want to make it easier for everyone in Wales to walk, wheel and cycle.

Increasing active travel in Wales:

Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS, started the Conference by discussing the actions the Welsh Government are taking to increase active travel across the country.

It was fantastic to be joined by the Minister as he set out the Government's commitment to active travel.

Intersectional, evidence-based approaches:

The first session of the day focused on the evidence base for active travel and inclusion:

Dawn Rahman discussed her research on mothers who cycle

Dr Zahara Batool spoke about her innovative research on visualising barriers among Pakistani-heritage families living in Bradford

Sustrans' own Dr Andy Cope presented on collaborative working with the Centre for Ageing Better on understanding how people in mid-life can be supported to take up active travel.

Each presentation provided a valuable insight into what is stopping people, and underlining the importance of taking an intersectional, evidence-based approach.

Empowering under-represented groups:

We then heard about people's lived experiences, and what the barriers are to making active travel accessible for everyone.

It was a privilege to have with us some fantastic projects from across Wales that empower underrepresented groups.

From The Gap Wales and Cardiff University, to Pedal Power and Partneriaeth Ogwen, we heard stories from the length of Wales displaying how behavioural change empowers people to use active travel.

Designing for all:

Finally, we focused on designing for inclusion.

Amanda Harris shared her powerful and impactful experience of [cycling independently following a life-changing accident in 2014](#).

Andrea Gordon from Guide Dogs Cymru, alongside Caroline Lewis from Access Design Solutions, presented an important presentation on designing for inclusion.

This highlighted the importance of designing for all within the social model of disability.

Finally, we examined the great work that Bridgend County Borough Council has been doing in removing barriers, enabling freer usage of these routes.

Each of these perspectives highlighted the practical considerations of designing active travel that is accessible for all.

Powerful stories and perspectives:

During the event, we asked attendees to give their thoughts on a shared noteboard.

It was clear that attendees were struck by the need to consult with underrepresented groups when it comes to active travel.

Only then can we understand what barriers there are and what actions will serve everyone.

It was also clear that many were struck by the powerful stories and perspectives that were heard throughout the day.

We want to say a massive thank you to everyone that took part and attended the Wales Active Travel Conference – it couldn't have happened without you!

Bike2Work Scheme

Author

Article from: Sustrans



The Bike2Work Scheme is a free employee benefit approved by the government, designed to get more people cycling to work and living healthier lives.

Bike2Work is a limitless cycle to work scheme with over 2,200 partner shops. You can choose the perfect bike and equipment for your needs and make your daily commutes what you want them to be.

Further information including videos, savings calculator and a list of partner shops can be found on the [Bike2Work Scheme website](#).

The Grapevine



Resources for Sustainable Health - Helping organisations and individuals to consider the natural environment and the health of the planet and people in everything they do.

The Resources for Sustainable Health e-catalogue gives a brief summary of all the resources produced by the Health and Sustainability Hub. The resources promoted in the e-catalogue will help teams and individuals reduce their impact on the environment and climate change, and encourage sustainable behaviour in both their work and home life. The resources are a mixture of e-briefs, reports and toolkits, which bring together research, ideas, suggestions and practical actions. Some are aimed at individual or team level, some at organisation, national, or international policy level, to support sustainability, improve health and well-being, help embed the Well-being of Future Generations Act and reduce our impact on the planet

[Resources for Sustainable Health - World Health Organization Collaborating Centre On Investment for Health and Well-being \(phwwhocc.co.uk\).](https://phwwhocc.co.uk)



CoedLleol
SmallWoods



Connecting with Nature

Mondays, 10am-1pm

**Mynydd Mawr
Woodland Park, Tumble**

**Starts 26th September
for six weeks**

A six-week programme designed to help you connect with nature, enjoy your local woodland and support your wellbeing.

Join us for:

- Nature journaling
- Forest bathing
- Nature arts and crafts
- Foraging
- And more!

Accessible to those with physical access needs. Carers / support workers are welcome to come with you.

Register on our website

coedlleol.org.uk/register

For more information, contact:

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📍 [actifwoodswalescarmarthenshire](https://www.facebook.com/actifwoodswalescarmarthenshire)



Latest from the Network

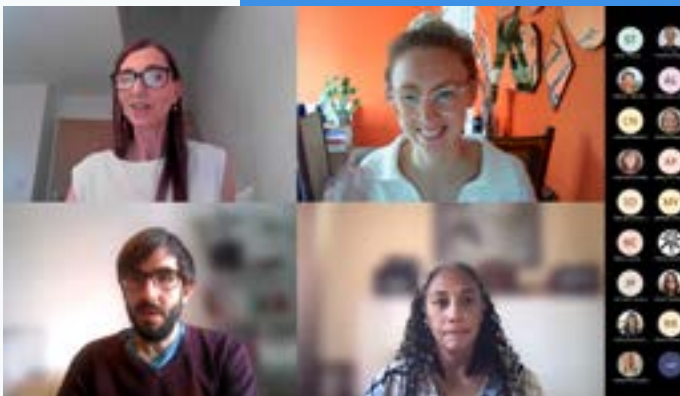
Listen to our latest podcast

Healthy Schools

What is the Welsh Network of Healthy School Scheme and Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school Scheme? What is a Whole School/Setting Approach? What does a 'healthy' School or Pre-school look like?

[Listen](#)[See all podcasts](#)

Watch our latest video



Food Security in Wales

This webinar provided a background to the current Welsh and UK legislative and policy context in relation to food security and the impact that food security has on the health and wellbeing of the population. The webinar also shared how local food partnerships are mobilising community food leaders and advocating for better access to affordable, healthy and sustainable food.

[See all videos](#)[Watch](#)

Latest News

[See all news](#)



27-09-2022

[Vaccination encouraged, as flu expected to be a major public health issue in Wales this winter](#)



22-09-2022

[Welsh public survey reveals perceived harmful impacts of climate change on mental health and cost of living](#)



20-09-2022

[Leaving the EU has changed the way in which Wales collaborates on global infectious disease preparedness, prevention and response](#)



07-09-2022

[Understanding Social Prescribing synergies key to improving health and wellbeing for all](#)



30-08-2022

[£1.5 million fund to celebrate Wales in the World Cup](#)



25-08-2022

[New plan helping people with learning disabilities into work](#)

Upcoming Events



19-10-2022, 14:00-15:00

[WEBINAR: Systems thinking and public health: an introduction](#)



26-10-2022, 14:00-15:00

[WEBINAR: Understanding the influences on mental wellbeing at an individual and community level](#)

Topics

[See all topics](#)

- A** Accidents and injury prevention
Adverse Childhood Experiences
Air Quality
Alcohol and substance use and misuse
Approaches and methods in public health practice
Arts and health
- B** Behaviour change
Biodiversity and greenspace
Built environment
Cancers
Cardiovascular conditions
Carers
Children and young people
Climate change
Communicable diseases
Community
Community assets
COVID-19
- D** Debt and benefits
Diabetes
Diet and nutrition

Early Years
Education and training
Employment
Environment
Ethnicity
Evaluation
- F** Foodborne communicable diseases
Fuel Poverty
Further, higher and tertiary education
- G** Good, fair work
- H** Health in all policies
Health inequalities
Health related behaviours
Homelessness
Housing
Housing quality
Human rights and social justice
- I** Income and resources
Influenza
- L** Learning difficulties
LGBTQ+
- M** Maternal and new born health
Men
Mental health conditions
Mental ill-health
Mental wellbeing
- N** Natural environment
Non-communicable diseases
- O** Offenders
Older adults
Oral health
- P** People
Physical activity
Planning
Poverty
Precarious work
Preschool (including WNHPSS)
Prevention in healthcare
- R** Respiratory conditions
- S** School (Including WNHPSS)
Sexual health
Sexually Transmitted Infections
Smoking and vaping
Social capital
Spirituality
Stress, coping and resilience
Suicide and suicide prevention
Sustainable development
Systems thinking in public health
- T** Transport
- U** Unemployment
- W** Water and sanitation
Wellbeing of Future Generations
Wider determinants of health
Women
Working age adults

Next Issue

Protecting the mental well-being of current and future generations

Mental well-being relates to our ability to feel confident with ourselves, develop and maintain supportive relationships with our families, friends and communities, have a sense of purpose, live and work productively, cope with daily stresses and adapt positively to change.

For our next e-bulletin we would welcome articles which look at national, regional or local initiatives, programmes or policy changes which encourage and promote good mental well-being throughout the life course.

Things to consider when sending us your article:

- Maximum of 500 words
- Please send us the text in a word document along with a Welsh translation if possible
- Please include any images or logos in a separate jpg or eps format
- Any images you send need to have the correct copyright

Please send articles to publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk by 26 October 2022.

