

£18 million announced for cycle training for children and their families

- government invests record £18 million toward cycle training for children and families
- funding will ensure children are cycling-confident and whole family groups can receive bespoke training sessions through the Bikeability programme
- as restrictions are cautiously lifted in line with the coronavirus (COVID-19) roadmap, government encourages parents and pupils to choose active travel as a safe and healthy way to get around

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has today (9 April 2021) announced £18 million for cycle training across the country to ensure children and their families have the confidence to choose active travel, as the government encourages everyone to choose to walk or cycle where possible.

The funding, which is managed via the [Bikeability Trust](#) charity, will go toward delivering high-quality, practical on-road cycle training as a modern day equivalent of the 'cycling proficiency' scheme many parents will themselves have undertaken during their school days.

Bikeability, brought in from 2007, goes beyond the playground, teaching children to cycle safely on modern roads. At different levels of the scheme, children will learn how to:

- develop early cycle handling and awareness skills (Bikeability Balance)
- master pedalling (Bikeability Learn to Ride)
- prepare for on-road cycling (Level 1)
- cycle on single-lane roads and simple junctions (Level 2)
- handle busier streets, complex junctions and roundabouts (Level 3)

And, for families looking to improve their confidence cycling together, local authorities can offer bespoke Bikeability Family training sessions with an instructor, to help them feel confident in a range of scenarios ranging from a weekend ride to commuting and taking the children to school.

Today's investment will help ensure children are road-ready on their bikes as schools and families prepare for the summer term.

Physical activity like walking and cycling is proven to have numerous benefits, both in terms of fitness, wellbeing and attentiveness in school, and research into Bikeability cycle training specifically also shows that, after taking part, parents were more likely to feel confident in allowing their child to cycle independently.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Cycling is such a fun and healthy way for pupils to get to school, and we want as many as possible to make it their choice of transport. With social distancing still a necessity, the more people who walk or cycle, the more we can keep ease pressure on public transport as people return to normal life.

But we know not all children, or parents, feel bike-confident. Today's funding will kick-start our plans to provide Bikeability training to all children by 2025, giving the next generation of cyclists a life skill and the confidence they need to choose a more active way to travel.

Since its launch in 2006, more than 3.5 million children have taken part in Bikeability training, learning basic cycle handling skills, risk assessment, and how to ride safely and confidently on the road.

Emily Cherry, Executive Director of the Bikeability Trust, said:

The commitment of government to fund Bikeability in this next year is hugely welcomed as we seek to ensure that every child can access cycling as a life skill by 2025. This record investment will allow us to reach more children and, importantly, their families too, as a result of additional funding for our Family module.

Personally, I know the value of Bikeability cycle training for both children and their parents, having taken part in family training with my teacher husband and our children. Now, they cycle to school daily using the skills they learned from the training and, as a family, we continue to enjoy cycling together. Bikeability is the first step to ensure that adults and children alike have the confidence and competence to cycle.

Pupils of all ages should consider walking or cycling to school, especially if they live a short distance away from their school or college.

For those who live further afield and who are using public transport, plan ahead, allow more time for journeys and follow [safer travel advice](#), including wearing a face covering (unless under the age of 11 or you are exempt), social distancing where possible and regularly sanitising your hands.

For those who are driving, they should avoid sharing a car with someone outside of their household or [support bubble](#).