

My ref:
Your ref:
Date: 9th August 2017
Contact: Councillor Ian Bates
Telephone: 07799 133467
E Mail: ian.bates@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive
Local Government Association
Layden House
76-78 Turnmill Street
London
EC1M 5LG

Box1102
Shire Hall
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

Dear Mark,

Re: Bikeability Cycle Training

Firstly, it was very nice to have met you up in Birmingham recently.

I am writing to you to alert you to funding issues related to the provision of Bikeability Cycle Training.

The Department of Transport (DfT) has until recently fully funded Bikeability in Cambridgeshire, and thus we have been able to offer the opportunity to all pupils in every school across the County. Levels of take up have been increasing year on year, and this supports many of our objectives around public health and encouraging people to be independent, as well as helping people to access employment and training opportunities, thus contributing to a strong economy.

As a Cambridge resident yourself you will know that young people want to and are able, to travel independently by bike from a relatively young age. Clearly we want to support this by equipping them with the necessary skills to ensure that they are safe, as well as building their awareness and respect for other road users.

Although the overall funding pot for Bikeability at DfT has remained constant, the demand upon this money has grown each year as more local authorities establish their cycle training programmes, and build aspirations around getting more people cycling.

This now means that the DfT are unable to give every authority the entire amount of funding that they would like, and thus we are now having to explore opportunities to seek other 'top up' funding. I am aware that our neighbouring authorities are in the same position, and all are wrestling with the same issue.

To date we have been lucky enough to have some departmental underspends to use to address the funding gap, but looking ahead we are having to consider sponsorship and/or charging either schools or parents in part for the training.

I am very concerned on a number of counts. Firstly that valuable officer time will now be spent pursuing funding options, processing payments, and undertaking lots of fresh administration work to support something that until now has worked simply and efficiently. The other great concern is that take up levels will now drop, take up in geographic areas will vary, and there is a possibility that those who would benefit most from the training will not receive it.

It would be very much appreciated if you were able to look into this please Mark, not only on behalf of Cambridgeshire, but for all local authorities, and for all aspiring young cyclists.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A.C.B.' followed by a flourish.

Ian Bates

Chairman Economy and Environment Committee

Councillor for Fenstanton, Hemingford Abbots, Houghton & Wyton, Hemingford Grey, Hilton

CC Members of the Economy and Environment Committee