

Case Study: Uniting the Active Travel Movement

Removing Barriers to Cycling:
Greenleys Junior School

Powered by Sport England Place investment



Removing Barriers to Cycling: Greenleys Junior School

The Starting Point: Access Without Opportunity

Greenleys Junior School is located **close to local walking and cycling routes**, with most pupils living nearby. Despite this, cycling participation was limited by a key barrier: **access to suitable bikes**.

While around 71–75% of pupils were already travelling actively, **many did not own a bike or had one that was unsafe or unsuitable for Bikeability training**. This significantly restricted participation, with some pupils unable to take part altogether due to limited availability of appropriate bikes.

With **60% of pupils eligible for pupil premium**, these challenges created clear inequalities in access, limiting opportunities to develop cycling skills, confidence and road safety awareness.

"Access to bikes was a major barrier: many pupils either did not have a bike or had one that was unsafe or unsuitable for Bikeability sessions. This meant participation in sessions was low, with some children unable to take part at all because there were not enough appropriate bikes available. As a result, uptake of Bikeability and opportunities to learn to ride safely were significantly limited."

**Alastair Chapman -
Assistant Headteacher
Greenleys Junior School**



The Spark: Learning from Others and Unlocking Support

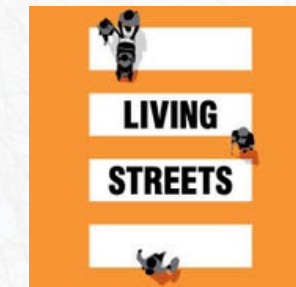
Through a place-based test-and-learn approach, Greenleys was supported to address these challenges by connecting with local partners and learning from other schools. Key contributors included:



School Leadership: Alastair Chapman and the leadership team prioritised active travel, dedicating time and focus to removing barriers and embedding cycling opportunities within the school.



Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC): Provided funding, access to schemes, and guidance on developing sustainable active travel approaches.



Living Streets: Delivered the Travel Tracker (WOW programme), enabling the school to monitor progress and motivate pupils through incentives.



Cycle Saviours: Supported bike safety and maintenance, ensuring all equipment used by pupils was roadworthy and suitable.



Two Mile Ash School: Shared practical insights and real-life examples, with Jake Saville's approach providing inspiration for developing and expanding active travel.

MK PEP

MK PEP: Charlotte, MK Place Community Officer, connected partners, shared learning, and helped Greenleys access the support and resources needed to strengthen active travel.

What Changed: From Programme to Culture

Removing barriers at Greenleys Junior School was not about introducing a single initiative, but creating the right conditions for change. By focusing on access, skills and sustained engagement, the school shifted from a position where cycling opportunities were limited into an approach that enabled participation, built confidence, and supported a growing culture of active travel across the school.

What had changed through a coordinated place-based approach:



ACCESS



• SKILLS •



ENGAGEMENT •



• LEARNING

Access & Inclusion

- Purchase of 12 new bikes for school use
- Installation of secure storage and maintenance equipment
- Ability for pupils to borrow bikes, ensuring all could participate regardless of personal circumstances

Skills & Participation

- Delivery of Bikeability Level 1 and Level 2 training
- Introduction of Learn to Ride opportunities for Year 4 pupils for the first time
- Significant increase in participation across key year groups

Engagement & Behaviour

- Introduction of the Living Streets Travel Tracker (WOW programme)
- Increased motivation through rewards and recognition
- Strengthened use of Modeshift STARS to support travel planning

Shared Learning in Practice

- Continued engagement with approaches used at Two Mile Ash School, helping shape delivery and provide inspiration
- Ongoing collaboration with partners to strengthen delivery and sustain impact



Unlocking Access Over Time: From Barrier to Participation

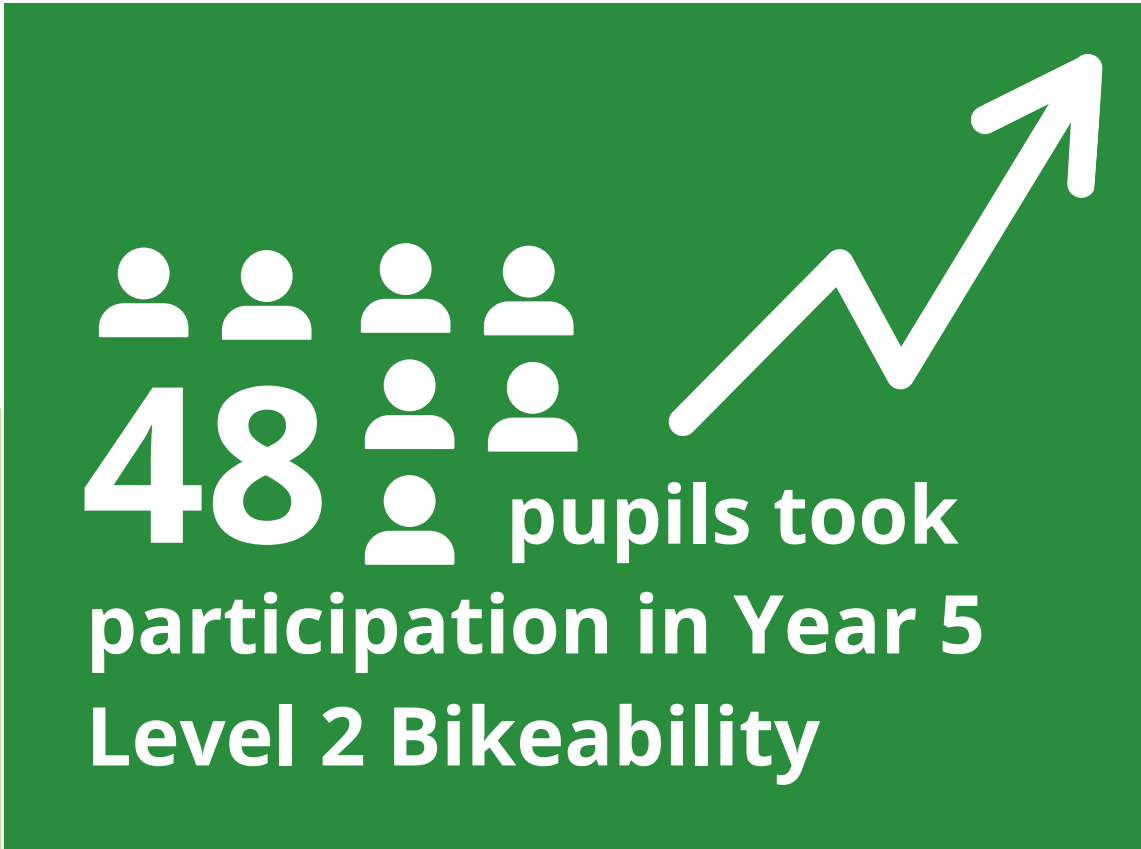
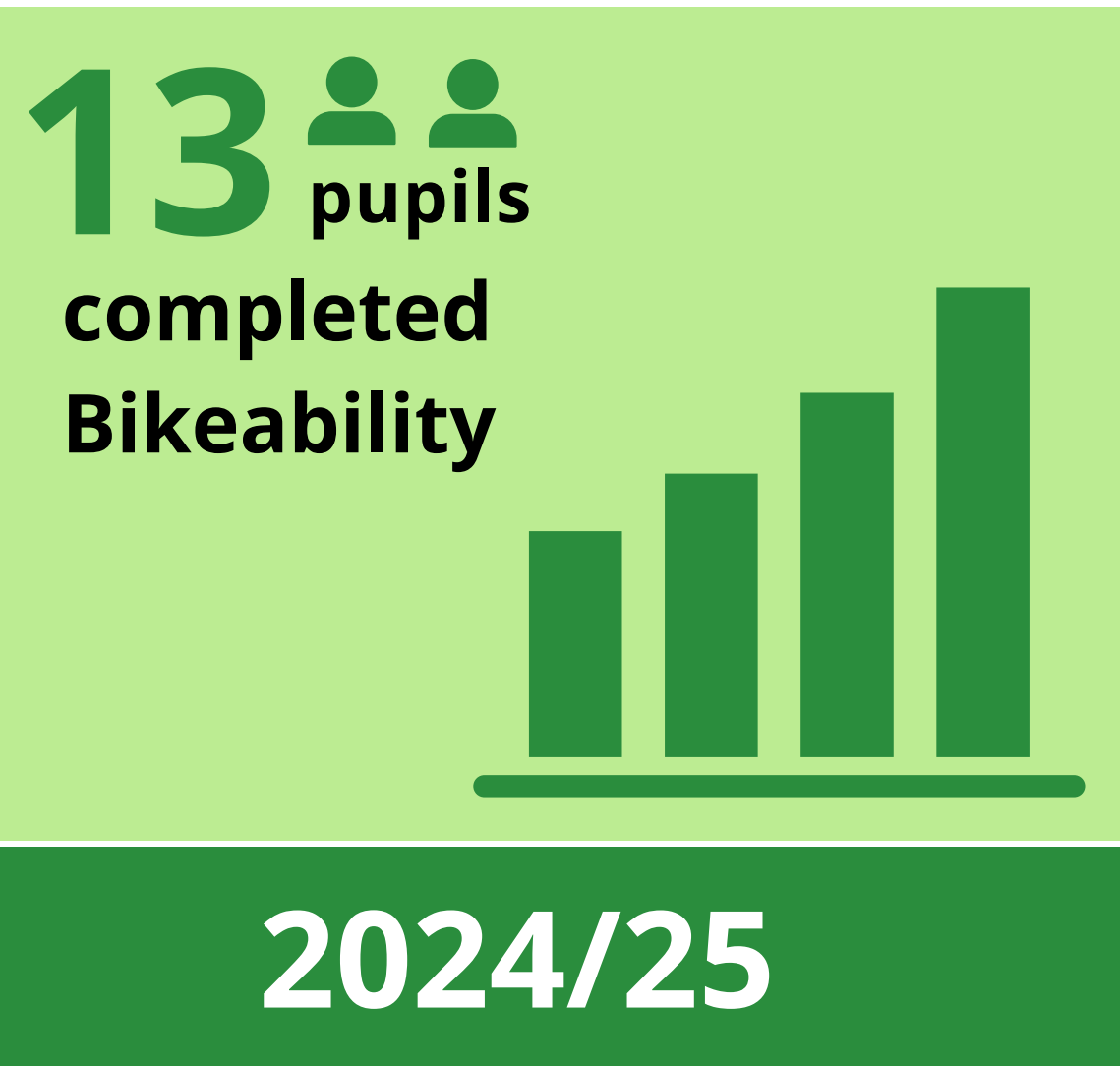
In **2024/25**, opportunities for children at Greenleys to take part in Bikeability **were extremely limited**. Only **13 pupils completed training, following two years with no provision at all**, and participation depended heavily on whether a child could bring a suitable bike from home. Demand was clear but without access to appropriate equipment, **many pupils were unable to take part**.

Through **Sport England's Place Investment funding**, the introduction of 12 school-owned bikes, alongside secure storage and maintenance, began to change this during the following academic year. By **2025/26**, this investment enabled a significant increase in participation, with around **75% of Year 5 pupils signing up for Bikeability** and **Year 4 pupils accessing Learn to Ride and Level 1 for the first time**. With bikes available to all, sessions could run at scale and were no longer restricted by availability or condition of personal equipment.

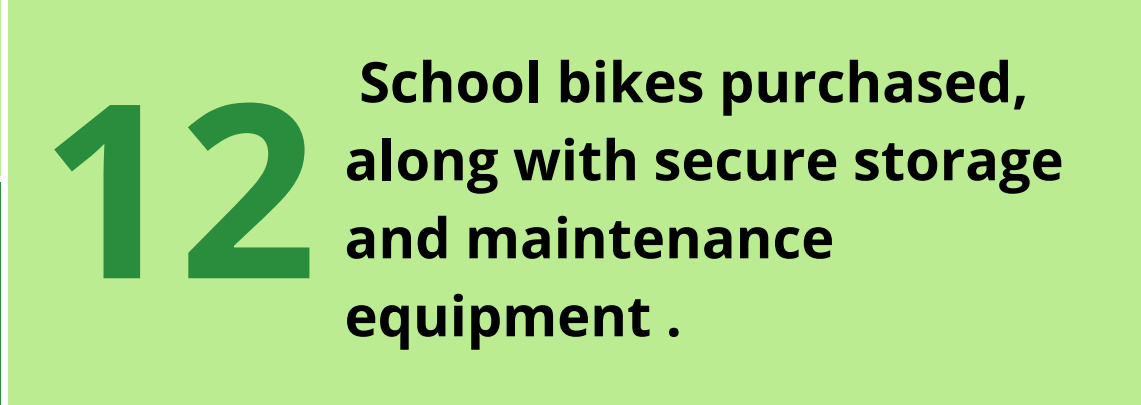
As participation increased, so did wider engagement. Data from the **Living Streets Travel Tracker** shows active travel rising from **71.6% in the first half term to over 90%, reaching 93%**, alongside a growing presence of pupils cycling in the local area. This steady progression reflects how improving access over time enabled more children to build the skills, confidence and opportunity to travel actively.

Measurable Outcomes

These outcomes demonstrate how removing access barriers can drive both participation and sustained behaviour change.



2025/26



2025/26





Greenleys Junior School:

“Charlotte (MK Place Community Officer) has been very helpful in organising opportunities to talk and learn from others, such as Jake from Two Mile Ash School, as well as people from the council.”

“The test and learn project, facilitated by Charlotte, has also allowed myself the opportunity to meet other local leaders, learn from their experience and access other resources which have all supported the increase in active travel. We have been guided through Modeshift Stars and learned more about the Access to Bikes scheme through Raeesa and Hayley at the council; learned more about various ideas and approaches thanks to Jake at Two Mile Ash; accessed support from Cycle Saviours to ensure our children are riding safe bikes; gained free access to the Living Streets Travel Tracker.”

**Alastair Chapman -
Assistant Headteacher, Greenleys Junior School**

Building for the Future: Sustaining and Scaling Impact

The work at Greenleys Junior School has **established a strong foundation through a test-and-learn approach**, demonstrating how targeted investment in access to bikes can significantly increase participation. **The next phase focuses on sustaining this progress, strengthening infrastructure, and ensuring active travel remains embedded in school life over the long term.**

A key priority is strengthening infrastructure to support continued growth. As an older school, Greenleys does not currently have covered bike storage, and expanding safe, secure facilities will be important as more pupils begin cycling. Alongside this, the school is building on its awareness of available support, including the Access to Bikes scheme and partnerships with organisations such as Cycle Saviours, which will support future referrals and further reduce barriers for pupils, particularly important given that **60% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium**. Greenleys is also exploring opportunities through **Milton Keynes City Council's Active Travel Grant**, which could support improved cycle parking provision, with Charlotte from Leap offering support with bid writing and applications.

Looking ahead, the focus is on long-term sustainability. With a strong foundation already in place through Modeshift STARS, responsibility for maintaining and developing active travel will transition to the Head of PE. This will ensure the work continues to evolve while maintaining a clear focus on reducing inequalities and ensuring all pupils can access cycling opportunities.

The success of the Greenleys project has also helped shape wider ambitions across the city. Leap is currently seeking further **Sport England Place Investment funding** to support active travel initiatives in **two additional primary schools**, using the learning from Greenleys, Two Mile Ash and other local partners to inspire and enable change across more communities.



Uniting the Active Travel Movement

For more information or support in developing active travel in your school, please contact:

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