

National acclaim for the capital's I Bike scheme

An innovative scheme aimed at getting more pupils on their bikes, which was piloted at schools in Edinburgh, has won a Scottish Transport Award.

The 12 schools involved in the I Bike scheme have reported an increase in the number of children cycling to class, as well as a fall in the number of those being driven.

Run in partnership by transport charity Sustrans and the City of Edinburgh Council, I Bike was launched in 2009 and is set to be rolled out to more schools across the Capital and to other local authorities following its success.

The programme aims to identify and break down barriers preventing children from cycling at both primary and secondary school level, then uses tailored schemes to encourage them to cycle both to school and for leisure.

Since I Bike's launch, the number of pupils regularly cycling to school has risen from 10.7% to 19.3%, while the number being driven dropped from 23.9% to 17.2%.

I Bike was awarded the Best Practice in Travel to School and Work schemes at the transport awards.

Each school involved had a bike crew which leads the project. Schemes included bike and helmet decorating, "hi-viz" days when pupils wore bright clothes to school, and "beauty and the bike", specifically aimed at secondary school girls after Edinburgh University research revealed that older girls are more likely to become less physically active than older boys.



Convener of

Transport &
Environment –
Lesley Hinds

Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds said: “Congratulations to all of those involved in the I Bike scheme, it is fantastic to see that such an innovative project to encourage pupils to get out of cars and onto their bikes is paying off.

“Regular exercise improves the concentration of pupils in the classroom as well as keeping them fit and healthy. We will continue to work with organisations such as Sustrans to ensure that Edinburgh is as safe a city as possible for cyclists of all ages.”

John Lauder, National Director of Sustrans Scotland, said, “It’s great that Sustrans work with schools in Edinburgh has won this award. Our project really works, with levels of cycling to school doubling in the first year of having a member of Sustrans staff working with them.

“We’re delighted that City of Edinburgh Council continues to offer support for this work, which is helping to keep our kids healthy and active, while cutting down on congestion and pollution, too. We hope the council will be inspired to allow even more children to benefit from the project.”