

eBike provision for staff during the COVID-19 response

May 2020

North East eBike company Ride Electric launched a scheme loaning out eBikes to staff from Newcastle Hospitals and other organisations providing frontline services during COVID-19.

As staff were discouraged from using public transport, many were interested in using active travel methods to get to and from work.

Ride Electric approached businesses in the region to help increase the supply of bikes.

The problem

During the response to the COVID-19 outbreak staff were discouraged from using public transport to travel to and from work. Staff reported concerns about the risk of infection from using public transport, the lack of availability in unsociable hours and the reduction in provision in the immediate response to COVID-19.

A number of thefts of bikes from outside the hospital buildings had been reported.

What happened

Ride Electric approached the Trust with the offer of the loan of e-Bikes to staff to help them commute safely to and from work.

The sustainability team were aware of staff members who had had bicycles stolen and they were approached with the offer of an e-Bike on loan.

Ride Electric then approached several North East Businesses for funding to enable more bikes to be made available.

Direct approaches were made as well as press releases to printed media and interviews for regional TV and radio.

The outcome

As a result 5 staff members have been offered a long term loan of an e-Bike.

Through the Trak system installed on the bikes we are able to ascertain that 903 miles have been travelled in total.

The impact

“The bike has made the commute much more sustainable for myself and cut my commute time down from 1hr each way using bus/metro/walking/bike, to 25 minutes.”

“Now I have the e-bike I can ride 30km in one session. It has given me my confidence back, I feel confident being on the road and also my fitness levels has risen and I have also lost weight.”

“I am not a car driver and don't feel comfortable being on public transport, the e-bike has given me my freedom back and I am free to travel where ever I need to be.”

“With more cycle lanes opening and security tightened at the RVI and the FRH, I will be using my e-bike through the summer and autumn in the knowledge that my bike is safe at work.”

“After a day of work, riding the bike home is a great stress reliever, I am able to reflect on my work day and by the time I'm home I'm relaxed and refreshed.”



Next Steps

As a key objective of the sustainability work of the Trust is to increase the uptake of active and sustainable travel methods, the potential to use e-bikes for pool bikes is great.