

Increasing the use of shared micromobility by disabled people

A pilot to raise awareness and build skills



Project summary

The use of shared micromobility (bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters), has grown rapidly in recent years. Use of shared micromobility by disabled people has so far been an under-researched topic. However, the question is crucial given that 16 million people in the UK, about a quarter of the total population, are disabled under the Equality Act definition.¹

This project focused on disabled people whose access needs are currently met by the existing shared micromobility vehicles available as part of the UK's on-street fleet. Therefore, the findings are not representative of all disabled people. The project set out to analyse the impact of awareness, skills and confidence building activities on the use of shared micromobility by disabled people. A competitive bidding process was followed in order to select delivery partners.

Key info

Location: Salford

Time frame: February 2025 to January 2026

Activities: Awareness raising, plus in-person skills and confidence training for disabled people who can ride the existing vehicle types

Project funding: Motability Foundation

Delivery lead: Cycling UK

Project management, monitoring & evaluation: CoMoUK

Operators: Lime and Beryl

Local authorities: TfGM and Salford Council

An advisory group was convened to support the project and was made up of representatives from: Wheels for Wellbeing; Abilitynet; and DPTAC (the disabled persons transport advisory committee). This report reveals the key findings from the research and sets out recommendations for influential stakeholder groups.



Front cover: A shared micromobility user with a limb difference, riding a shared e-bike

This page: A shared micromobility user who is neurodiverse, riding a shared e-scooter

Objectives

The project had three stated objectives:

- 1** Investigate a range of outreach methods to raise awareness and interest to join the engagement activities and use shared micromobility.
- 2** Co-design and test out different types of engagement activities in different settings to identify and overcome barriers to use.
- 3** Analyse the project results and understand which initiatives are most impactful at improving access to shared micromobility services.

¹ [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2022 to 2023](#)

What did the project deliver?



15

Training sessions over 4 months



41

Training participants



74,000

Impressions from social media content marketing advertising the training



128,000

Engagements on awareness raising social media campaign posts



A shared micromobility user with a chronic illness, riding a shared e-scooter

The project tested a range of different **awareness raising techniques**, from direct promotion with local disability charities, to leaflets, stalls and social media campaigns. The latter was enhanced by the creation of new videos and images with disabled people represented and the expertise of disabled persons-led marketing agency Purple Goat.

We also offered a set of **in-person training sessions to boost skills and confidence** in the use of the scheme apps and riding the e-bikes and e-scooters. Cycling UK offered training in safe off-road spaces as well as led rides in the surrounding area. The sessions were run by experienced staff trained in working with disabled people and each session was tailored to the needs of the participant.

"The session was well structured, and the instructors explained everything clearly, which made it easy to learn. The hands-on practice was the most helpful part, as it gave me confidence."

Summary of findings

Percentages shown on this page are calculated based on the numbers of individuals providing feedback from the two engagement routes. There were 41 training participants and 47 responses to the social media campaign

Outreach and promotion

Promotion via networks of local charities and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) provided the most effective way of encouraging people to come along to the training sessions and then go on to ride. 51% of participants heard about the training through word of mouth or emails sent to their local group.

The greatest number of engagements came from the targeted social media campaign. The combination of engaging stories and the offer of a free rides caught the attention of disabled people who had not used shared modes before.

Lack of awareness

71% of those responding to the social media campaign said they hadn't used the modes before.

48% of participants didn't know how the shared micromobility schemes worked before taking part in the training.

"[I was] surprised by all the misconceptions of e-bikes. It wasn't what I thought."

When giving feedback on the sessions, 20% of all responses highlighted the benefit of **learning new information**.

Training and learning opportunities

Training participants recognised the potential benefits of using a shared e-bike or e-scooter but reported that they had not used them as they didn't feel safe and or were unsure how to use the app or ride a vehicle.

43% - "I didn't feel safe to use a bike/e-scooter"

27% - "I didn't know how to use the app"

After the training sessions, participants were looking forward to using the modes independently and many reported an increase in confidence.



A shared micromobility user who is deaf, pictured with a shared e-bike

Supporting ongoing independent use

Following the training, 71% of participants said that they were "quite likely" or "very likely" to use the Starling Bank e-bikes independently and 43% stated the same expectation for their ongoing use of Lime e-scooter.

"I found use them very easy...actually easier than I thought they would be."

Tracking the use of operator codes given out for free rides indicated that over **50%** of training participants had gone on to ride independently within a month of the project concluding.

Ongoing barriers

Feedback from training participants and the social media engagement campaign indicate that there are several ongoing barriers to use, including financial limitations and the requirement to have a driving license to ride a shared e-scooter.

"The laws surrounding e-bikes and e-scooters are confusing."

Vehicle design continues to be a barrier for some disabled people, and the current legislation around e-scooters can exclude potential users.

Stakeholder recommendations

In order to further increase the accessibility and use of shared micromobility among disabled people we recommend the following actions.

UK Government and devolved administrations

- ✓ Remove the requirement for a driving licence to access shared e-scooters in the anticipated Low-Speed Zero Emission Vehicle (LZEV) legislation to legalise low powered zero emission options. This will include e-scooters and potentially many other items that could benefit disabled people. The need for a driving licence is a barrier to take up which disproportionately affects disabled people.¹
- ✓ Roll out of inclusive e-scooter training through a nationally recognised standard for e-scooter training, to boost rider skills and confidence.
- ✓ Ensure both the national cycle training standard, Bikeability, and the scooter equivalent include the option for training in use of the apps of the shared schemes in accessible formats.
- ✓ Open up access to non-standard vehicles such as a seated e-scooter, through LZEV legislation. The project has shown the value of supporting access to current vehicle types, but there is a need for other vehicle types to support more disabled people to benefit from shared micromobility.



- ✓ Continue to support the roll out of safe and inclusive infrastructure for shared micromobility in the form of segregated paths and accessible parking bays.

Operators and local authorities

- ✓ Develop strategies for inclusive marketing to disabled people to encourage participation and increase awareness of opportunities. Marketing assets should include greater representation of disabled people.
- ✓ Build strong links with Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) to promote the use of the schemes and travel training offered.
- ✓ Simplify the sign-up process to make sure apps are fully accessible.
- ✓ Provide information and training on the digital aspects of using the shared micromobility apps. This could be a relatively low cost, high impact intervention offered through existing travel support centres and projects.
- ✓ Adapt current national cycle training programme, Bikeability, for adults to include inclusive sessions for disabled people and carers.
- ✓ Provide inclusive shared e-scooter training so people have the knowledge and skills to ride safely and legally.
- ✓ Ensure there is a high density of vehicles which are regularly checked to be reliable. This is an important issue for all riders but is key for disabled riders with greater mobility challenges.
- ✓ Provide customer service support for disabled people especially if stranded due to a fault with the schemes.

¹ [UK Government statistics](#) from 2023 (published this year) show that 60% of disabled adults aged 17 or over held a full driving licence, compared with 78% of non-disabled adults in the same age group

How to deliver a successful project

The experience of delivering this project provides a set of advice for others wanting to introduce similar initiatives. Below, this advice has been grouped thematically:

Training design

- ☐ Hold training in a safe and accessible location with options to progress onto cycle paths and roads with support.
- ☐ Offer frequent training opportunities at different times of the day and week with different modes.
- ☐ Provide shared e-scooters as well as shared bikes as a useful alternative for individuals with specific mobility needs.
- ☐ Link to a scheme with non-standard cycles where possible for those who cannot use standard shared bikes.
- ☐ Free or discounted opportunities to access the rental services help remove or reduce financial barriers to using such schemes.
- ☐ Aim for smaller group sizes where possible to allow more personalised engagement.
- ☐ Ensure that insurance is in place for training participants.

Marketing and promotion

- ☐ Employ marketing messages that centre on convenience and mental health, illustrated with personal stories from disabled people.
- ☐ Build networks with DPOs, who have existing relationships with potential participants .
- ☐ Target outreach through DPOs supporting people whose access needs can be currently met by shared micromobility vehicle types (primarily two-wheel vehicles).
- ☐ Simpler stills images had higher click through rates than video content.
- ☐ Allow time for word-of-mouth promotion to build up. It continues to be a highly effective method of engaging with people.

Training delivery

- ☐ Deploy experienced staff who understand inclusive practice and adaptive delivery, neurodiversity awareness and inclusive language and communication.
- ☐ Tailor support to the individual by adapting pace and activities to meet the participants' specific access needs, as well as by providing access to a variety of equipment.
- ☐ Collect feedback from training participants and encourage reflection by those delivering training, to improve delivery.

Data collection analysis

- ☐ Use a functional model for collecting impairment data as there may be a reluctance to disclose disabilities by participants.
- ☐ Collect feedback on impacts at the time of training rather than relying on responses to follow on surveys.
- ☐ Secure support of the operators and data sharing agreements to report on the use of the modes after the intervention is complete.



A shared micromobility user who is deaf, adjusting the seat of a shared e-bike

Contact

For further information on this piece of research and on CoMoUK's other work on shared transport, please contact info@como.org.uk.

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