

28 January 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place & Client services	Author	Emily Harrup
Title	Colchester eCargo Bike Library project update		☎ 506476
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This is an update on the Energy Saving Trust/Department for Transport funded eCargo bike trial project. Significant progress on implementing the project has been made, despite challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions.

1.2 Key areas of progress include:

- All 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers delivered by mid November 2020.
- Eleven eCargo bikes and one eTrailer given on long term loan to nine project champions
- Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park provided with an eCargo bike and eTrailer
- Induction and training session for 10 Highwoods volunteers and 2 Highwoods staff took place on December 19th 2020
- Transport & Sustainability team using eCargo bikes in delivery of project and for other work related needs
- Monthly feedback is provided by champions on number of miles, number of journeys, operation of the bike and infrastructure.
- Feedback to date shows our Champions have replaced 1,229 miles worth of car/van journeys by eCargo bike between August and December 2020.
- From January 2021 we will be using the monthly data to calculate carbon and emission savings. This emissions saving data is compared to had these journeys been made by car or van to demonstrate the positive contribution the eCargo bike project is making towards our climate emergency commitment.
- Maintenance contract tendered and awarded to Repair, Reuse, Recycle CIC who are also one of our project Champions
- Over 50 people including CBC staff, CBC Cllrs, (Cllr Cory, Cllr Goss and Cllr King) nine project champions and their staff, Council volunteers and potential pool users trained to Bikeability level 3 by Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP)
- Colchester eCargo bike library branding designed, printed and installed on bikes
- Web pages further developed to promote short term loan scheme
- Project launched via press release on 15th December 2020
- Free 'hire' agreement formulated for short term loan of six pool bikes to external organisations
- Initial interest in a short term loan from University of Essex, Colchester Borough Homes maintenance team, Ellisons Solicitors, QGO, the Food Bank and Enform
- Ideas for how eCargo bikes can support town centre businesses being discussed with the BID

1.3 Key next steps include:

- Complete roll out of CBC bikes to CBC teams, including training and induction
- Roll out pool bikes for short term loans and promote further to increase interest

- Support champions to increase the usage of their bikes
- Work with the BID to use eCargo bikes to support local businesses
- Develop the Local Delivery Pilot aspect of the project which focuses on delivery drivers and put together a funding bid to the LDP.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 That the content of the report be noted.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 As above

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are required.

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5. Background Information

5.1 Energy Saving Trust/Department for Transport grant

In May 2020 the Council were successful in a bid to the Energy Saving Trust for the provision of 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers. A further additional grant was secured for a frame and tarpaulin for one of the eTrailers bringing the total grant to £137,452.90. This grant was the 3rd highest across the country behind Sheffield City Council (32 eCargo bikes) and Cambridgeshire (30 eCargo bikes). The grant was capital only to fund the bikes and trailers. All other costs to implement and run the project are the Council's

5.2 Delivery of eCargo bikes/trailers

By November 2020 all 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers had been delivered. One eTrailer and eleven eCargo bikes have been provided to our nine external project champions. They have all signed a legal agreement giving them long term loan of the bike/trailer in exchange for monthly feedback and help with publicity, marketing and breaking down the barriers to eCargo bike use/take up.

5.3 Security and Storage for Council bikes/trailers and pool

Security enhancements to an external building were completed in November and the Council bikes and pool bikes are now being stored between Rowan House, Highwoods Country Park, Castle Park, Culver Square and in due course Ipswich Museums. Two gold standard locks have been purchased for each bike/trailer. A presentation was made in December at a webinar arranged by the Energy Saving Trust focused on our approach to storage, maintenance and security.

5.4 Maintenance

A maintenance contract was put out to tender and the contract has been awarded to Repair Reuse Recycle CIC who are also one of our project champions. The contract includes annual and interim servicing, a breakdown recovery service and ad hoc repairs.

5.5 Bikeability

The grant requires that all riders of the eCargo bikes have to be trained to Bikeability level 3. To date Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) have trained over 50 CBC staff, (including 3 of our Councillors, Cllr Cory, Cllr Goss and Cllr King) our nine champions and their staff, Council volunteers particularly at Highwoods country park, and potential pool users.

5.6 Publicity and Branding

Branding for the Colchester eCargo Bike Library has been developed by our communications team and installed on the bikes. The branding is also being installed on Champion bikes but is smaller so that they can add their own branding as well. The web pages www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary have been further developed to include photos of the pool bikes and a demonstration of the carrying capacity of each one.

The project was launched on November 15th with a press release and photo of Council staff on branded eCargo bikes. A physical launch was delayed due to the lock down restrictions.

Champions have provided publicity through their own social media feeds and newsletters.

5.7 Champions

The bikes/trailers are being used by our champions for many different activities. For example Norwegian Bakers are using their Christiana for local deliveries 3 times a week. Repair Reuse Recycle are using their Tender 2500 to attend Dr Bike services they provide and to collect and deliver bikes. Wivenhoe Town Council are using their Urban

Arrow Shorty daily for litter picking, maintenance jobs and opening/closing facilities. Colchester Hospital have used their Butchers & Bicycle and Tender 1500 Post & Parcel for transporting waste, transferring equipment and samples around the site. Feedback on performance of the bike and infrastructure is collected each month and is giving us valuable insight into the practical usage of eCargo bikes in Colchester.

5.8 Council bikes

A bike and trailer are based at both Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park. The bikes have been used a little so far but not the trailers, as it is intended that these will mainly be used by volunteers and with the Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns it has been difficult to carry out inductions.

On December 19th the first induction and training session was carried out with 10 Highwoods Volunteers and 2 Highwoods country park council staff. It went very well and the volunteers were very enthusiastic.

Now that the other bikes and trailer are accessible from Rowan House, discussions will take place with the zones and other team about using them.

Ipswich Museum staff are awaiting Bikeability training which needs to be provided by Suffolk County Council, however some of the staff do not have bikes or helmets to do the training on, and with the continual changes in restrictions with Covid-19 this is taking some time to arrange and coordinate.

The Transport and Sustainability team have been using the eCargo bikes for example delivering the branding, delivering bikes to champions (and cycling back on the folding Brompton) delivering inductions, providing demonstrations to those interested in short term loans etc

5.9 Usage

The majority of our champions are now actively using their bikes, though the pandemic and restrictions are impacting on some of them. The table below shows the number of eCargo bike miles to December 2020 against active champions each month.

So far 1,229 miles of car/van miles have been replaced by eCargo bikes.

Now all of our champions have their bikes and are in the main using them. From January 2021 we will start a more in-depth analysis of the numbers and feedback including calculating the positive environmental impact the eCargo bikes/trailers are having in replacing car/van journeys.

Month	Total miles replaced by eCargo bike	Active Champions (inc CBC)
August	66	2
September	148	7
October	254	8
November	415	10
December	346	7
Total miles to date	1,229	

5.10 Pool Bikes

There are 7 pool bikes currently available for short term loans (an extra one due to one of our champions dropping out)

A free 'hire' agreement has been developed with the legal and insurance team, for use of the pool bikes.

The pool bikes will be loaned out for 1 to 3 months depending on usage. The only cost to the organisation trying out the bike will be to fund their Bikeability training (currently £10 with SERP) and a monthly £25 fee to the council to cover insurance for the bike. Public Liability and goods they are carrying will need to be covered by their own insurance.

To date the following organisations have expressed interest in trialling an eCargo bike/trailer, University of Essex, Colchester Borough Homes maintenance team, QGO, the Food Bank, Ellisons Solicitors and Enform. We have also had 3 emails expressing interest following the press release.

We are also discussing with the town centre Business Improvement District Manager the potential for a cargo bike to be based at their offices to support local small business with home delivery.

5.11 Next Steps

Complete roll out of CBC bikes to CBC teams, including training and induction

Roll out pool bikes for short term loans and promote further to increase interest

Support champions to increase the usage of their bikes

Work with the BID to use eCargo bikes to support local businesses

Develop the Local Delivery Pilot aspect of the project which focuses on delivery drivers and put together a funding bid to the LDP.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 None though it is intended to put together an Equality Impact Assessment. Also there is a Local Delivery Pilot element to the project which will focus on harder to reach audiences which is yet to be explored.

7. Standard References

- 7.1 There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Appendices

There are no appendices.

Background Papers

There are no background papers