

Using Sport To Support Economic Growth

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An Introduction

- Managing Director of Sphere Connect
- UK & Ireland President for ACES Europe
- European Cycling Directeur

Over 25 years in the sports / commerce and leisure sector and 15 years in the cycling industry – giving me specialist expertise and depth of knowledge and currently work with leading cycling industry brands in the UK and internationally.

I have operated across the public and commercial sectors within the UK and Europe, including at Director level for a Local Authority and since 2017 have successfully run my own company.



An Overview

In my new role as the European Cycling Directeur, I am coordinating efforts from private and public sector partners to get as many people Bike Active as possible.

UK Local Authorities have a vital role to play...and I need YOUR help, and in turn I can help YOU....

Let me explain -

- The Context – pandemic and public sector finances
- The Context – pandemic and the ‘cycling boom’
- The Cycling Boom – increasing participation and wellbeing
- The Cycling Boom – achieving the best ROI
- Some Case Studies



How can you help me to get people 'Bike Active'?

Did you know that –

- Most local authorities have received government Active Travel funding allocations?
- Many cycling infrastructure, facility and development projects can attract Sport England and British Cycling funding support?
- Many local authorities have developed cycling & walking strategies, action plans and appointed 'cycling champions'?

As the European Cycling Directeur, I want to discuss your local cycling development plans and help with –

- Developing your cycling development strategy
- Identifying and promoting the best events for your area
- Identifying profile-raising awards relevant to your area
- Sourcing funding and sponsorship partners
- Identifying cycling activities, schemes and animation ideas
- Identifying delivery partners for activities and schemes
- Sharing your successes with a wide UK & European audience



The Context – cycling over the past decade

- London 2012 and the Cycling Legacy
- Elite cycling through to grass-roots cycling?
- Government initiatives – the Cycle To Work Scheme
- Cycling diversifying – the digital and virtual world



The Context – pandemic and public sector finances

- Record levels of public borrowing and debt...
- A legacy of renewed long-term austerity?
- Budget implications for local authorities?
- Sport and Leisure – a ‘nice to have’?
- But cycling is different...it is a ‘must have’

STRAVA METRO

Berlin: +56% April '19 to April '20
Barcelona: +82% June '19 to June '20
London: +119% May '19 to May '20
Liverpool: +222% May '19 to May '20

The Context – pandemic and the ‘cycling boom’

- Some statistics – from Strava on bike journeys

A typical example – Lincolnshire:

Nearly 200,000 more rides were logged in Lincolnshire in 2020 to the end of October compared to the whole of 2019. There were 516,834 rides logged in the county in, compared to 319,212 in the whole of 2019.

Nearly 23,000 individual cyclists logged rides in Lincolnshire in 2019, up to over 39,000 individuals by the end of October 2020.



The Context – pandemic and the ‘cycling boom’

Can the ‘Bike Boom’ Keep Going?

In May 2020, Liverpool announced a £2 million scheme for another 100 km of bike lanes, and Manchester’s £1.5 billion plans for new cycling and walking paths remain on track. Elsewhere, in October, Scotland announced an £8 million fund to improve their own cycling facilities nationwide, while earlier in November, Grant Shapps awarded English councils a further £175 million to create safe space for cycling, including ‘School Streets’ and segregated cycle lanes.

In the private sector, Graham Stapleton, CEO of Halfords stated in November that: “There’s absolutely no sign of any slowdown in growth, if anything, more recently it accelerated again. For the mid-to-long-term, the government are investing enormous amounts in cycling. There are so many reasons for bike growth to continue, I can’t see it stopping.



The Cycling Boom

- how to increase participation and wellbeing?

- People are cycling – how to keep them cycling?
- What about ‘under-represented’ groups in society?
- Investment in competitive cycling alone is not enough....
- Investment in infrastructure alone is not enough....
- **Invest in those things that people want to take part in**
- **Invest in removing things that prevent people taking part**



The Cycling Boom

- how to increase participation and wellbeing?

Evidence shows that people want to take part in –

- Cycling as a social / family activity – get families involved
- Cycling for health and fitness – focus on ‘all abilities’
- Cycling events – events / races and animation in town centres

Evidence shows that people need help with –

- Safe public spaces and roads where they can cycle
- Facilities and activities in local areas for ‘all abilities / ages’
- Advice on bikes, kit, etc for ‘entry level’ cyclists



The Cycling Boom – how to increase participation and wellbeing?

Some examples that work –

- High Profile Cycling Awards
 - Showcase cycling development and investment
 - Encourage inward investment
 - Boost tourism and the local economy
 - Attract funding and sponsorship
- Professional Cycle Race Events
 - Animate town/city centres
 - Engage the local community and businesses
 - Encourage inward investment
 - Boost tourism and the local economy
- The Rainbow Ride
 - Cycling for all ages and abilities
 - Improve health, fitness and wellbeing
 - Raise money for local NHS hospitals
 - Be part of a UK-wide cycling community



The Cycling Boom – how to achieve the best ROI

My work with Local Authorities across the UK and with towns and cities across Europe highlights some common keys to success in maximising ROI –

- Invest in events but focus on animation that engages your communities and stakeholders to achieve your goals.
- Invest in awards to showcase your projects, developments and achievements – but also use awards to engage with partner sponsors and investors.
- Work with specialists from the cycling industry / sector to help you achieve the greatest benefits from your cycling-related investment and funding from government etc.
- Identify key initiatives and activities provided by the private sector that you can support to engage your local community to help you achieve your goals.



Some Case Studies

Mini-Holland Schemes – Kingston, Enfield and Waltham Forest

A comprehensive study produced by the University of Westminster on February 1st 2021 shows that the provision of cycling infrastructure along with supporting activities increased the likelihood of physical activity in the localised area and thus active travel goals were more likely to be met.

A particular focus was given to the outer London Mini Holland schemes where it is calculated that the 20-year economic benefit of that activity, factoring health and transport efficiency improvements would tally £724 million, many-fold the £80 million invested.



Some Case Studies

Paris – the French ‘revolution’

Paris Deputy Mayor David Belliard talks of a big transformation in the French capital, with €20m invested since the start of the pandemic. "It's like a revolution," he says. The more you give space for bicycles the more they will use it.

As at October 2020, cycling levels have increased by 27% compared with the same time last year. This is partly due to the extensive approach taken by the French government, which is offering a €50 subsidy towards the cost of bike repairs and also offering free cycling lessons.

"Normally, we have about 150 adults each year learning to cycle and now we have easily doubled to 300 people," says Joël Sick, a teacher at Maison du Vélo, on the banks of the River Seine.



In Summary...

- Act now -** to make the most of the Cycling Boom in your local area
- Act now -** work with me to get people in your local area Bike Active
- Act now -** to develop your cycling strategy and development plans to secure the best ROI for your local area

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