

# DISABILITY, CYCLING & WELLBEING



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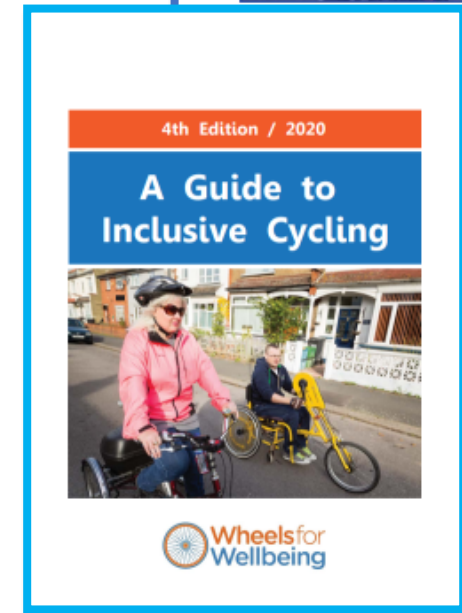
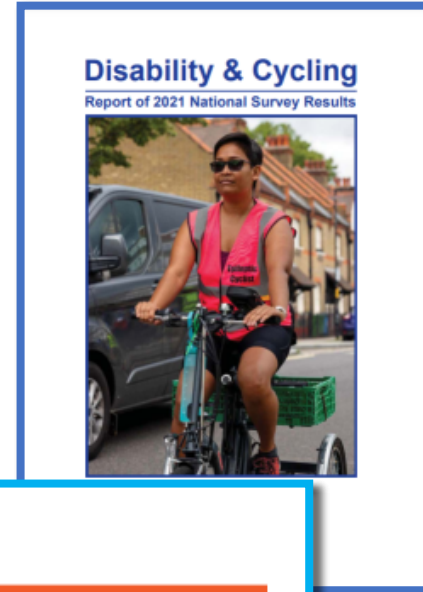
 **Wheels for  
Wellbeing**  
Removing barriers to cycling





# Wheels for Wellbeing (WfW)

- **DPO:** est. 2007
- **Access to cycling:** inclusive cycling sessions; led rides; hire scheme.
- **Campaigns & Policy:** training & consultancy, publications [Guide to Inclusive Cycling](#); [Report of National Survey](#); campaigns #MyCycleMyMobilityAid #BeyondtheBicycle; #BashtheBarriers
- **Mobility Justice:** targeting resources towards those who have least access to transport and mobility rather than those with the most mobility privilege.

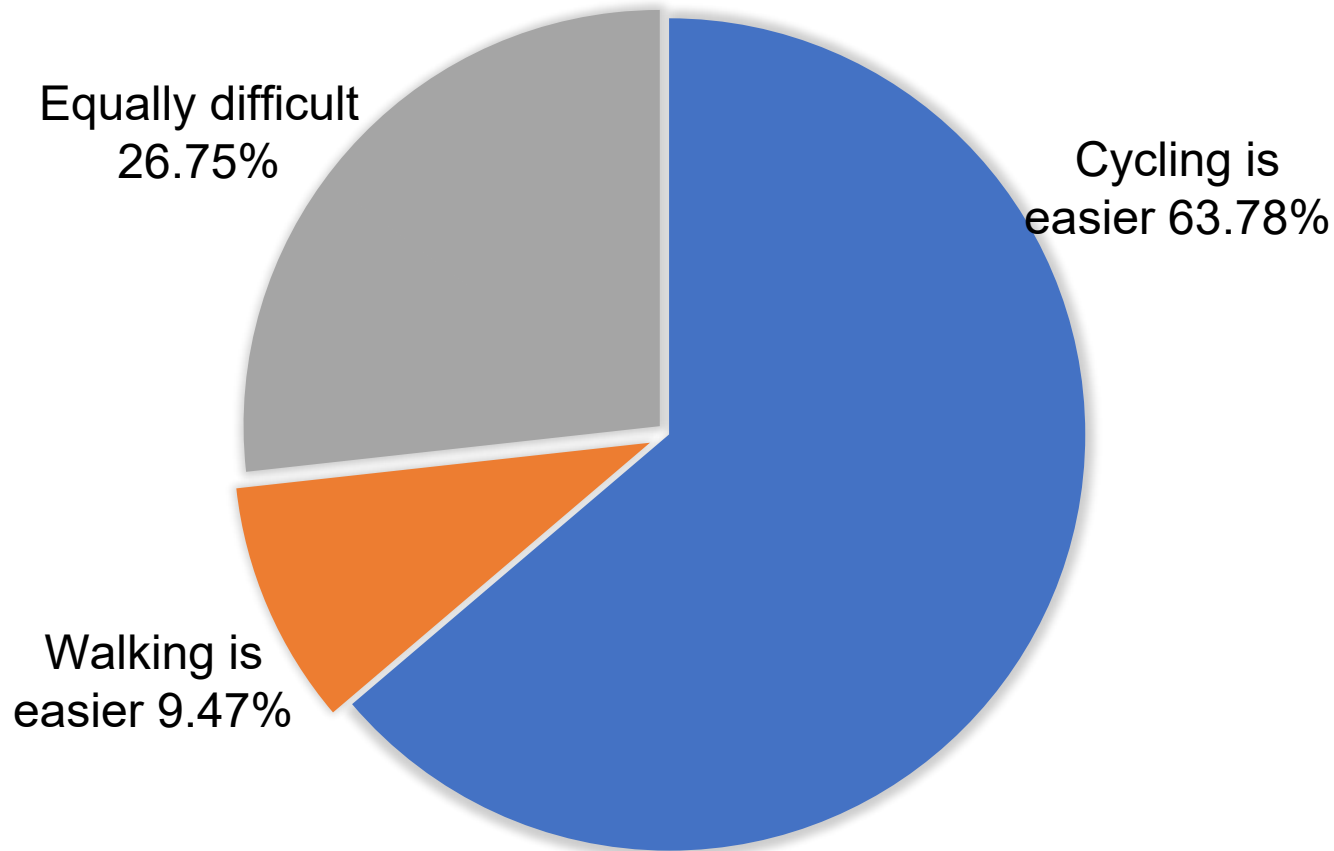


# Cycles as Mobility Aids

Data & citations from WfW 2021 National Survey (WfW 2022)



## Which is Easier: Cycling or Walking?



- *“I have spinal issues and can't walk any real distance. But I cycle on a normal bike without problem. [It] gives me my independence.”*
- *“I have had MS for 30 years and wish I had realised earlier that I could cycle much better than I could walk!”*

**No cycle = No mobility**

90% of mobility impaired Disabled people don't have a suitable mobility aid to complete a 1km journey (Disabled Ramblers, 2022)

# Cycling also Provides



- Transport/mobility
- Social contact
- Physical exercise/activity
- Access to nature and greenspaces
- Autonomy
- Fun!



Photograph from recent “nature ride”  
organized by WfW

....all of which are **essential** for good **mental health**

# Barriers to cycling for Disabled people

1. Infrastructure (53%)
2. Parking / storage (35%)
3. Cost (33%)
4. Unable to hire a suitable cycle (30%)
5. Abuse (24%)
6. No inclusive cycling opportunities (23%)

Data from 2021 National Survey (WfW, 2022)



Photo credit: WfW, Harrie Larrington Spencer



# Cycling and Wellbeing



- ‘What the trike has done is it as actually given me freedom’ (Eric)
- ‘Just that feeling of *being* out on the road, it was like freedom’ (Rosie)
- ‘I find it gives me the independence’ (Michael)
- ‘It’s the *independence*, which I haven’t said. I think that’s the other thing, you’re not *relying* on transport you are relying on your own transport: you are relying on *yourself* and I think that is a big boost to anybody with a disability. You rely on yourself, and wherever you are when you are on your bicycle, you rely on yourself. And wherever you are you can dictate what you do, no-one’s dictating to you what you can do.’ (Nasia)
- (Inckle, 2020)

# Cycling & Mental Health



- “Being a Disabled person who can get out and cycle has been a lifesaver for me, when cycling I feel less disabled, it is the best treatment for my mental health.”
- “I find it hugely enabling to cycle around for transport and my commute. It keeps me active and mobile, prevents degenerative decline in my muscles and makes me feel good about myself.”

(in WfW, 2022)



Photograph from WfW photobank

# Cycling, Mental Health & Recovery following “Life-changing” Injury

- Michael: **“It’s better than counselling”**
- “To my mind you can go one of two ways if you have an accident – obviously for people who are already disabled they have grown up with that – but when something *happens* to you like this you can go one of two ways: you can sit in a chair and go, “Oh my goodness this is terrible, what am I going to do?!” Or you can try and get on with life, and I think that if you can stay positive and do what you could do *before* then that certainly [helps]. I think if I hadn’t had *that* [e.g. cycling], that would have been a very different story *for me.*” (Paul)
  - (in Inckle, 2020)





Our regular cycling sessions take place at three locations in South London; Croydon, Herne Hill and Ladywell.

**Croydon Sports Arena.**  
*Outdoors.*



Albert Road, South  
Norwood, SE25 4QL.

Train: Norwood Junction.  
Elmers End. Arena  
(Tramlink 2)

**Herne Hill Velodrome.**  
*Outdoors.*



104 Burbage Road, Herne  
Hill, SE24 9HE.

Train: Herne Hill or North  
Dulwich.  
Bus: P4, P13, 3, 37, 68, 196,

**Ladywell Day Centre.**  
*Outdoors.*



148 Dressington Ave,  
Lewisham, SE4 1JF.

Train: Ladywell  
Bus: 284, P4, 122  
Car: Collect free permit at



## References

- Disabled Ramblers (2022) [Not Enough Wheels to Go Round](#). Ware: Disabled Ramblers
- Health Foundation (2021) [Unequal Pandemic: Fairer Recovery](#). London: The Health Foundation.
- Inckle, K (2020) [Disability, Cycling & Health: Impacts and \(Missed\) Opportunities in Public Health](#), *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*
- Wheels for Wellbeing (2022) [Disability & Cycling: Report of National Survey Results](#). London: WfW
- Wheels for Wellbeing (2020) [Guide to Inclusive Cycling](#). London: WfW.



## Questions/further info

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