Draft News Release \*\* for immediate release\*\*

23 September 2019

**Record increase in schools offering free cycle training for pupils**

AS the percentage of Scotland’s primary schools offering on-road cycle training has increased from 42% to 47% (2018-2019), the remaining 53% are urged to follow their path and take advantage of free cycling training for pupils.

Bikeability Scotland is the national cycle training programme for school children, funded by Cycling Scotland through grant funding by Transport Scotland. The programme is free for schools and pupils and Cycling Scotland hopes to inspire more schools to contact them and move up a gear.

In the past year, more than 43,000 children have received cycling training, a key life skill for the next generation.

Working in tandem with Local Authorities, Cycling Scotland provides a financial support package to deliver Bikeability Scotland Level 2 on-road training. On average, applying local authorities have been awarded £17,055 per annum over the past 7 years and 300,000 primary pupils have benefited. Over half a million pounds is being distributed in 2019 to support local authorities.

Surveys found that 65% of children were more confident cycling after Bikeability training and 82% of parents were more in favour of letting their children cycle as a result. \*

Lee Craigie, Active Nation Commissioner for Scotland, said:

“Cycling is such an important life skill, opening up a new world for our children. It can give our young people an independent means of travel to nearby friends and activities and is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, benefiting health and wellbeing.

“Bikeability Scotland supports the next generation of confident and responsible road users – any school that hasn’t taken part should, we owe it to our children to unlock the potential being a confident cyclist offers.”

David Collins, Cycling Scotland Bikeability Development Officer, explains:

“Cycling Scotland provides funding to support delivery of Bikeability Scotland training to all primary children aged 7-11yrs.

“We’ve done all we can to make the process of accessing the free training for instructors and grant funding as easy as possible. All materials - including pupil’s guides, certificates, badges and information for parents – are provided, even bikes can be supplied for the training period.

“It’s really just a case of teachers contacting us to say they’d like to deliver it in their school.”

Mrs Black, Acting Principal Teacher, Toronto Primary School said:

“It’s been great having the Bikeabilty Scotland team support our delivery of this training for our pupils. It was such an easy process and the children have loved it. We would love to offer this each year going forward so all our primary sixes are equipped with the right knowledge and confidence to be safer cyclists.”

The campaign, launched today, highlights the percentage of schools in each local authority that have so far delivered Bikeability Scotland Level 2 training. Four Local Authorities have achieved a 100% delivery rate – East Renfrewshire, Shetland, Clackmannanshire and Western Isles. Western Isles received the 2019 Scottish Transport Award for Best Practice in Travel to School and Work Schemes for their achievements in Bikeability, increasing delivery from 5% of schools to 100% in 2 years.

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

INSERT GRAPH

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FURTHER SUPPORTIVE QUOTES

\*Source: ‘Give Everyone Cycle Space’ survey May 2016.

Argyll & Bute, North and East Ayrshire have not participated in Bikeability Scotland to date.

jpeg images available from [insert link]

For further media information please contact:

Dan Gilmore, Marketing & Communications Manager, Cycling Scotland

0141 229 5373

[dangilmore@cycling.scot](mailto:dangilmore@cycling.scot)

**Cycling Scotland**

1. Cycling Scotland is the nation’s cycling organisation. Working in partnership with other organisations, with funding from Transport Scotland, we help create an environment for everyone in Scotland to cycle easily and safely. Our vision is of a sustainable, inclusive and healthy Scotland where anyone, anywhere can enjoy all the benefits of cycling. For more information please visit [www.cycling.scot](http://www.cycling.scot)
2. Cycling Scotland is a Scottish Charity, SC029760, regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)
3. As individuals we will lead by example and as an organisation, our values are to be:

• Collaborative

• Inclusive

• Professional & evidence-driven

• Ambitious

• Sustainable