

TRAINEE CASE STUDY for Direct Support for Cycling: Bike Buddy Scheme



For Pip Saran selling her car was a real catalyst for change. She had bought the car when she was just nineteen but now it was becoming too expensive to run. Looking for an alternative way of travelling led Pip to cycle training. She wanted training that would give her the confidence and know-how to ride on road.

It was Pip's supervisor at the Lido centre who told her that Ealing Council provides cycle training for £5; 'I was like, 'Woah, I didn't even know about it!' On the same day she went on Ealing Council's website and phoned their Direct Support for Cycling team at CTUK who booked her a lesson.

Pip's main goal was to be able to ride to the Lido where she worked, as well as riding locally to shop and bank.

Pip received three lessons. In her first lesson she quickly went through control skills training and Paul, her instructor, took her on roads around Southall. The second lesson started at Pip's home with the end goal of cycling to the Lido. They practised junction turns in the quieter roads in Southall and started roundabout training, initially using a mini roundabout. Paul and Pip talked about the primary riding position and lanes changes, particularly with reference to Pip's journey (Uxbridge Road travelling east from junction of Dormer's Wells Road to Iron Bridge). In this session they got most of the way to Pip's work and journeyed back together. In the third session Paul accompanied Pip from work to her home.

'The training follows a very logical process. We are building up the trainees' skills and confidence gradually with realistic targets. After three sessions Pip could cycle to work via the busy Uxbridge Road. Initially, for many trainees cycling in heavy traffic seems an impossible challenge, however, through training and the bike buddy scheme, they become empowered to manage complex road manoeuvres as well as busy roads.'

Paul Schwarz, DSC Ealing Instructor.

"I would absolutely recommend this training to other people, one hundred per cent. It gave me a feeling of being capable, not just in terms of learning to ride on the road but in general. Learning how to be in a lane and how to signal and knowing that I have right to ride a bicycle on the road and to be treated as an equal to a motor vehicle, that's been the best bit. I really didn't know that: my impression was that cycling was always a nuisance and people had to be at the side and as a cyclist you were not a part of the flow of traffic. Realising that I am a part of the flow of traffic has been very liberating." Pip Saran