

TRAINING FOR DIVERSE GROUPS - CASE STUDY 3 – Devon: *Special needs 1:1 cycle training*

Delivered by: Free Trike NSI instructors, supported by Devon & Torbay Councils



Context: **Freetrike** aims to give people the freedom to challenge their disabilities. The idea for a rehab cycling service came to Tom (owner) after his father's stroke in 2002 made him housebound. Devon & Torbay Councils have provided funding for **Freetrike** to provide free 'try-out' cycle training sessions, alongside outreach.

Objectives & Actions:

- **Outreach:** **Freetrike** provides transport to/from homes to local traffic-free paths to deliver 2 hour, 1-to-1 supported rehab sessions on modern, adapted bikes and trikes.
- **Taster Centres:** offers FREE 2 hour 1-to-1 rehab sessions including Torbay Velopark and National Trust's Killington House driveway.
- **Equipment sales:** full range of adapted bikes that can be tailor-fitted.

Outcomes: Since 2010 adults with additional needs on adapted bikes, trikes & recumbents have ridden more than 4,500 miles. In 2015 alone they have gained 35,000 feet of altitude. 85% of users are stroke victims (about 20% are under 20 years old). There is enormous diversity of users, including people suffering from cerebral palsy, MS, Parkinsons disease and cystic fibrosis to name a few.

Lessons learnt / 'top tips': The impacts of the outreach programme go so much further than the cycle training eg. changing the lives of carers and giving users the confidence to succeed in others areas of life.

Next steps: Aspirations to do national trials of the impact of the outreach scheme & establish a GP referral programme.

"Riding a normal bike with kidney failure is impossible. Tom introduced me to recumbent triking. Have gone on to purchase a trike and now ride every week with my wife." **(65-74 year old)**

"A professional jockey, I have regional pain syndrome after being kicked in the leg by a horse, and awaiting elective amputation. Tom gave me the chance to try a recumbent trike and a handcycle. I decided to buy a handcycle and now use it regularly. Thanks." **(25-34 year old)**

*"After my road traffic accident I suffered a head injury that made life very difficult. **Freetrike** gave me freedom to get outdoors and enjoy my life again. Tom supplied me my own trike and gave me instruction on how to use it on roads so I could get around my town and onto the Tarka Trail cycle path."* **(18 year old)**

"your .. approach equipped Ashley with the confidence to learn how to ride a bicycle.... It has given him the confidence to engage with independence a whole range of other activities and experiences." **(Father of 25 year old)**



A free taster session at Killington NT property

Further information: Tom Pales, **Freetrike:** tombfro@yahoo.co.uk 07957 647675 / www.freetrike.co.uk and for more info on free cycle training in Devon visit www.cycledevon.info Oct 2015