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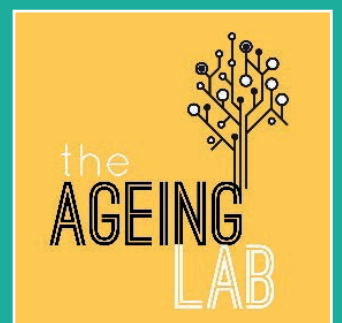
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CYCLING WITHOUT AGE



EVALUATION REPORT 2018



Being able to get outside is something that many of us take for granted, whether that's part of our daily commute, to do a bit of physical activity, or simply to enjoy the fresh air. For many people, however, mobility issues and other barriers can limit being able to get outdoors. People living in care homes can be particularly affected. Even in care homes with a full range of activities, getting outdoors regularly can prove challenging.

That is where **Cycling Without Age** can help.



Cycling Without Age is a global initiative that began in Denmark in 2012 and has since spread to over 40 countries. The simple idea is that trained volunteers take people on cycle rides in their local area on specially designed trishaws. Cycling Without Age's ethos is to give people "the right to wind in their hair, the right to experience the city and nature close up... and by giving them an opportunity to tell their story in the environment where they have lived their lives".

Volunteer community group Communities Along the Carron Association brought Cycling Without Age to Falkirk in 2017, the first such group in Scotland. To support a nationwide roll-out, Cycling Without Age Falkirk joined with The Ageing Lab at Heriot-Watt University to evaluate the experiences of those taking part in the trial.

This report provides a summary of that evaluation. Though developed in collaboration with Cycling Without Age Falkirk and The Ageing Lab, the evaluation was conducted by Janet Biggar, an independent researcher.

The report details the many positive experiences of those taking part in the trial, by listening to the care home residents who took part and their families, the care home staff, and the volunteers themselves. The report also details what has been learned from the trial to support the wider roll-out.

Since the initial trial in Falkirk, the initiative has spread across the rest of the country, led by Cycling Without Age Scotland and supported by the Scottish Government.

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CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

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Introduction

Cycling Without Age (CWA) is a movement started in Denmark in 2012 by Ole Kassow and Dorthe Pedersen. The aim was to help older people with limited mobility to get back on their bicycles. Free rides on trishaws were offered to local nursing home residents. The movement has since grown to become international (there are now over 1,500 'Chapters' in 42 countries), working through an affiliate agreement as not-for-profit endeavours.



Photographer: Ronnie Anderson

Volunteer 'Pilots', working through local 'Chapters', take up to 2 people out for rides in specially designed trishaws. The movement's guiding principles are:

- **Generosity:** Cycling Without Age is based on generosity and kindness. It starts with the obvious generous act of taking one or two older or less-able people out on a bike ride. It's a simple act that most people can do.
- **Slowness:** Slowness allows you to sense the environment, be present in the moment and it allows people you meet along the way to be curious and gain knowledge about Cycling Without Age because you make time to stop and talk.
- **Storytelling:** Older people have so many stories that will be forgotten if we don't reach out and listen to them. We tell stories, we listen to stories on the bike and we also document the stories when we share them via word of mouth or on social media.
- **Relationships:** Cycling Without Age is about creating a multitude of new relationships: between generations, among older people, between Pilots and passengers, nursing home employees and family members. Relationships build trust, happiness and quality of life.
- **Without Age:** Life does not end when you turn 75. Life unfolds at all ages, young and old, and can be thrilling, fun, sad, beautiful and meaningful. Cycling Without Age is about letting people age in a positive context – fully aware of the opportunities that lie ahead when interacting in their local community.

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE IN SCOTLAND

The first Cycling Without Age Chapter in Scotland was launched in Falkirk in 2017 by the Communities Along the Carron Association working with the Carrondale Care Home. This trial benefitted from an award from the Scottish Government's Climate Change Fund to explore the potential impact the project could have in Scotland. This evaluation is the final part of that trial.

The Scottish Government is now providing £300,000 to set up the Cycling Without Age (CWA) project across the country. In the first phase of the roll-out during 2018/19, CWA is being introduced in five local authority areas (East Lothian, Falkirk, Highlands and Islands, Perth and Kinross, and the Scottish Borders) and partnerships for further projects will follow in eight others. Further CWA projects will be in Fife, South Ayrshire and West Lothian. CWA will work with Heriot-Watt University to continue to evaluate the project.

TRIAL EVALUATION

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the trial CWA Chapter in Falkirk. The aim was to:

- explore the mental and physical health and wellbeing benefits for participants;
- identify the potential impact of CWA on social isolation;
- identify potential benefits in the wider social context including those with mobility issues, socially isolated at home, people of all ages with disabilities, as a means of encouraging exercise and social integration;
- gather evidence of the value placed on having participated in the scheme;
- highlight opportunities for intergenerational interaction;
- understand perceived barriers or issues; and
- to inform development of approaches to evaluation for the wider roll-out.



Methodology

A very flexible, open and qualitative approach was used to explore the experiences and perceptions of those involved and to allow reflection on approaches to evaluating the initiative as it rolls out.

Initial plans anticipated focus groups with older people, families, staff and volunteers (Pilots) as well as some depth and paired interviews. Based on an initial scoping of the likely practical and logistical challenges, however, depth interviews were proposed as more manageable for many respondents: busy schedules meant convening focus groups of care home staff would likely disrupt the necessary care routines; many of the residents have poor hearing, advanced dementia and/or other communication challenges; and convening a focus group of family members proved difficult due to timing constraints.

The findings in this report are based on the following qualitative interactions:

- 2 volunteer focus groups (14 Pilots in total)
- 8 face-to-face depth interviews with residents
- 5 face-to-face depth interviews with staff and one mini-group (4 staff)
- 7 telephone depth interviews with family member/main carer

The research was conducted between December 2017 and May 2018. The full research tools are available on request.

Detailed findings

BENEFITS

Benefits for residents and care home

Residents and care home staff alike were exceptionally positive about the benefits of CWA. Even in a care home that runs a very active calendar of opportunities and outings for its residents, this initiative provided something unique, with a sense of independence, connection to each other, to the Pilot, the community and the environment. The sense of movement and journeying, in a simpler way than motorised transport, more connected to the environment and air came across in many of the interviews.

I went past them once when they were out and the laughter coming from that trishaw – I wish you could have heard it. We do lots of good activities and outings, but this is different – there’s no bus journey, it’s straight from the front door.

Staff member

It’s the different people and it just keeps going all the time, like a choo-choo.

Resident

I like it very much, because it moves and everybody’s happy.

Resident

Resident perspectives

None of the residents who had been out on the trishaws said they had been apprehensive or needed persuasion to take part. They described the main appeal as the idea of doing something different and getting out in the fresh air and had enjoyed the sense of freedom that fresh air gives them – it is like going out for a walk or, for some reminds them of other outdoor activities they have done during their lives. One had always been a keen cyclist (since she was a small child) and really appreciated the opportunity to have the sensation of cycling again.

I had no hesitation at all... I was looking forward to it. You feel you’re in the same place every day... you haven’t got the freedom to get up and go out the door and along the path.

Resident

It gets me out, you know, I’m stuck in the office [care home], I like to get out in the fresh air...it gives me something to do, because I used to play football and golf.

Resident

It makes me move and it goes fast. I really like it...it’s rare, just being on the bike.

Resident

Some talked about how much they enjoy being able to go along the riverbank and see the water, trees, hear birds singing. Some also talked about going to places they had not been to before, enjoying the fresh air and the views. The sense of movement was also mentioned as a positive element of the experience and some liked to go quite fast, talking about the feeling of moving out in the fresh air.

It’s so lovely, especially when you’ve been two or three times and you notice the surrounding trees and shrubberies, with the seasons, when it was dark green and all the foliage drooping and then it becomes autumn and when you cycle along, and the leaves are dropping.

Resident

Residents also emphasised the social aspects of the experience, talking along the way, singing songs, chatting to people they meet or pass, stopping to buy a coffee at the Kelpies (a local landmark) and so on. Most who were able to detail their experiences talked about meeting local people and tourists along the way, as well as getting to know each other better and getting to know the

Pilots. These social aspects of the experience were clearly very stimulating for them and were shared with delight.

We talk all the time, right round...we go for two hours and get back in time for lunch.

Resident

It's the fresh air and you get a bit of banter... always laughing and joking.

Resident

I just like company, and they're all so nice...it's nice to see them.

Resident

Those who enjoyed the experience were not put off by inclement weather and even claimed to enjoy it more in rainy weather than dry: finding it exhilarating, refreshing and exciting and staying dry and warm under the canopy and blanket. During the winter when there were fewer opportunities, these residents were impatient for the weather to improve and the days get longer so they could go more often again.

It's nice to be out in the fresh air and you're not cold, it's quite comfortable.

Resident

Several residents who were particularly enthusiastic about the trishaw rides would like to go out for longer and more often. One resident who goes out very regularly commented about the limited routes and said he would like to go out for longer than two hours so that he could go on a different route. He suggested a trishaw taxi service to make more use of the trishaws and to allow him to go different places. He also commented though, that he sees new things on the familiar route sometimes and enjoys exploring, giving the example of a sundial that he noticed it one day when the light was different.

It's better to see something different than to go back to things you've seen a lot of times already...a different route would make a difference, it's the change of scene that's good.

Resident

Another resident said she had been three times and didn't want to go again; she was 'fed up' with it now, because she sees the same thing every time and gets asked to go with new residents.

Residents who were able to comment said they enjoyed the experience, particularly the social aspects of it, but could not identify any health or wellbeing benefits for themselves when specifically asked: though as noted above they feel this brings something extra to their lives and they enjoy the sense of freedom and connection. One mentioned that she enjoyed looking forward to a trip and remembering it during the rest of that day and as she was falling asleep that night. She also talked about enjoying watching children play at the Kelpies, laughing, and their parents not minding them getting wet playing in the water: clearly this connection to community life brought her joy.

I like all the noise and the bustle...it makes all the difference. I feel good...I've been away out jaunting.

Resident

I always think the experience lasts for a wee while and sometimes a long while.

Resident

In summary, residents identified key benefits of **freedom, friendship and fresh air**.

Pilot perspectives

Pilots mentioned that residents sometimes met old friends or neighbours (or even old girlfriends) while they are out. From their perspective, they think the residents benefit from getting to areas that they would not see when taken out in a car or minibus and interacting with others in the community: the trishaw trips are usually very sociable, with plenty of stopping to chat. Residents are described as looking happy, smiling, laughing and animated during trips, and many want to go as often as they can.

Family members' perspectives

Family members were not all aware that their loved one had been out in a trishaw until afterwards, though some had been asked for their views on participation in advance. None were worried about safety or had any concerns about their relative taking part, as long as they were wrapped up well on cold days. All were very positive and supportive of the idea and believe their loved one will enjoy/had enjoyed the rides, citing the attractions of the natural environment in the area and appeal of being able to experience the sensations of cycling.

I'd seen it on the news, so I knew when she went there that it was available, but it wasn't till I was visiting and saw a photo of her on it in her room, and I thought 'that's brilliant that she's been out on that'.

Family member

Because Falkirk's a lovely place – there's so many nice places you can go that are quiet and beautiful and peaceful.

Family member

I've never seen her when she's come back, but she cycled a lot when she was younger and I'm sure she will enjoy it.

Family member

Those who had been involved in encouraging their loved one to get involved commented that once they understood what was involved they were keen to

have a go. However, many residents have quite advanced dementia and are not able to remember or tell their families about their experiences with CWA, so some family members felt they could not readily comment on how their relative felt about the experience.

When the opportunity came up for her to go out on a bike, she was like a teenager again – she loved the idea and she would go out every day if she had the chance. It really did revitalise her.

Family member

Family members mentioned being out and about, fresh air, interaction with others, mood improvements, combatting depression, avoiding 'institutionalisation', improved social skills, general wellbeing, 'keeping them going', 'just being in an environment that is not a room with four walls', as key benefits they have seen or assumed will arise for their relative. CWA is viewed as a very different experience from other outings the home or family can offer, which usually involve a car as transport.

Being in the fresh air, it's much better than a car or a bus...Hearing the birds, feeling the sun, feeling the wind.

Family member

Some family members believed they attributed improved alertness and more interest in other activities (even just reading a newspaper) in their relative to being out on the trishaws. For those whose loved one had been able to recall and recount their experience(s), they commented that they did so with a smile and enthusiasm. Some talked about re-connection with familiar people or places from the past. Others mentioned their relative being more 'smiley', 'euphoric', 'sunny' having a 'glow' about them and suggested the change of scenery and something different to do had had positive impacts on their mental health.

It's getting him out, so he can recognise places again...they find something that he can recognise, or an old building with a history or whatever.

Family member

His mood's a lot better, he seems happier. Staff have said too that he lights up, he knows what's happening and when he's come back he seems excited but settled.... the man who takes him said he has a grin from ear to ear from the moment he goes out.

Family member

One family member talked of his mother's enthusiasm for the initiative, her animation in telling him about her latest ride when he visits and resultant general improvement in mood and disposition. He believes it has cheered her up and given her 'something to look forward to' as a person who likes to get out and about in the fresh air. He attributed her willingness to go out on other outings to her involvement in CWA, and believes that all of these outings combined have positively contributed to a better outlook and improved communication skills compared to when she lived at home alone and was reluctant to go out.

I'm sure all these things have helped her overall mental capacity, it's helped her communications...she's got more to talk about and she's having to use vocabulary again...it's helped her overall wellbeing.

Family member

There's the element of adventure that's totally been missing from her life for the last twenty years and to see her enthused about it is really nice.

Family member

Another talked of her father's enthusiasm and excitement when asked about trips on the trishaws, telling her about the birds he'd heard, cars he'd seen, how much he was enjoying going out: the experience has been very positive for him both at the time and when he remembers it later. Another family member had encouraged his mother to get involved, as

she had been an independent and outgoing person before a recent stroke. Communication impairment meant it had been difficult for him to get much information from her about how she felt about the experience, but he was able to say that she seems to want to do the activity and smiles when asked about it. He intends to train as a Pilot, so he can take her out himself. Another relative and his wife have also trained as Pilots.

I think there will be benefits to her getting out and about, fresh air and just general interest.

Family member

In summary, relatives emphasised the key benefits of **fresh air, something different to do and general mood/mental health improvements.**



Staff perspectives

All staff were very positive about the initiative, some describing it as a ‘massive success’ that has ‘changed people’s lives’. Most had had no reservations about its introduction. One mentioned a slight initial concern about how the Pilots might cope with any challenging behaviour from residents who have dementia but said that had not been an issue at all, with Pilots ‘going the extra mile’ and getting on very well with the residents. She and others gave an example of a Pilot sitting and having a cuppa with his passenger instead of going out on a particularly cold day. Others endorsed this with many comments about how nice, patient and friendly the Pilots are and how well they interact with residents.

Staff described some residents as apprehensive even about going to sit out in the garden on a nice day and needing encouragement to go on the trishaw (usually by showing them it and explaining how it works or going out with them to begin with). However, once they were persuaded to give it a go, most really enjoy the experience and want to go again.

Some that maybe cannae come out their shell in here...see when they come back, [after their first ride], they can't wait to go again.

Staff

Staff were able to cite benefits for the residents in terms of immediate enjoyment and ongoing mood, emphasising how much residents enjoy CWA as an activity outdoors, where the other activities available tend to be indoors. They also meet people and see new places, new faces, get fresh air and a chat, and some believe that residents sleep better after the fresh air experience. Many of the residents are from the area, so they see places they have a connection with while they are out.

Staff talked about a sense of independence, freedom, feel-good, improved spirits, combatting depression, getting to know a location such as the Kelpies and the publicity that the initiative has had among the positive benefits for residents, with resultant benefits for themselves in their roles.

I think it's the freedom...it's quite amazing how they'll see things and it reminds them of something and it lets them know just exactly where they are.

Staff

The impact for many residents is short lived as they forget very quickly, but when they go out the next time that ‘gees them back up again’. There was laughter among staff groups when recounting stories of residents coming back from rides with joy on their faces or laughing at their own windswept hair. There are knock on benefits for staff, who tell stories of the prospect of a trishaw ride encouraging a reluctant resident to get up and dressed, improved sleep for residents and improved mood, all making staff jobs easier.

They can be in a mood and go out and when they come back they are smiling all night.

Staff

It makes our job easier because they always come back in a good mood.

Staff

They are quite exhilarated when they come back, and chatty.

Staff

They all loved when STV came to film and they knew they were going to be on the telly – and when [resident] was on the Pride of Britain awards waving, he and his family were so chuffed.

Staff

Staff talked about residents benefitting from fresh air in a way that doesn't happen when their families or the home take them out in a car/bus. They are more likely to speak to

the other resident they are out with than they would in the home and this can have lasting impacts on their behaviour, for example one resident attends bingo in a different unit now she knows one of the residents there through going out on the trishaw with her.

Staff talked about residents seeming more communicative and animated/energised as a result of the social aspect of their involvement in CWA and that for some this had a lasting impact beyond immediately returning from a trip. Residents whose memory or communication allowed them to were able to chat among themselves about who had been, who is going and so on.

They look a lot brighter and they seem to communicate more, because the cyclers aren't just taking them out and cycling, they're chatting away.

Staff

Staff too talk among themselves about the initiative and feel that there is a 'buzz' of energy about the home as a result.

In summary, staff describe benefits including mood improvements, social skills and camaraderie.

Benefits for Pilots

Pilot perspectives

Pilots represented a wide range of backgrounds, ages and interests. Publicity on Facebook and through local and national television news attracted many of the Pilots to get involved in this first Chapter. Motivations varied: some had got involved as a joint interest with their partners, some to give something back to the community in their retirement, some because they like cycling and some simply because they were looking for something a bit different to do. For some, the experience of an older relative living in a care home taking pleasure from being taken outdoors was an additional motivation.

Two had become Pilots as a direct result of a family member being in the home and having the opportunity to go out on the trishaws. One mentioned having just lost her last grandparent who had been a very active person who could no longer get out and about, making her want to help other older people like him to have outdoor experiences. Another had not had grandparents around for over fifteen years and wanted to connect again with people from an older generation. Many had not been active cyclists before their involvement and were pleased to be able to be involved without any need to be a 'cyclist'.

I get a lot from it myself and like giving something back to the community I have lived in and served through my working life.

Pilot

I have my gran, but I wanted to feel a connection with the older generation where I live locally, so I thought this would be a really nice project to get involved in.

Pilot

Pilots all felt they gained personally from their involvement and found it very rewarding, saying they never come back from a trip without a smile on their own face. They talked about their enjoyment of bringing a

smile to another face, interacting with people from a different generation and watching them interact with others in the community, motivation for themselves to be more active or to go out in poorer weather, stopping, meeting and talking to people they would not otherwise meet or speak to, and the rewards of bringing fresh air and something different to the care home residents.

The feedback you get from the residents is amazing...on a miserable morning you can go out and come back with a smile on your face and certainly get a smile and a laugh out of them.

Pilot

Pilots had learnt about the area and its history from residents and about their personal histories. One mentioned that he had PTSD and that involvement in the initiative had been central to his recovery, giving him the incentive to go out and get active and connect with others, where previously he would have stayed home alone on days off work.

Learning their wee back-stories, the things they've done - that's probably the best bit.

Pilot

Especially at this time of year [December] when the weather isn't great and you are less inclined to go out on your own bike, it makes you give yourself a wee push and say 'I'll put my name down for next Wednesday, or whatever'

Pilot

Resident and family members' perspectives

Residents were appreciative of the time and work Pilots put into the initiative and believe they enjoy it as much as they do, since they chat and interact with them, the passengers. They feel they get to know the Pilots and that the Pilots enjoy getting to know them as well.

If their mood is uplifting you share it, you know.

Resident

Family members believe that general fitness and good social and communication skills would be the key attributes Pilots need to have and that they will benefit from the social interaction. Some had or intended to become Pilots themselves.

I think the best volunteer is just somebody with heart and understanding...just being a people's person, cos you have to chat and interact.

Family member

PRACTICALITIES

For residents and care home

Staff and residents were unsure what was involved until CWA was demonstrated to them, but all said that the first time they saw it and saw how much residents enjoyed it, they were excited by the idea.

I couldn't quite get my head round it, but instantly when you saw them and how much the residents enjoyed it, it was fantastic, amazing...Who would have thought of coming up with such a simple thing that's changed their lives?

Staff

Planning ahead could often be difficult, because it is hard to know in advance how an individual's health will be on a given day and although staff do not mind Pilots turning up and waiting while they get residents ready to go out, they felt (as did some Pilots) that it seemed a shame to have the volunteers sitting around waiting. However, the approach of calling the home an hour ahead of time was now working well for both the home and for Pilots. None identified any disruption or difficulty for the home and the one or two minor concerns or apprehensions that had arisen have been quickly sorted out by discussion between CWA and the home, who have regular catch-ups. CWA staff are perceived by both Pilots and the home to be very accessible and approachable and there is a positive sense of learning together about what

works and a willingness to contribute and try suggestions for improvements.

Residents do find getting on and off the trishaw difficult ('it can be a bit of a struggle'), though none could think of a way to make this easier for them. One commented that 'it's not for everyone' and gave an example of a fellow resident who tired it and wanted out before she even got to the end of the car park: staff confirmed that one resident had not enjoyed the experience and chose not to go again. Staff also said that for some residents, getting in and out of the trishaw can be difficult.

Suggestions for improvements included finding a way to get the people who need hoists into the trishaw so that those with more limited mobility could also benefit from the initiative. In general though, there was praise for the design of the trishaws and the availability of effective protection against rain and cold.

It's not an uncomfortable ride for them, they've thought of everything.

Staff

Many staff mentioned that they would like to go out on a trishaw themselves – some humorously, but with a serious note that 'it would be good to get to experience what the residents are experiencing'.

As the trial has progressed, practicalities for the home have become simpler; for example, having the shed with equipment at the home has helped avoid having to store blankets under desks within the care home.

For Pilots

Getting involved and training

Pilots described getting involved as straightforward, messaging through Facebook and then having a couple of training sessions covering what was expected in terms of interaction with the residents as well as managing the trishaw. They felt the training was casual and

informal, but got all the main points across, so they felt confident on their first outing.

He certainly put you at your ease and has a good knack of getting his point across in a friendly manner.

Pilot

It was hands on – you got straight on the bike yourself...he just explained everything as we went along, so you got the maximum experience from that training session...two sessions on the bike doing all the different manoeuvres that you're going to have to do.

Pilot

The first outing from the care home involved one resident and one of the CWA staff, helping Pilots to feel confident that there was somebody there who could assist if they had any difficulties and could talk them through anything they were unsure of. This also allowed them an opportunity to observe and learn from the experienced CWA staff member as they spoke to the care home staff and organised the outing and as they chatted and interacted with the resident passenger during the trip. This approach meant Pilots felt they had learnt by example and were confident to take their first unaccompanied trip. Most had felt a bit nervous, feeling a sense of responsibility for two older people, but all had felt well prepared and confident that the care home staff would be using their judgement about who they suggested an outing to. All felt well supported by both CWA and the care home, and that help would be on hand if needed during a trip.

There were a few suggestions for improvements to the training: one or two minor practical issues had arisen (for instance around sharing a new padlock code for the bike shed). For some of those involved from the very early stages of the initiative, there had been a gap of a couple of months between training and their first trip and one or two gaps in the training were identified (for example,

how to work the canopy). For those who had got involved once the initiative was up and running, however, the training had been fully developed and standardised.

Pilots all appreciated that this was the first Scottish Chapter and a learning process for the CWA staff: they had felt able to make suggestions to help develop the training. For example, training now involves sitting in the passenger seat to help Pilots appreciate the difference in temperature, feeling of speed and so on: a comfortable speed restriction is now recommended, with emphasis on slowness and stopping to talk to people (part of the ethos of CWA).

We've got a checklist now and a more formal and standardised training programme.

Pilot

As the programme progresses, we're identifying more training needs all the time, for example, when [Pilot] went out on a recce, there was a steeper hill that made us realise that we maybe need more intensive training on gear use.

Pilot

Some Pilots suggested that some first aid training would be helpful, and Pilots and staff suggested that perhaps some training on communication with people with dementia would be useful. Others suggested that a brief outline of individual passengers' medical conditions, or more dialogue with the staff would make them feel more confident and prepared for anything that could happen (for example if a passenger is prone to fits or has continence issues).

All agreed that the key qualities for Pilots include social skills, interaction, listening and encouraging more reserved older people to communicate - rather than cycling ability.

The time commitment is flexible, arranged through an app and Pilots like the fact that they can 'dip in and out', assess the weather forecast and make relatively spontaneous

decisions to go out. Pilots run trips in pairs and the app helps them to arrange this too.

It's the flexibility of it, you're not committing to a time or an amount of hours...there's no pressure... so I can do it on my days off.

Pilot

Limitations

The limitations imposed by street/path furniture (such as bollards too close together to allow the trishaw through) and inappropriately parked cars were a source of frustration. This led to discussions about the need to identify and reconnoitre new routes to add to the repertoire and several Pilots talked about working out new routes, exploring on their own bikes or taking an empty trishaw. Some had done this and others were planning to get together to do so, planning first from OS or Sustrans maps and then going out with bikes or trishaws to reconnoitre and document new routes for sharing with the wider group. This in turn led to discussions about Pilots getting to know each other better and suggestions that they should be organising opportunities for social events to encourage that.

Communication and planning

Better communication and planning with the care home ahead of planned trips was an issue cited by Pilots consulted early in the research. They felt that care home (who did not use the app) did not usually know they were coming and were therefore not prepared for their arrival, meaning a lengthy wait whilst residents were invited and readied for a trip. As well as being time consuming, this meant that some residents who might be interested (but who might need more time to think about it) were not having an opportunity to go out. This problem has since been resolved and now the home is notified by phone an hour ahead of Pilots arriving. Communication is also in place now to let the care home know if a planned trip is not to go ahead after Pilots

have assessed weather conditions. In general, both the care home and CWA have worked together to learn from the trial initiative and improve the smoothness of their interactions.

Ensuring that residents have appropriate clothing, especially in the winter months, is important and experienced Pilots now take a proactive approach, offering to go with residents to their room to help them find and put on their jacket before going out, for example. Whilst there are fewer trips during winter months, from the Pilots' (and many residents') perspective, the weather need not be a barrier to trips, since residents can be kept warm with clothing, blankets and the canopy, and routes adjusted to be shorter if the weather is inclement.

Overall, Pilots were clearly involved in an ongoing way in establishing their Chapter, making and implementing suggestions for improvements and feeding back to CWA Scotland on their learning and experiences, contributing to and feeling involved in the development of the initiative.

The strapline – the right to the wind in your hair was universally endorsed as summing up what the initiative is all about.

That describes how you feel and the benefit you get from it, you can just imagine the wind in your hair!

Resident

That is lovely, wonderful...we all go about in cars and trains and things now... absolutely apt...gives you a warm glow.

Staff

Participants suggested many other groups (apart from care home residents) who they believed could benefit from access to CWA: people who are housebound for any reason, people with mobility problems, frailty, people in hospital, children's wards, sheltered housing, those who might be losing confidence to go out, including people of all ages..

Not just care homes, but there's a lot of people in their own homes who would like to get out and about...who never see anyone or go anywhere.

Family member



Key learning points

Each new Chapter will be self-sufficient and will adapt to its own community and environment, with access to the learning, experience and ongoing advice and support of the CWA staff.

It will be important to continue to learn from experience, through feedback and suggestions from Pilots who are actively involved in providing ideas and suggestions for training needs, Chapter operation and communications. Opportunities for Pilots to socialise and get to know each other, and also to 'brainstorm' ideas for improvement in their Chapter will be helpful.

The key quality for successful Pilots is a sociable nature, and the benefits of volunteering that should be emphasised include: the rewarding nature of bringing a smile to an older person's face, the fun, fresh air and exercise, and the flexibility of the model, with no particular time commitment needed.

Pilots and staff both emphasised the importance of encouragement from someone a passenger trusts/knows, or is familiar with, such as family or a staff member to assist in ensuring passengers feel safe to try CWA. For the first trip, making sure that the fellow passenger is someone they know and have a relationship with is helpful. Passengers enjoy getting to know a Pilot, so consistency is important, particularly for people with dementia.

EVALUATION

There are also learning points in terms of evaluation approaches and methods. Firstly, flexibility is important: conducting research with older people who may have hearing, communication and cognitive limitations requires flexibility. Interactions need to be short, straightforward and make appropriate use of photos and other visual stimulation to aid communication. If possible, they should also be 'real-time' since those with poor memories are not able to provide feedback on their experience at a later time.

Proxies are helpful: staff and family members are often able to comment on impacts for an individual they know well; indicators for wellbeing, mood and connectedness can be used with all participants and there are recognised tools (for example the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) that could be adapted for this purpose.

It would be useful for CWA Scotland to develop standard, real-time approaches to collecting feedback from passengers – for example, a self-evaluation tool-kit and protocol. This would need to be simple and non-intrusive to use and allow for flexibility for different types of Chapter and passenger groups. It could include a short, simple tool for passenger feedback that could be administered by Pilots on a regular basis. Observational data could also be collected through Pilots and carers, using a standard tool. A survey tool could be developed for gathering feedback from family members.

The above approaches could be used to collect ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation information within individual Chapters, with more formal overall evaluation conducted less frequently and including wider stakeholder groups (such as CWA staff, funders, etc.).

CONCLUSIONS

This has been a successful trial of the Cycling Without Age initiative in Scotland and CWA staff have learned a great deal through implementing it. The training and safety protocols have been continuously reviewed and improved. There is a strong sense that the initiative is very well organised, with staff and Pilots now having a strong feeling of ownership and of belonging to the movement. Dialogue is open, positive and solution-focussed and the learning from the CWA Falkirk trial at Carrondale has been used to develop the initiative for the current roll-out. Pilots and CWA staff have an open and productive relationship and sense of joint working towards a common goal.

There are clear benefits and impacts for care home residents, primarily a sense of freedom,

enjoyment of fresh air and social interaction (with each other, the Pilots and people in the community). Connections with community, environment and meaningful, genuine relationships between Pilots and residents have developed through CWA. Staff and family members identified impacts in terms of mood, alertness and general wellbeing.

Pilots too benefit from developing connections to people of another generation, their local area and each other and report improved wellbeing.

CWA Scotland has learnt a great deal through this trial Chapter and that learning is contributing to the ongoing roll-out of the initiative. Monitoring and evaluation approaches can be developed to reflect this journey and provide ongoing feedback, learning and contribution to development.



WHO CONDUCTED THE EVALUATION?

The evaluation was carried out by Janet Biggar. The interview guides were developed in collaboration with Dr Alan Gow at The Ageing Lab, based in the School of Social Sciences at Heriot-Watt University, and Christine Bell, Executive Officer for Cycling Without Age Scotland.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CYCLING WITHOUT AGE SCOTLAND?

Cycling Without Age Scotland has chapters across the country. Details can be found on the CWA Scotland website (<https://cyclingwithoutage.scot/home/>), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CWAScotland/>), or by calling 01324 467272.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVALUATION?

The Ageing Lab team would be happy to provide further details about the evaluation or their ongoing research. More information can be found at www.healthyageing.hw.ac.uk, and you can contact the research team at HealthyAgeing@hw.ac.uk.

Research with **Cycling Without Age Scotland** is continuing and you can find updates on the website as they become available, www.healthyageing.hw.ac.uk.

WHO FUNDS THE INITIATIVE?

Cycling Without Age Falkirk was established in 2017 with funding from the Scottish Innovation Fund to the Communities Along the Carron Association. Cycling Without Age Scotland was subsequently launched in 2018 with funding from the Scottish Government.

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We would also like to thank the many individuals and groups who have contributed to the development of **Cycling Without Age Scotland**. Thank you for helping to give people the 'right to wind in their hair'.

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