

# Toolkit

## Taking photos and capturing case studies

We're looking forward to hearing about the amazing successes from this year's Big Bike Revival, but **what's the best way of capturing those stories?**

It's all about people - people who don't cycle regularly, people who've overcome great adversity to cycle, and people for whom cost, culture or age have proved a barrier to cycling. It's important we capture those stories in the most powerful way, to encourage even more people to get involved.

Here's a quick guide to help you do that:

### Case studies

Ideally, we'd like to know:

- **First and last name**  
Remember to check the spelling, even it appears to be obvious, for example John or Jon? Sean or Sion or Shawn or Shaun?
- **Location**  
Find out the town or city where they live for example Leicester, Bristol, Newcastle, or Witney, near Oxford if it's a little-known place.
- **Age**  
Particularly useful if they are old or young – but it's good practice to ask as we draw a very different picture in our minds when we read “Joan, 13, from Leeds” to “Joan, 83, from Leeds.”
- **Contact details**  
Take a phone number and email address so we can contact the person, share their story with them, check the details, add extra ones and ask their consent.

### The story: and how to capture it

A Big Bike Revival story is about a person who's been inspired to cycle more. So, we are looking for **people's stories** about **how cycling has changed their habits, behaviour or life!**

**Don't be afraid to ask questions**, e.g. If someone has said they started cycling to overcome a physical or mental health problem, ask them to describe how the problem has affected their life (if they are happy to do so) and how the problem made them feel. This makes the reader feel more connected to the story – and therefore they are more likely to make a positive change themselves and start cycling.

## Open-ended questions

Ask open-ended questions, i.e. ones that require a longer response than yes or no, like:

### BEFORE: ask questions about their life before attending the event

- How long has it been since you've ridden a bike?
- What's stopped you from cycling before?
- Why did you come to the event today?
- What were you hoping to get out of the event today?

### DURING: ask questions about how they have found the event

- What have you enjoyed about the event?
- What have you got out of the event today?

### AFTER: ask questions about what they plan to do after the event

- How is this event going to change your life / daily habits?
- What sort of commitment to regular cycling are you going to make and why?
- What has changed in your life since attending the BBR event/cycling regularly? (If the person attended a previous years BBR event or began cycling several months before).

## Photos

### 'A picture is worth a thousand words'

When interviewing a person for a case study, ask if they mind you taking their photograph. We'll use it for publicity and / or the press to highlight the success of the Bike Big Revival. If they agree you **MUST** get them to sign a [photographic consent form](#).

#### Do



- Take natural shots and poses
- Ask people to smile
- Fill the frame with faces / some upper body
- Huddle groups so shoulders almost touch
- Take the photo in landscape

#### Don't



- Shoot from distance
- Shoot backs of heads and bottoms
- Take the photo in portrait
- Only take pictures of people standing in a row (natural, action shots are best)

### Types of pictures – Thinking about your purpose

If you're not sure what story you're trying to tell with your photos or if you're taking photos for someone else, it's a good idea to take a range of types of pictures. There's nothing worse than 30 pictures all containing the same thing.

See if you can take one picture from each of these picture types. All five image types should have a human element. A picture can be more than one type.

- **ACTION**  
This is an action shot. It's should not look posed. It should show someone in the middle of doing something, such as cycling or teaching. Be careful about the image blurring.
- **LANDSCAPE**  
A picture of the surrounding landscape allows the viewer to understand where the story is happening. If it's a cycle in a vibrant city or stunning countryside the viewer wants to see. Make sure there's a human element (not posed).
- **PORTRAIT**  
We're not taking about a picture taken in portrait (all pictures should be taken in landscape). This is a picture of the subject of our story. It could be a close-up head shot or head and shoulders on a bike or interacting with someone. It should not be a posed picture of a person standing in front of the camera.
- **DETAIL**  
It's helpful to have a close-up to help to expand the story. So, if there is some bicycle maintenance taking place, then a detailed image of a bike repair. It should also include a person – it could just be their hands. This keeps the image alive. A picture of a bike chain is quite ordinary but a picture of someone working on a bike chain is more engaging.
- **ARCHITECTURE**  
These photos show the structures present (if any). These help to set the scene.

### Get in the right position - Technical tips

Take pictures of people with their bikes, think about changing the angle you take the shot from or ask them to remove helmets! This can transform an ordinary photo into something more interesting. Changing the position from which you take a picture can make a big difference.



## Consent

Please don't forget to get people to sign a photographic consent form. **We cannot use the image without one!**