

MOST INSPIRING GROUP

Cycling Minds CCC

Cycling Minds is also based in the north-east of England and part of the England-wide network of Cycling UK Community Cycle Clubs. It was funded by a grant through the Sport England Together Fund, which is supporting the running and development of the Link Community Cycle Hub in Hexham.

Cycling Minds' slogan is: 'Connecting, empowering and healing people and communities through cycling'. The club only started in April 2022 but has already achieved so much. It uses cycling to support young people who may be from disadvantaged backgrounds and who may struggle to engage with society and the job market.

Nominating the club for the award, its supporters said: "Cycling Minds offers great and wide-ranging services from training, e-bike hire and guided rides to workshop provision. They are lovely people doing great work and have made a significant contribution to the local community, having a very positive impact on wellbeing and mental health through encouraging more people to cycle."

They singled out founder Toby Price for praise: "He has worked tirelessly to establish this project and is passing on his extensive cycling knowledge to young people and other volunteers... Toby is making a difference for many beneficiaries of his services, and is a beacon for cycling in Hexham."

Toby, who has experienced mental health difficulties himself, said: "Cycling Minds is not just a cycling club. It has launched its own charitable e-bike ride and workplace training programmes, run lots of events for Cycling UK and other organisations, installed two public bike repair stations for people to use (with another two on the way), serviced hundreds of bikes and refurbished and sold many more.

"It's great to see our work being noticed, especially as a new organisation. We have plenty to be proud of since we launched, although it has been an uphill battle with lots of challenges along the way. Knowing an established organisation like Cycling UK recognises the value of what we have started makes all the hard work worthwhile."



Above: Brian Shannon at Belfast City Hall after the 'Ride on Belfast 2023', and receiving a Cycling UK Certificate of Appreciation from Andrew McClean
Below left: Start of a Cycling Minds ride, Tyne Green, Hexham, Northumberland

MOST INSPIRING CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

Brian Shannon, Belfast Cycling Campaign

Nominating Brian for his award, Cycling UK's engagement officer for Northern Ireland, Andrew McClean, said: "Brian has been a Cycling UK Cycle Advocacy Network (CAN) local rep for the Belfast area for around one year now. He has put hours of volunteering into supporting Cycling UK event evenings and initiatives such as Belfast bike buses. He is also a founding member of the Belfast Cycle Campaign.

"On top of this, Brian has also pioneered the 'Share our Cars Belfast' scheme for residents to reduce the need for car ownership and car dependency. He has leafleted residents, been featured in our national media – both in print and on radio – lobbied the council and politicians in the Assembly for support and legislative change, and managed to get several groups committed to sharing their cars.