Reflections on cycling experience in later life: diaries and discussions
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Focus

WHO?

People aged 50-59 and 60+

CARDIFF
OXFORD
BRISTOL
READING
Mixed methods approach

Scoping secondary data sources

Urban Design Audit

International study visits

Mixed methods approach

Life History / Biographical interviews

Mobile methods / Micro-ethnography

(E)Cycling & Wellbeing Trial

Urban Design Audit

International study visits

Mixed methods approach

Life History / Biographical interviews

Mobile methods / Micro-ethnography

(E)Cycling & Wellbeing Trial
Life course to glimpses of everyday life

Later life transitions

(E)cycling trials
(E)cycling Focus Groups
Mobile rides
Interviews

Not to scale!

Incidents
Ecological model of human behaviour; longitudinal framework to consider the impact of multiple layers of influence over the life span.

Individual cycling behaviour a developmental trajectory that encompassed a person’s thoughts, feelings, capabilities and activities related to cycling.

An individual’s cycling status in mid and later life is viewed “dynamically as the consequence of past experience and future expectation as well as the integration of internal motive and external constraint” (Giele and Elder, 1998).

Life history interview: Rationale

Through individual life histories of cycling reveal

- Whole-life view on engagement with cycling
  - Behaviour change and continuity in relation to life events and transitions and evolving social and physical settings
  - Practice of contemporary cycling

- Experience and narratives of cycling and ageing
  - How cycling is affected by later adulthood transitions? e.g. changing work patterns, family structure, roles, health
  - Adaptive, restorative and diminishing changes
  - Outlook for future cycling
Cycling Life History: Grid

(See Harrison, Veeck & Gentry, 2011)

Cycling Life History: Timeline
Life History Interviews: Emerging themes

- Heterogeneity in past cycling trajectories:
  - continued | expanded | diminished | rediscovered | discontinued | new | stopped | absent
- Heterogeneity in future cycling trajectories:
  - continue | increase | decrease | uncertain | start | behind me
- Later life:
  - transitions: retirement | residential moves | family roles | body | motivation
  - Niches: established and evolved
- Cycling niche:
  - enduring: knowledge | skills
  - adapting: bike | kit | timing | skills | company | routes
  - explorative: geography | mentors

Life course to glimpses of everyday life

Later life transitions

- (E)cycling trials
- (E)cycling Focus
  - Groups
- Mobile
  - rides
- Interviews

Incidents

Not to scale!
Integrated methods

Life history interview  

E-cycling wellbeing trial

How has their cycling status arisen over their life course  

Experiences of and responses to 8 weeks E-cycling in later life

(E)cycling - eight week trial: background

Objective:
To test the impact of (re)discovering cycling on physical activity, mental health and wellbeing in older adults.

“work on well-being and mobility should consider both the objective and the subjective and the hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions of well-being, and should pay detailed attention to the multiple ways in which well-being and its linkages to mobility are context-dependent and shaped by the particularities of time and place”

(Nordbakke & Schwanen 2014)
(E)cycling - eight week trial: background

Measures:
1. Cognitive function (Executive function tasks)
2. Eudaimonic wellbeing (actualizing inherent potentials)
3. Hedonic wellbeing (maximizing pleasure moments)
4. Physical health (self-reported)

Tools – Psychological wellbeing (PWB) questionnaire (Ryff, 1989); Health Survey SF36v2. Exec function tasks: MMSE; CERAD I & II; Verbal fluency; Plus minus; RVIP; Stroop; Letter Memory; Dot probe; Go-No-Go… Diary entries

Sample of E-bike (n=40); pedal cycle (n=40); control group (n=20) matched on age, sex, SES, educational from Oxford and Reading areas.

Exposure - (Re)Engaging with cycling at least 3 times per week for at least 30 minutes during the 8-week period.

(E)cycling - eight week trial

Life History Interview Cycling assessment
Pre-tests
Diary
GPS/Odometer verification
Post-tests
Focus group
Follow-up (?)
(E)cycling - eight week trial

Life History Interview Cycling assessment
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(E)cycling trial – diary example
# E-cycling trial – Ulrich’s diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</table>
| 1     | Excited about independent cycling: ‘Exuberant’  
Familiarisation: gears, settings, speed, weight: ‘Power does help’ |
| 2     | Enjoyment: ‘E-bike has brought fun back to cycling’  
Environment: ‘Poor state of some roads and cycle ways’ |
| 3     | Social: ‘With Carina, who can go faster then me. Picnic by river’  
Health: knee problem resolved, regained interest in sport and ‘fighting spirit’ |
| 4     | Testing: ‘stamina on unbroken run’, ‘Carina can overtake me easily’  
Familiarity: ‘Initial excitement... has passed... enjoyment of using it is still there’ |
| 5     | Exploratory rides: ‘Interesting ride over new routes’ |
| 6     | Encouraged: ‘Could not have kept time schedule due to heavy traffic’, ‘Do more’ |
| 7     | Technical: ‘Punctured, lucky near home’, Fixing it ‘heavy work’ |
| 8     | Benefits: ‘Pleased could still ride pedal cycle without a struggle’, ‘542 miles’! |
| 9     | Appreciation: ‘Final ride... all good things have to come to an end’ Buy one... |
## E-cycling trials – initial findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>Excitement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation: kit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Familiarisation: cycle training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiencing</td>
<td>Body/mind</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Confidence: ability</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation: cycle BOOM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographies/Infrastructure/environment</td>
<td>Expansion of cycling: topography</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Environmental challenges: weather</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Bike problems: gears</td>
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<td>Positive comparison to driving: speed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social interactions</td>
<td>Clothing and ‘clobber’: gloves</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accompanied cycling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ending</td>
<td>Appreciation: mobility</td>
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<td>Planning: e-bike</td>
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## E-bike opportunities

"same amount of exercise but more pleasure because going further than my usual boundaries"

“Instead of 'closing down' at our ages we’re thinking of exciting and challenging things to do”

**Mobility practices**
- Geographies – rediscovered | extended | deepened
- Additional journeys | replacing car
- Learning effect > novelty (Fyrhi & Fearnley 2015)

**Health and wellbeing**
- Greater (cycling) confidence
- Spatial awareness and control
- Independence & social contact
- Exercise and enjoyment
- Engagement with the unknown: 'mobility of the self' (Schwanen & Ziegler 2011a)
E-bike challenges

“how is that going to help?...
I imagined a little scooter that you switch on and it goes”

“Oxford is a dangerous city to cycle round”

E-bikes: image/nature | weight | cost | security | stranding | technical support

Unsupportive environments: roads | traffic | cycle tracks

Life course to glimpses of everyday life

Later life transitions

(E)cycling trials

(E)cycling Focus Groups

Mobile rides

Interviews

Not to scale!

Incidents
‘Naturalistic’ rides: background

- ‘New mobilities paradigm’ exploring mobile bodies in mobile contexts
- Approaches that diverge from traditional methods – research ‘on the move’. (Sheller and Urry, 2006)
- Mobility not just movement between A and B (Cresswell, 2006)
- Interest in affect, place, meaning, culture and representation

Integrated methods

- Life history interview
- Naturalistic ride and video elicitation interview

- How has their cycling status arisen over their life course
- Practices and experiences of everyday later life cycling
Mobile naturalistic ride observation

Mobile naturalistic ride interview
Mobile naturalistic rides – initial findings

Temporal & spatial flexibility / discretion (fair-weather / seasonal)
Competence: expert manoeuvres | reactivity
Awareness of risks and capabilities
Detailed knowledge of (changing) environment
Avoiding conflict: observing etiquette
Transgressions: justified & confessional

Summary

Temporal experience: life course to cycling incidents | reflection
Later life transitions: retirement | residential moves & environment | family roles | body |
motivations | changing ‘embodied capacities’
(Schwanen & Ziegler 2011b)
E-bikes: image and marketing | loans | design |
social & technical support | ‘learning effect’
Unsupportive environments: roads | traffic | cycle tracks | storage
References


Fyhri, A. & Fearnley, N. 2015 Effects of e-bikes on bicycle use and mode share. Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment 36, 45-52


Schwanen,T. & Ziegler, F. 2011a. ‘I like to go out to be energised by different people’: an exploratory analysis of mobility and wellbeing in later life. Ageing and Society, 31, 758-781