



From girl power to pedal power

By **Ola Adeniran, 12,**
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Recent research shows that fewer women are prepared to cycle in Hackney than men. But is that the same for girls too? We hit the streets to find out.

From our research we discovered that only one in seven teenage girls cycle on a regular basis. However, over half the girls we spoke to said they would cycle if there were more cycle paths.

Maria, 13, said she 'enjoys cycling because it's a fun way to pass the time'. However, Kristina, 15, said she doesn't and will never cycle, as she prefers to walk.

So, why don't more girls cycle? Many of the girls we spoke to said they don't feel the roads are safe enough.

Maria, 13, said: "I cycle but would use my bike more if there were more cycle paths. I enjoy cycling because it's a fun way to pass the time."

And Sonita, 16, agrees: "I don't cycle because I am lazy. But I would if there were more cycle routes and hot dudes."

Duyen Anh, 12, said: "I cycle when I feel like I need to lose weight, but I also cycle for fun and pleasure."

“I enjoy it and think it's a good form of exercise. I started cycling on a tricycle when I was five”

"I cycle a couple of times a week. I enjoy it and think it's a good form of exercise. I started cycling on a tricycle when I was five. I think if people are willing to cycle they should but they shouldn't be forced."

Overall, most of the teenagers we interviewed believed that if more girls started cycling even greater numbers would follow suit.

To find out all the ways Hackney Council is working to boost the numbers of cyclists, of all ages, in the borough, turn to pg 27.



Ola & Rebecca (above); a girl has her bike checked out at a London Fields surgery this summer (below) and fashion for female cyclists at the Wheels & Heels event in Colombia Road this February (left)



My Opinion

Free money for the young to do stuff they really want to

By **Ola Adeniran, 12**

YOUNG people in Hackney have thousands of pounds of funding available to help provide things for them to do.

This is good news, because a new report shows that young people want the chance to do more positive things in their free time. Sixteen to 19-year-olds from London were quizzed about their free time as part of a nationwide Teen Talk survey. It was conducted by a mobile network and is believed to be the largest ever SMS-based poll of teenagers' free-time habits.

It found that 67 per cent of London teens would rather be doing things like football, dance, music, martial arts and going to the gym.



And it's good news because the Government has handed over £381,500 to young people in Hackney, some of which is available to apply for through the Youth Opportunities Fund. **(See the advert on pg 22 for more details.)**

This fund is managed by a panel of young people who judge which projects should be given money. It means that young people in the borough get to decide what schemes will go ahead. And it is better for the young

people who are applying for the money too, because they will be better understood and heard.

I think the idea is a really good one because instead of adults deciding what projects young people do, they decide for themselves, so they get to do stuff they really want to. If I set up my own project, I would start a



YOUR OPINION

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singing group to help young people get their voices heard as you can say a lot about issues through song.



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