



e-smartec
Interreg Europe

Action Plan

West Midlands

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General information

project

e-smartec - enhanced sustainable mobility with marketing techniques (PGI06099)

partner organisation(s) concerned

Coventry University Enterprises Ltd

country

United Kingdom

NUTS2 region

West Midlands

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The Action Plan aims to impact

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme**
- European Territorial Cooperation programme**
- Other regional development policy instrument**

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed

European Structural and Investment funds 2014 to 2020 Coventry and Warwickshire Strategy

National funds Linked to Local Air Quality Action Plan

Commonwealth Active Communities Fund (Sport England)

1. Introduction

Many European urban areas face a series of environmental challenges linked to mobility – congestion linked to air pollution. Based on the experience, sustainable urban mobility planning cannot be achieved without the commitment of key stakeholders and travellers. Users' engagement in mobility planning is often a big challenge for authorities since it requires deep knowledge of marketing and sociological aspects.

E-smartec aims at reinforcing existing policies and programmes by enhancing each step of mobility planning with the deployment of targeted marketing techniques for linking bottom-up and top-down decision making. The overall goal is to develop Action Plans that provide tailored guidelines on citizens' and stakeholders engagement marketing techniques. Eventually e-smartec is expected to contribute to the urban dimension of regional and local mobility policy-making by enhancing sustainable measures acceptance level, thus contributing to the implementation of the EU goal on the transition to a low carbon economy.

The 6 e-smartec 'test-bed' areas of the Action Plans include: Bratislava Self Governing Region (represented by University of Zilina), Region of Central Macedonia (represented by Regional Development Fund of the Region of Central Macedonia on behalf of the Region of Central Macedonia), Lazio Region (represented by Rome Mobility Agency), North Limburg (represented by Municipality of Venlo) , West Midlands (represented by Coventry University Enterprises Ltd) and State of Hessen (represented by Hessen Trade & Invest GmbH/ Centre of Competence for Sustainable Urban Mobility). With the lead partner CERTH (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas), the communication leader POLIS (Promotion of Operational Links with Integrated Services) and the technical support partner LCU (Link Campus University), the e-smartec consortium brings together 9 partner from 7 countries, engaged to further enhance the inclusiveness of sustainable mobility planning and the awareness of sustainable mobility interventions.

Funded under the Interreg Europe Project and the thematic area of Low Carbon Economy, the e-smartec project initiated at the beginning of August 2019 and unfolds into two phases of a total duration of three years: phase 1 (two years duration), where an exchange of experience process takes place, resulting in the regional Action Plans formulation and phase 2 (one year duration), where the Action Plans are implemented.

2. Background

West Midlands is a metropolitan county situated in western-central England. It borders with the counties of Warwickshire to the east, Worcestershire to the south, and Staffordshire to the north and west. The county has an area of 902 km² and it is one of the most urbanised counties in the United Kingdom and the second most populous county in England with an estimated population of 2,916,458 people.

The county consists of metropolitan boroughs: the City of Birmingham, the City of Coventry, the City of Wolverhampton, and the metropolitan boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, and Walsall.

Approximately 41% of journeys under two miles in the West Midlands are made by car. Therefore, there is potential for an increased role for sustainable travel. Smarter choice initiatives have a role to play, as do improvements to cycling and public transport to support longer journeys.

West Midlands cycling levels are currently significantly below those of many other metropolitan areas and core cities across the UK. The success these areas have had has not been by chance, but due to a clear and defined ambition to raise cycling levels, and commitment and will to deliver this change. Addressing the safety concerns of existing and potential cyclists has been fundamental to increasing cycling elsewhere. Cycling has an important role to play in addressing the challenges the West Midlands face, which include reducing congestion, carbon and pollution, supporting economic growth and employment, tackling obesity and creating places where people want to live, work, learn, shop and do business. Cycling plays a key role in developing a high-quality sustainable mobility system that meets the travel needs of local businesses and communities – connecting people to opportunities and improving choice, convenience, affordability, safety and connectivity across the West Midlands for all citizens. The popularity of cycling continues to grow, with more people taking up cycling for getting to work, staying healthy and for leisure activities. We need to make the most of the benefits cycling offers the West Midlands, and capitalise on the current cycling ‘renaissance’.

The West Midlands has a diverse population. It is also a region with higher than average levels of inequality and the highest levels of physical inactivity compared to all regions. Substantial inequalities are also found in relation to gender, age, disability and ethnicity for both utility and leisure cycling. Cycling needs to be made more inclusive, accessible and

affordable for people of all ages who live, work and learn in the West Midlands. Inclusivity in cycling requires consideration of the social, structural and cultural barriers that can prohibit accessibility. In particular, all style of pedal cycles including hand cycles, trikes, recumbents and cargo cycles need to be taken into consideration when designing safe cycle routes as well as in the development of community-based cycling programmes so that everyone can enjoy cycling together.

Delivery of cycling and walking schemes is a cross cutting agenda that supports the aims of other programmes and strategies of WMCA and the seven constituent local authorities. Therefore, we tried initially to involve the main local stakeholders in charge of sustainable mobility in the several activities organised within the e-smartec project. This was essential to understand better the needs of the region, find a common ground and plan actions that could improve sustainable mobility.

The Action Plan came along as a result of our close collaboration with our main stakeholder, the Coventry City Council. In specific, we worked with the CW Green Business Program Team (Action 1), the Transport and Infrastructure Department (Action 2) and the Go Parks Department (Action 3).

Considering also the Brexit implications, we worked together to design actions which were taking into account our funding challenges and pushing the sustainable mobility agenda.

3. Policy Context

The co-ordinated, effective and efficient delivery of cycle training, safety and marketing will play a significant role in increasing cycling and walking across the West Midlands.

Funding for cycling improvements will be crucial if we are to meet our aspirations for cycling growth in the West Midlands.

In the current public sector funding climate, we need to be innovative and work in partnership with other organisations to lever in funding for Cycling across the region.

1. Funding and resources will be secured over the next ten years to give certainty and the ability to forward plan to achieve our ambitious cycling target. This will include identifying and sharing of partner resources and expertise to get maximum value. We will identify how

highway maintenance programmes can offer opportunities for improving cycle infrastructure. We will also identify additional sources of funding, including the EU and central government, private sector contributions and the role of the third sector and social enterprises, along with the health, education and sport sectors.

2. Funding will be sought to deliver a high quality strategic cycle network across the region. Cycling will receive a 'fair share of the pot' – we will strive to achieve a spend in line with the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG) recommendations of £10 to £20 per person invested in improving cycling facilities locally, and supporting more people from across the West Midlands to cycle.

3. Co-ordination of resources and expertise from a range of partners (including the voluntary, private and public sector) to maximise the potential for delivering an increase in cycling.

Travel behaviours have been changing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown. During lockdown, road traffic had fallen and there has been an uplift in cycling and walking as people have adjusted to life in these new conditions. The impact of the pandemic has been a marked increase in levels of car traffic and decreased trust in public transport. Further action to reduce the impacts of transport on the environment is more pressing than ever. During this crisis people have taken to cycling and walking, whether for exercise or as a safe, socially distanced choice of transport. Whilst cars remain vital for many, there is an opportunity to enable cycling and walking as an attractive and safe sustainable transport option. This is particularly important for those who may rely on affordable travel. In the forthcoming months there will be a golden opportunity to embed greener travel habits which will give rise to cleaner air and healthier communities.

In the West Midlands, we are working with our partners to develop and implement a Community and a Green Recovery Plan because of COVID-19's significant impact on transport operators and travel behaviours. Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) will work closely with all regional partners to aid economic resilience and recovery.

On 9 May 2020 the Government announced the Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) to help make it easier for people to cycle and walk to get around. In the summer of 2020, the ambition for active travel in the West Midlands was announced with the name Starley Network, which pays tribute to the history of manufacturing of cycles in the region.

According to Transport for West Midlands, in our Region, we are aiming at raising the levels of cycling across Metropolitan area to 5% of all trips by 2023. This represents a 400% increase in cycling journeys from the 1% baseline. This ten-year target is not the end of a journey but a start – to where we see the West Midlands where cycling is naturally commonplace. By 2033, we want to raise cycling to 10% of all trips.

As part of an integrated transport system, cycling can:

- Support economic growth and the delivery of Strategic Economic Plans by reducing congestion and delays on our road network.
- Improve the environment by helping to reduce carbon emissions, air pollution and noise.
- Offer an affordable, convenient and low-cost travel option to access jobs, education and leisure opportunities, particularly for people without access to cars.
- Increase people’s physical activity levels, tackle health inequalities and improve both the physical and mental health of West Midlands residents.
- Create better places to live by making it easy for people to move around their local communities.

There is widespread evidence that encouraging more people to walk and cycle can help to make them happier, healthier and wealthier, improving their quality of life for all residents. The potential to enable more people of all ages and backgrounds to cycle is there, particularly for short trips to work, school, local shops or for leisure. However for the West Midlands to fully realise the potential of cycling, a fundamental cultural shift is required in how we lead, plan, promote and fund cycling in the region. This cultural shift has started.

Link to our Policy Instrument

The Policy Instrument selected for improvement is: European Structural and Investment funds 2014 to 2020 Coventry and Warwickshire Strategy.

For the 2014 to 2020 programming period, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) in England are responsible for designing and delivering strategies on how best to use this funding. Each LEP area receives a notional allocation from the funds for seven years to deliver its European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds strategy which must be spent in line with a set of overarching priorities set out in the EU regulations.

The Coventry and Warwickshire area has a notional allocation of 135.5 m Euro. LEP set out strategic-level activities to deliver its objectives with the European SFs and specify the outcomes they are seeking to achieve and the rationale for the selection of activities for ESI Funds investment. This funds have been already all spent towards priority axis 4 - SUPPORTING THE SHIFT TOWARDS A LOW CARBON ECONOMY IN ALL SECTORS.

Due to the timing of the ROP, we are going to find challenging to link the Action Plan to the Policy Instrument due to the ROP having ended in 2020.

However, this Action Plan aims at:

- Enhance current projects (2014-2020) with Marketing Techniques aimed at promoting sustainable mobility
- Enhancing National and Regional funds (namely funds linked to Local Air Quality and the 'Commonwealth Active Communities' fund - which is a £4 million Sport England fund to harness the power of the Games to support inactive people to become more active)

With our Actions, we are aiming at establishing awareness-raising activities for extending and promoting the use of cycling and walking among citizens of the West Midlands Region, daily Commuters/visitors to the Region and stakeholders by:

- 1- Training about Marketing techniques for sustainable mobility provided to stakeholders, organisations and businesses alike involved in the Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme
- 2- Mass Cycling Event during Summer 2022 to promote cycling among the population of Coventry on the backing of the Commonwealth Games of 2022.
- 3- Go-Park campaign – Commonwealth edition. The campaign, linked to the Commonwealth Games 2022 -which will be hosted in our area-, has the objective to raise awareness of walking in parks located in Coventry among children (and young families). QR codes will be scanned each time a child walks across a park. Schools will then compete against each other's to win a prize at the end of the competition.

4. Details of the actions envisaged

4.1

ACTION 1: Training about Marketing techniques for sustainable mobility aimed at stakeholders, organisations and business alike involved in the Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme

RELEVANCE TO THE PROJECT We are aiming at enhancing citizen and stakeholder engagement in sustainable mobility planning through targeted training on marketing techniques.

Our inspiration came from engagement with one of our stakeholders – Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Program- during our **second Plenary stakeholder meeting**. We established that our two programs had two similar kind of audiences and ultimately a common focus: make the world a greener place! By offering free training around marketing techniques to their Stakeholders, we are aiming at promoting sustainable mobility and a greener world.

In addition, the following two Good Practices both provided by PP9 Hessen Trade & Invest GmbH / Centre of Competence for Sustainable Urban Mobility:

- Marketing Toolbox Active Mobility Hessen

A selection of standardised materials for awareness raising and advertising on active mobility for local authorities.

Hessen offers the municipalities targeted assistance in the area of active mobility and the communication process between local authorities and citizens.

In addition to numerous guidelines, which give municipalities practical advice on the implementation of active mobility and supporting workshops, extensive materials for advertising are provided in a "marketing toolbox". This is intended to give local authorities and politicians the opportunity to discuss active mobility issues in public without having to use their own, usually scarce resources.

This GP offers materials and support for Municipalities in the area of the Active Mobility. With our Action, we are aiming to provide Training to Stakeholders and, in a similar way, we are aiming to provide tools to enhance stakeholders' engagement in sustainable mobility.

- Active Mobility Check for Municipalities in Hessen

The Active Mobility Check (AMC) is a marketing tool to promote a better environment for active mobility in municipalities. It combines different marketing techniques for awareness raising among stakeholders and creating a culture of walking and cycling in an urban community with an efficient, short and participatory planning process.

This GP offers inspiration in the sense that, by promoting the Training in a context beyond the one offered by the Project in the first place, the Municipalities will increase knowhow around the several marketing techniques that could be used to promote Active Mobility in the area.

NATURE OF THE ACTION

We are aiming to promote further the e-smartec course "Build the engagement strategy of a SUMP" in order to proactively engage participation of stakeholders and citizens in sustainable mobility planning beyond 2021, throughout the phase 2 of e-smartec.

The course has been designed within the e-smartec project, as a live e-course. The course will also be available in a non-live version from January 2022 ongoing throughout Phase 2.

The course outlines how to use marketing techniques and other engagement methods for raising awareness and linking bottom-up and top-down decision making through a facilitated dialogue between policy makers, stakeholders and citizens. It gives the basic instruments to ideally establish (or understand how to establish) a successful and overarching participatory approach using such techniques.

We are aiming to promote the training from February 2022 until December 2022 by engaging with the Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme.

Our team is aiming to digitally promote the training as part of CW Green Business Programme online webinars.

Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme is funded under the European Regional Development Fund (priorities 4b and 4f) and is being delivered by an established partnership between Coventry City Council and Coventry University Group.

The programme has now been extended until June 2023 and is on track to deliver the following objectives:

- Support SMEs with audits, 1:1 support or grants, to improve energy and resource efficiency, foster growth and adopt low carbon technologies.
- Saving of GHG emissions, delivering on national aspirations of “Clean Growth”.
- Delivering knowledge collaborations.
- Supporting SMEs to develop new to firm products.
- Further strengthen attendance and membership of the already established Green Business Network, as a means of exchanging good practice in energy and resource efficiency and the adoption of low carbon technologies.

Under objectives 2 and 5, our collaboration with Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Program would form part of the Clean Business growth and would enrich knowledge among the Green Business Network Community.

CW Green Business Programme support the shift towards a low carbon economy by delivering a cohesive package of business support activities that will facilitate economic growth through Coventry & Warwickshire -the reduction of Carbon is the output & outcome of the programme itself-.

Green Business Network Community is aimed at Organisations, Businesses and Business Owners interested in the Green agenda, with sustainable mobility being a crucial part of that. Their webinars will be used as a digital platform where to promote further the Training, beyond the reach of the e-smartec project itself.

The aim of this action is to demonstrate that we could encourage positive behavioural changes towards sustainable mobility by addressing potential training needs within a targeted community of Local and Regional Authorities, Organisations, Businesses and business owners which are likeminded due to their remit (the Green Business Network).

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The Stakeholders involved in the CW Green Business Programme are:

- Coventry City Council *Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises* - (Accountable body, Programme Management function, Green Business Network and administering the Green Business Grants Fund & Business assist)
- Coventry University Enterprises *Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low-carbon technologies* (Workshops, 1:1 Support & administering Low Carbon Innovation Grants)
- Coventry University Centre for Built and Natural Environment (R&D Clusters - research clusters focused on innovation in the low carbon sector)

TIMEFRAME February 2022 – December 2022

COSTS Not applicable

FUNDING SOURCES Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme is funded under the European Regional Development Fund (priorities 4b and 4f) and has being delivered by Coventry City Council in conjunction with Coventry University Group.

MONITORING MEASURES Training being promoted as part of 2 webinars between February 2022 and December 2022

4.2

ACTION 2: A Mass cycle to promote cycling linked to air quality inside city.

RELEVANCE TO THE PROJECT We are aiming at organizing an awareness-raising activity with the objective of enhancing behaviour towards Active mobility (within the sustainable mobility agenda) by promoting the use of cycling among citizens of the West Midlands Region, daily commuters/visitors to the Region and stakeholders alike. This event will be linked to the Clean Air and Air quality Agendas within the city of Coventry. The two causes (cycling and air quality) are complementary to each other in this respect.

During our **Open citizen's event** – thanks to the questionnaires that we imparted- we learned that half of the people interviewed were not currently cycling. Therefore, we think that a Mass Cycling event would be a way to promote cycling among the population.

Furthermore, our inspiration came from the following Good Practices provided by other partners in the project:

- Cycling against Diabetes Melitus by PP2 Regional Development Fund of the Region of Central Macedonia

A cycling race was organised, aiming to promote the message of minimising the effects of diabetes through daily exercise.

This GP was of inspiration, as we realised that a similar cause could be used to convey the same message, when the final objective is the same. In our case, both cycling and air quality within the City are complementary, leading to the same key message, even if belonging to two separate causes.

- City Cycling (STADTRADELN) by PP9 Hessen Trade & Invest GmbH / Centre of Competence for Sustainable Urban Mobility

The CITY CYCLING campaign is designed as a competition to promote cycling.

Likewise, our GP has been designed to promote cycling among citizens.

- VOLTARO by Region of Central Macedonia

The event aimed at increasing the citizens' awareness around Sustainable Urban Mobility with the use of volunteers. It provided information to citizens in a moment of relax, while taking their Sunday walk on the coast of Thessaloniki. The relaxed setting meant that the people were more receptive to information.

In our Action, we are similarly aiming at increasing awareness of cycling among citizens in a moment of relax, during the weekend and while the zone (likely to be the City inner Ring-Road) gets temporarily blocked to traffic.

NATURE OF THE ACTION This Action involves our Local Authority. Coventry City Council will be in charge of hosting a Mass cycle ride event during the summer 2022. The aim of this event will be to promote sustainable mobility – specifically cycling – among citizens.

It will involve very likely a closure of Coventry inner ring road.

The event will be linked to a very hot topic at the moment: air quality within the city.

By using Cause Marketing techniques, the event will be aiming at changing behaviour around cycling, by linking it to a different cause: air quality within the city.

Through a cross-sector approach (e.g. transport, health and air quality) this action is aiming to address attitudes and barriers to cycling.

Larger sport and cycling events have the potential to inspire people to take up more physical activity – including cycling.

STAKEHOLDERS Coventry City Council

INVOLVED Transport & Infrastructure Department

TIMEFRAME Summer 2022

COSTS n/a

FUNDING National funds Linked to Local Air Quality Action Plan

SOURCES

MONITORING One event to take place on a Sunday during the Summer 2022.

MEASURES

4.3

ACTION 3: Marketing of Walking among school aged children. A new ACTIVE SCHOOL CHALLENGE (part of Go Parks/ Coventry City Council), linked to the 2022 Commonwealth Games which will be hosted in our Region (Active School Challenge – Commonwealth Edition).

RELEVANCE TO THE PROJECT

We are aiming to the establishment of awareness-raising activities for extending and promoting the use of walking among young citizens and their families in Parks in the City of Coventry – West Midlands. Our Action aims at encouraging walking among children in school age and their families. The Commonwealth Games will be hosted in our area during 2022. E-smartec has liaised with GO Parks to promote walking among school aged children via promotional activities (the Active School challenge) linked to the upcoming 2022 Commonwealth Games (Active School Challenge- Commonwealth Edition).

During our **Expert Panel event**, we discussed the Active Transport Report and the Motiv project which links walking and cycling. We therefore considered walking as an important part of the sustainable mobility agenda in our local community, as well as a way of being active and healthy.

Moreover, our inspiration came form the following three Good Practices by other partners:

- PEDIBUS by PP6 Rome Mobility Agency

The PEDIBUS initiative supports primary schools managers to encourage pupils and families to walk to school safely in organised groups following fixed routes.

- ECOMOBILITY campaign in the Region of Central Macedonia by PP1 Centre for Research and Technology Hellas

The aim of the campaign/contest is to stimulate young people to approach the mobility and transport problems of the city.

- “Besser zur Schule” (“Better to school”) by PP9 Hessen Trade & Invest GmbH / Centre of Competence for Sustainable Urban Mobility

“Better to school” is the umbrella brand for all Hessian activities focusing mobility at schools as a target group. It bundles several offers for schools, municipalities and politicians. The aim is to influence the mobility of children and young people in a positive way.

Like in all these Good Practices, our Action aims at promoting sustainable mobility among children and young people through schools.

NATURE OF THE ACTION

Go Parks is a project giving the residents of Coventry new and exciting ways to use parks and greenspaces in the city. Go Parks brings everything from sport and physical activity to wellbeing and cultural elements into local parks. With an increasing number of people now using parks and greenspaces for activity as a result of COVID-19, they promote ways to be active in parks that are fun, simple and safe.

E-smartec Action Plan will further enhance the Go Park initiative with additional marketing content linked to the Commonwealth Games coming to our Area in 2022.

In order to encourage a change in behaviour in children – and parents of your families – during school years towards walking, we have engaged with GO parks (one of the departments of Coventry City Council) and drafted a plan to bring together activities linked to the upcoming

Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022, the Go Parks departmental objectives and our e-smartec project objectives.

By using a targeted marketing campaign aimed at capitalising the focus around physical activities around the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022, during the summer 2022, Go Parks will run a new ACTIVE SCHOOL CHALLENGE – Commonwealth Edition.

With this, we are aiming for children and parents alike to use a QR code upon entrance into a park, in order to collect points for their schools.

Go Parks: Active Schools Challenge .By using the Marketing technique of Gamification (Competition among schools) and Digital Marketing (QR codes), Go Parks Active Challenge represents a competition among schools in the Local Authority catchment area. Each time children or parents visit a local park, they will need to find and scan the QR code showing that they have been active. Schools need to be registered onto the program in order for the points to be counted towards each school. Every time a visit is recorded via the QR code scanning, each school will win 10 points. The schools with the highest participation will win a prize.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED GO Park is the Department of Coventry City Council in charge of running the initiative.

TIMEFRAME February 2022 – January 2023
The initiative will last one month during this timeframe period. Mostly likely during the second half of 2022. The QR codes, online marketing and posters will be likely to be produced around summer 2022.

COSTS n/a

FUNDING SOURCES The 'Commonwealth Active Communities' fund - which is a £4 million Sport England fund to harness the power of the Games to support inactive people to become more active.

GO PARKs is funded by a combination of Public Health funds and the Coventry Cultural Educational Partnership (CCEP)

MONITORING How many children use the Active School Challenge initiative (
MEASURES Commonwealth edition) between Jan 2022 and Jan 2023

REFERENCES:

- <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/jzkbkkzb/cycling-charter.pdf>
- <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/2zgizb5y/cycling-charter-action-plan-digital.pdf>

Endorsement

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