

Information-Sharing, Community-Building and Trust:

A case study amongst commuter cyclists

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Overview

- **Context**
- **Theoretical background**
- **“Cycology” case study:**
 - **community-building**
 - **trust**
- **Conclusion and discussion**

Context: word-of-mouth travel information



Word-of-mouth influences on travel behaviour

Social-Psychological Perspectives

■ Role of word-of-mouth information amongst cyclists

“So it is like an informal little network of tips going on, perhaps (...). I think, because there's fewer of us in the work environment that I've met, maybe there's a kind of looking out for each other a little bit more than car drivers.”



Information is not just instrumental, but also social.

Context: "digital word-of-mouth"

Sign Up Sign In Search Social Network

Cycle Social

The UK cyclists' social network

Home My Page/Blog Forums Blogs Events Photos Videos Sites We Like Members Help Nicole Cooke Chat is open!

SEARCH CYCLE SOCIAL

Welcome to Cycle Social

Cycle Social is the new social network for cyclists in the UK. It's **FREE** to join and you get to blog, debate, share experiences, share photos and videos of your world in cycling, plus a forum, chat and more. The network is open to all, from the recreational rider through to the most enthusiastic.

Thanks for stopping by!

Latest Activity

 [Moononastick](#) updated their [profile](#)
3 hours ago

 2 members updated their profile photos
3 hours ago

 [Mohini Raichura](#), [Camille](#), [bloggerfatboy](#) and 3 more joined Cycle Social

Members



[View All](#)

Forum

 [new road bike](#) 7 Replies
I really want a new bike that's quite attractive(not too sporty/manly) and light/fast as Ive been riding a clunky old falcon for too long. what does everyone think of condor? they seem very expensi...
Started by Anna Robinson in [Road](#). [Last reply](#) by Jim Graham 16 hours ago.

 [The knock](#) 24 Replies
I was out cycling with my friend on Saturday and after 60 mile he said he felt sick and couldnt go on without eating something..... when i got home and told my mom, she said "ah, he got th...
Started by Juanita in [General](#). [Last reply](#) by Mark Maliniak Aug 31.

 [what's the best oil for bike chain?](#) 8 Replies
totally new to cycling. would like to keep my bike running well. what's the best type of oil to use on the chain. don't want anything to messy. i know this is a stupid question. but there are so m...
Started by angela faulkner in [General](#). [Last reply](#) by Mark Maliniak Aug 31.

 [Facebook for Cyclists.](#) 4 Replies

Welcome to Cycle Social

[Sign Up](#) or [Sign In](#)

Events

September 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

[Last Month](#) [Next Month](#)

[Otesha UK: Cycle Tour 2009](#)
[August 7, 2009](#) to [September 19, 2009](#) – [Scotland OR East Anglia](#)

[Ride It! – West Yorkshire](#)
[September 5, 2009](#) to [September 6, 2009](#) – [Gateways School, Harewood, LS17 9LE](#)

[Sign in to chat!](#)

Context: online cycle routes

Sign in

Home | What's new?

Search

Go



About

Membership

Join the Campaign online!

Newsletters

The current newsletter

Previous newsletters

Events & diary

Campaigning

E-mail lists

Resources

Mapping

Introduction

Photomap: browse photos

Add your photos

Search photos

Most recent photos

Categorisation galleries

Route planner

Draw a route

Route coverage

Feedback form

Help

Shop

Links

Contacts

Get Acrobat Reader

Search the site

You are in: [Home](#) » [Mapping and photo-maps](#) » [Photomap](#)

Online mapping: Photo Map

Home

Photomap

Add photo

Galleries

Journey planner

Edit network

Feedback

Help

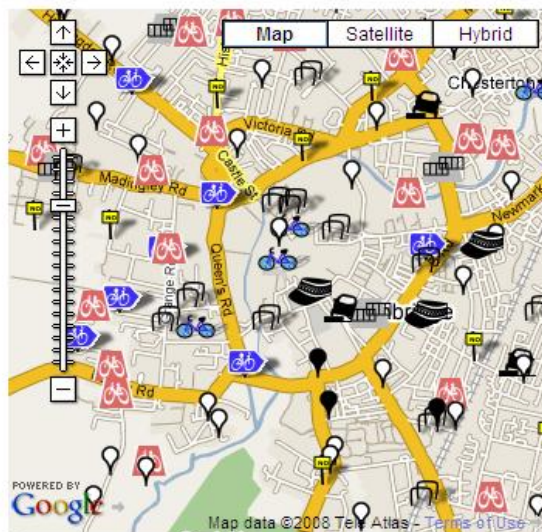
Search

Photosearch

11,621 cycling-related images/videos available

Add a photo or video

Click a marker to see a photo; zoom in / scroll to see more.



There are 91 photos in this view.

Legend



Bicycle



Cycle parking



Cycleway feature



Route sign



General sign/notice



Obstruction



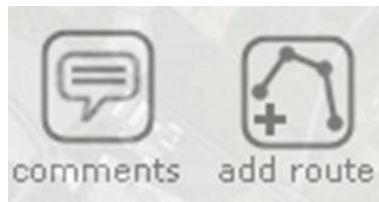
Midsummer Common - couldn't these paths be widened?

The comments and images here are not necessarily the policy view of the Campaign but reflect the views of the original submitter.

Copyright details

Rating: 0: Increase | reduce

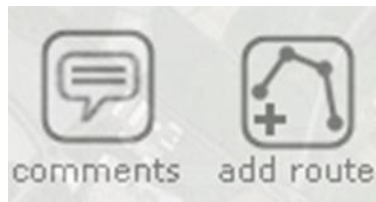
Show more nearby | Plan a journey to/from here



Research Aims

- explore social interactions about cycling (especially route-sharing) in an online environment
 - what social and psychological processes can be discerned?
 - what influence does it have on attitudes and behaviour?

.....using a web-based case study combining geographical and social information.



Theories of Social Influence

■ Dual process theory of social influence

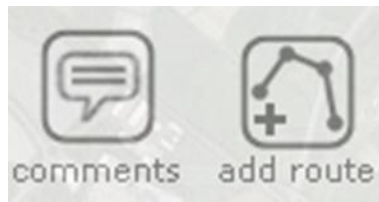
(Deutsch and Gerard, 1955)

Informational Social Influence

- Acceptance of information obtained from others as evidence about reality.

Normative Social Influence

- Need to conform with the positive expectations of others.



Theories of Group Behaviour

■ Self-categorisation theory

(Turner et al., 1987)

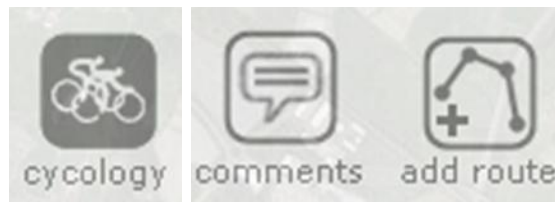
Referent Informational Influence

- The normative position of people categorised as similar to self is subjectively accepted as valid.



The *Cycology* Project

www.bristolstreets.co.uk



Sample and Method

- Small group (23) of research participants, purposively selected from 5 neighbouring organisations in North Bristol:
 - 13 women, 10 men
 - different age groups
 - different levels of cycling experience and frequency
 - commuting from different areas
- - observation of interactions during a 6 week study
 - exit questionnaires
 - participant interviews

http://www.bristolstreets.co.uk/#tmBartle/z16/r/ms/y51.51116/x-2.573612

Google Search

Norton Phishing Protection on Identity Safe Log-ins

bristolstreets.co.uk : bicycles

out in zoom areas history refresh clear (caroline) sign out

bristolstreets.co.uk



home



close



my stuff



cycology



comments



add route

cycle path

bridleway

bus lane

mountain bikes

cycle lane

quieter roads

follow new comments via rss.

start a floating comment

Overlays (all on)/(all off)

☐ Cycle Paths and Cycle Lanes☐ Quiet & Recommended Roads

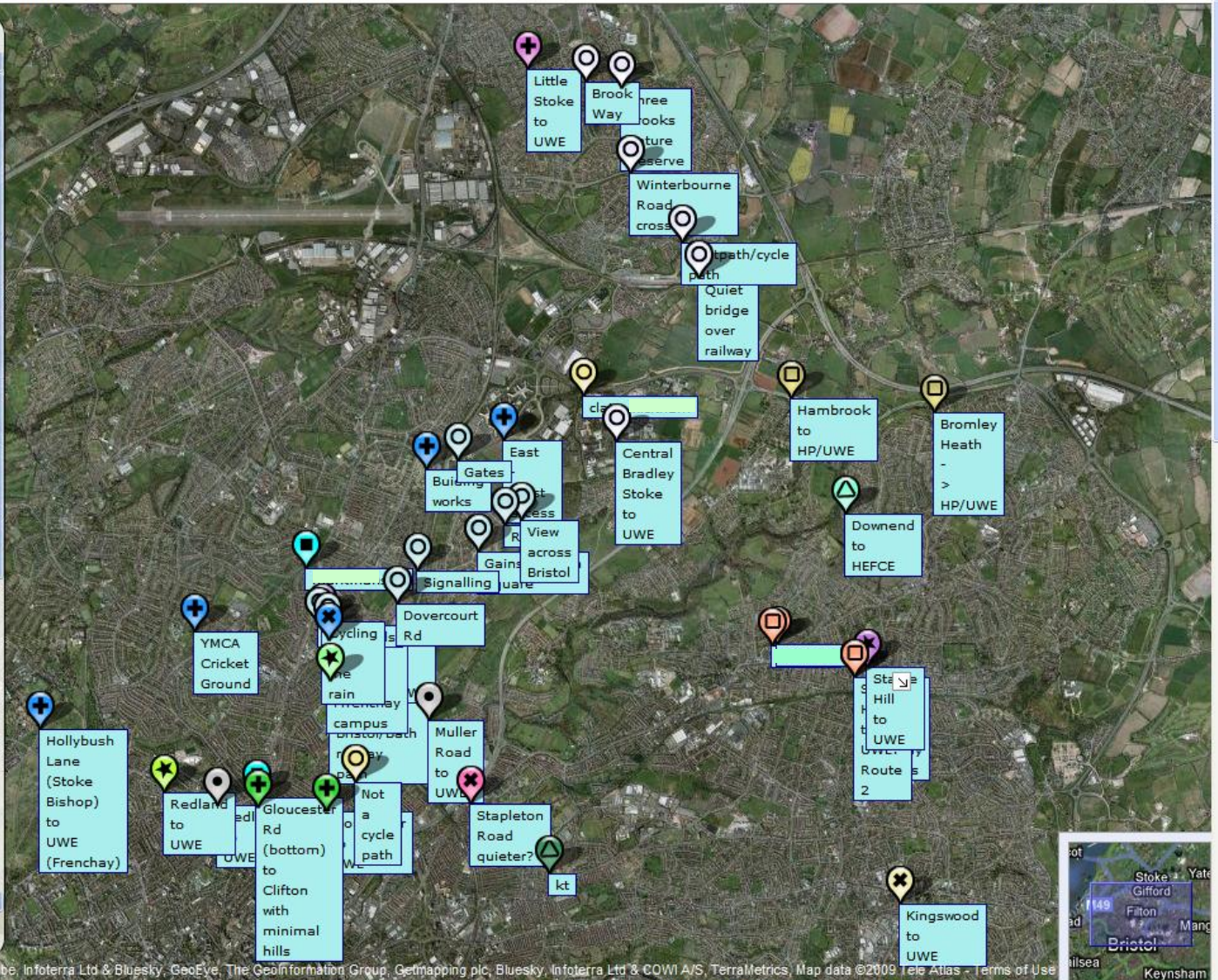
Markers (all on)/(all off)

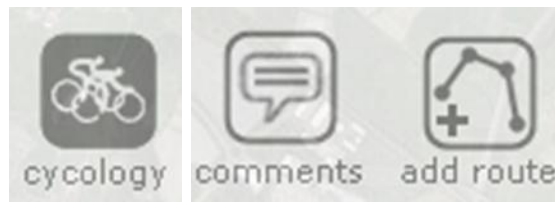
☐ Cycle Parking☐ Cycle Shops

Visitor Markers

☐ only show markers with routes☒ show comment titles on map

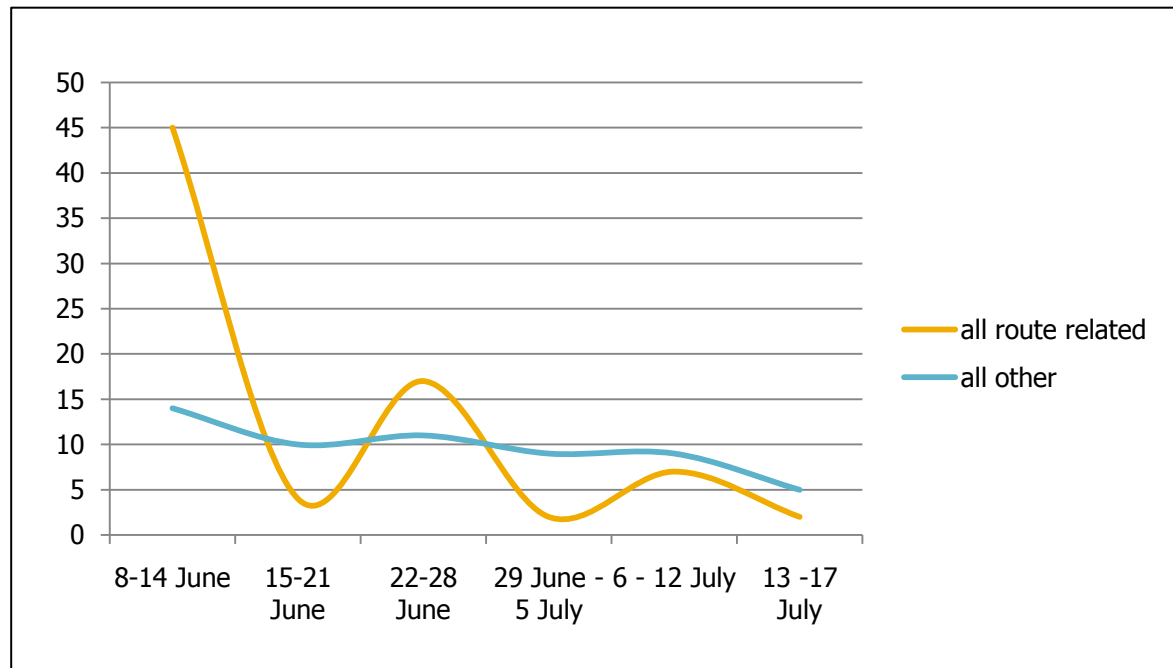
This filter allows you to select which items appear on the map and which ones do not. Sometimes it is good to be able to see only the type of information you want to see. You can turn each element on or off on its own by clicking on it or can turn whole groups on or off by clicking on the "all on" and "all off" links in each

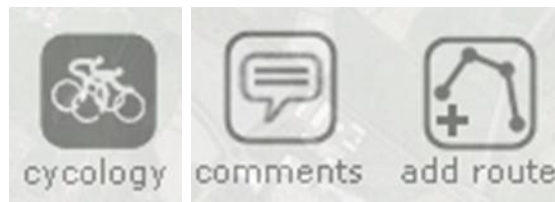




Level of activity on the website

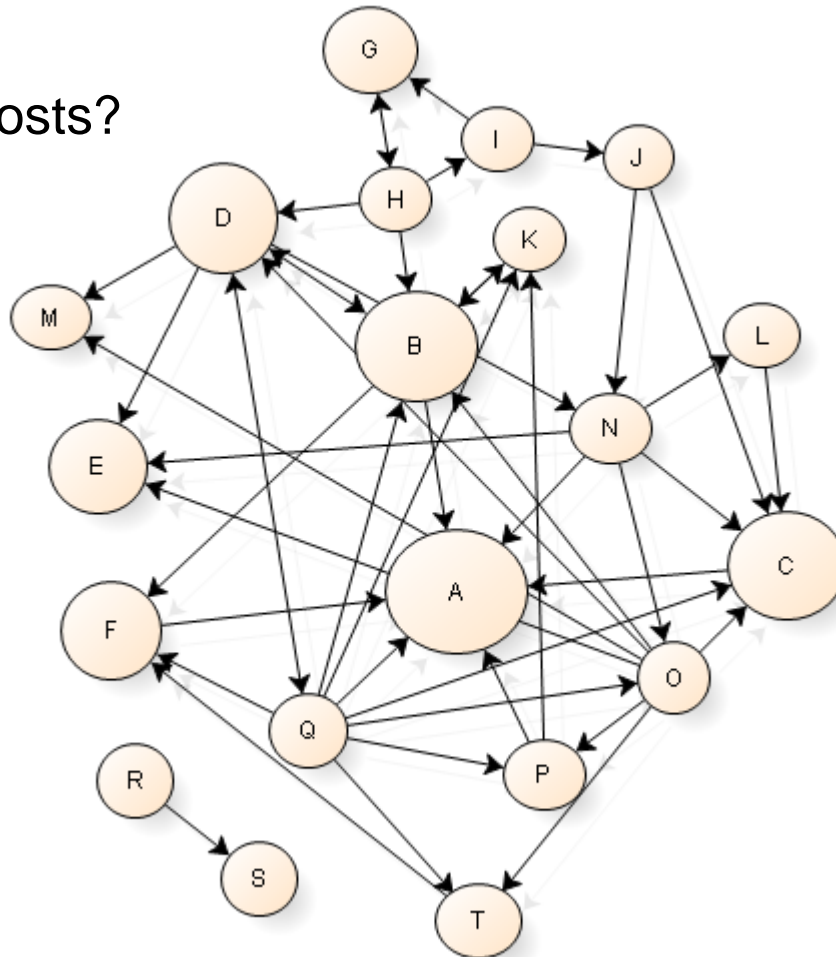
Number of route-related and other comments over time





Patterns of activity on the website


Who read whose posts?





 out in zoom areas history refresh clear


(caroline) sign out 

☐ Floating comments only
☐ Comments with routes only
 All comments newest first

 **Comment with Route**
12-Jun-2009@ 8:15
To get to UWE via the MOD, go straight on at Locklease Rd (right would take you to constable rd). K

 **General Comment**
12-Jun-2009@ 8:13
You mean that narrow lane along the side of HP? Yes, it is terrible and dangerous for bothe cyclists

 **Comment with Route**
11-Jun-2009@ 19:22
I tried this route this morning and it wasn't bad, though Cleeve Rd is a bit steep (didn't fancy it

 **Arches to Clifton Village**
Comment with Route
11-Jun-2009@ 12:51
another relatively un-hilly route on
generally quiet roads

 Comment with Route
11-Jun-2009@ 12:37

I tried this route this morning and it wasn't bad, though Cleeve Rd is a bit steep (didn't fancy it on the way back) and busy with traffic. Quite quick though - about 20 mins - and those cut-throughs are great - wouldn't want to meet another cyclist coming the other way though - it's a bit narrow and overgrown - I'm glad I wasn't wearing my

2 user comments [Add Comment](#)

close



Staple
Hill
to
LIVE

Staple Hill to UWE: Route 2

Aerial map of the study area. A blue rectangle highlights a section of Downend Rd. Labels include 'A432', 'Downend', 'A4017', 'Fishponds', and 'Soundwe'.

Psychological effects: solidarity and empathy

bristolstreets.co.uk

start a floating comment

show all comments

participants

☐ Floating comments only☐ Comments with routes only

All comments newest first

**Redland to UWE****Comment with Route****18-Jun-2009@ 12:01**

Just my route - i think this is the same as one posted earlier. Anyhow, this has the least amount o

**Traffic tie up question****General Comment****18-Jun-2009@ 11:51**

OK, question for anyone. This area is always backed up with cars waiting to get onto Gloucester. T

**Cycling in the rain****General Comment****18-Jun-2009@ 7:55**

So my cycle home yesterday started off as one of my most unpleasant to date. It was absolutely thro

**Comment with Route****16-Jun-2009@ 14:33**

i'm not keen on Stapleton Road...and so to avoid I go round the back of IKEA and Tescos and join the

**General Comment****16-Jun-2009@ 12:44**

http://www.bikeweek.org.uk/

**Big Bike Breakfast****General Comment****16-Jun-2009@ 12:12**

Hello All. Just thought I'd let these

Cycling in the rain

Visitor Comments and Suggestions

18-Jun-2009 @ 8:55

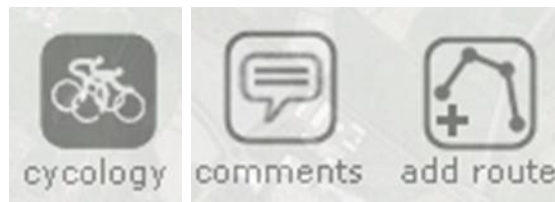
So my cycle home yesterday started off as one of my most unpleasant to date. It was absolutely throwing it down. It was nice to see I was joined by so many other cyclists-also soaked through. The best part was that everyone was so happy and friendly! I spoke to more people on the way home

1 user comments [Add Comment](#)[close](#)

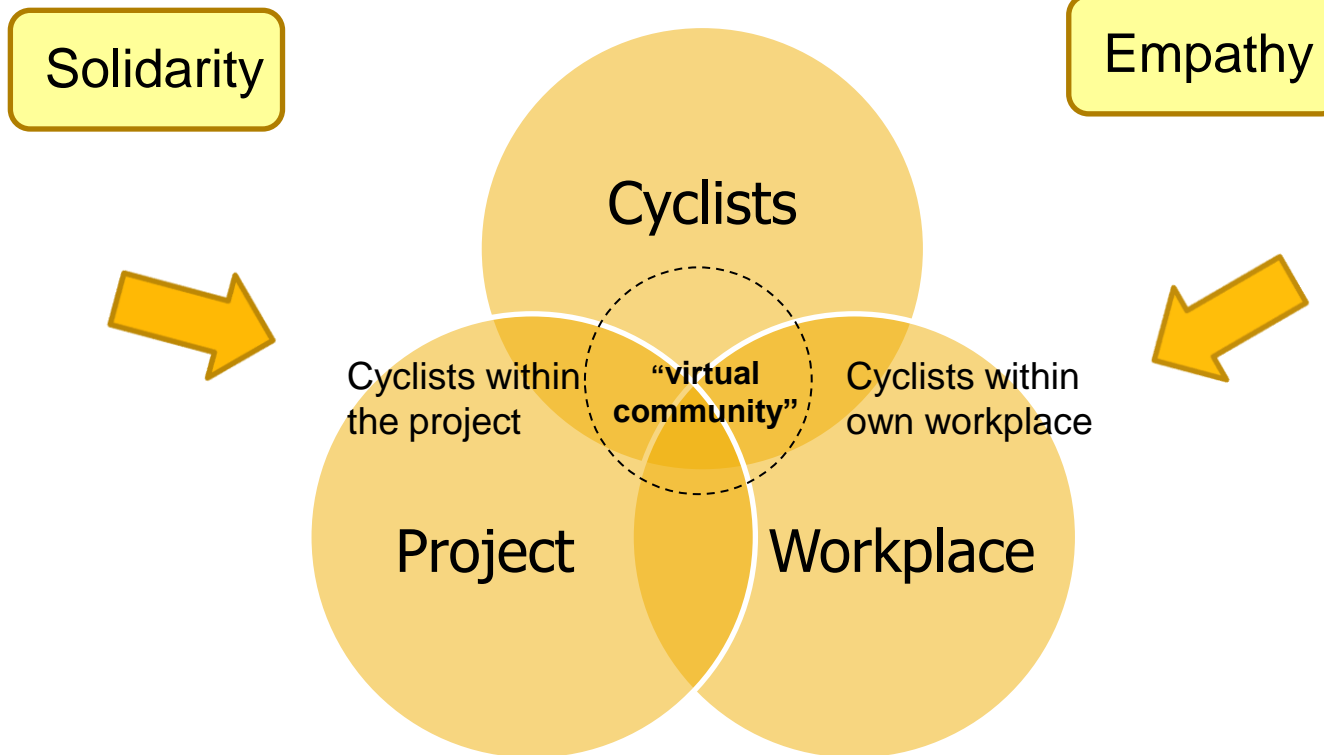
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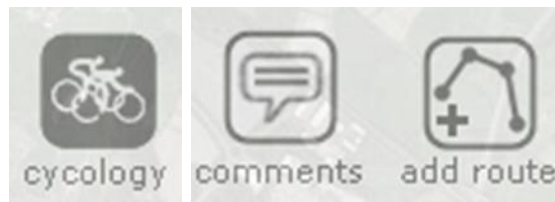


Horfield to UWE Frenchay campus



Interlocking concepts of “community” in Cycology



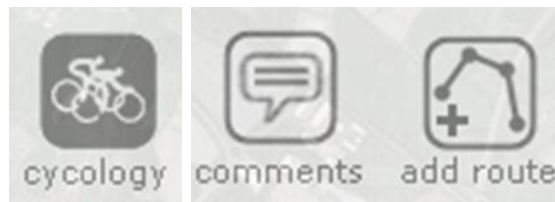


Findings

■ Group identification: “community”

Solidarity

- *“I enjoyed posts that encouraged a feeling of solidarity amongst cyclists when people discussed annoying issues or comical aspects of a route”*
- *“I mean, I kind of got a sense that everybody doing it, you know, we’re all cycling, everyone kind of had an attitude of, you know, being willing to share information, help each other. It was a nice feeling of solidarity in a way(...). So it was quite a nice feeling of community.”*

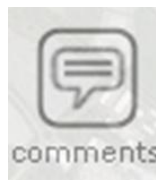
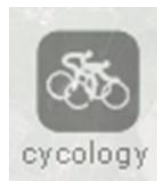


Findings

■ Group identification: “community”

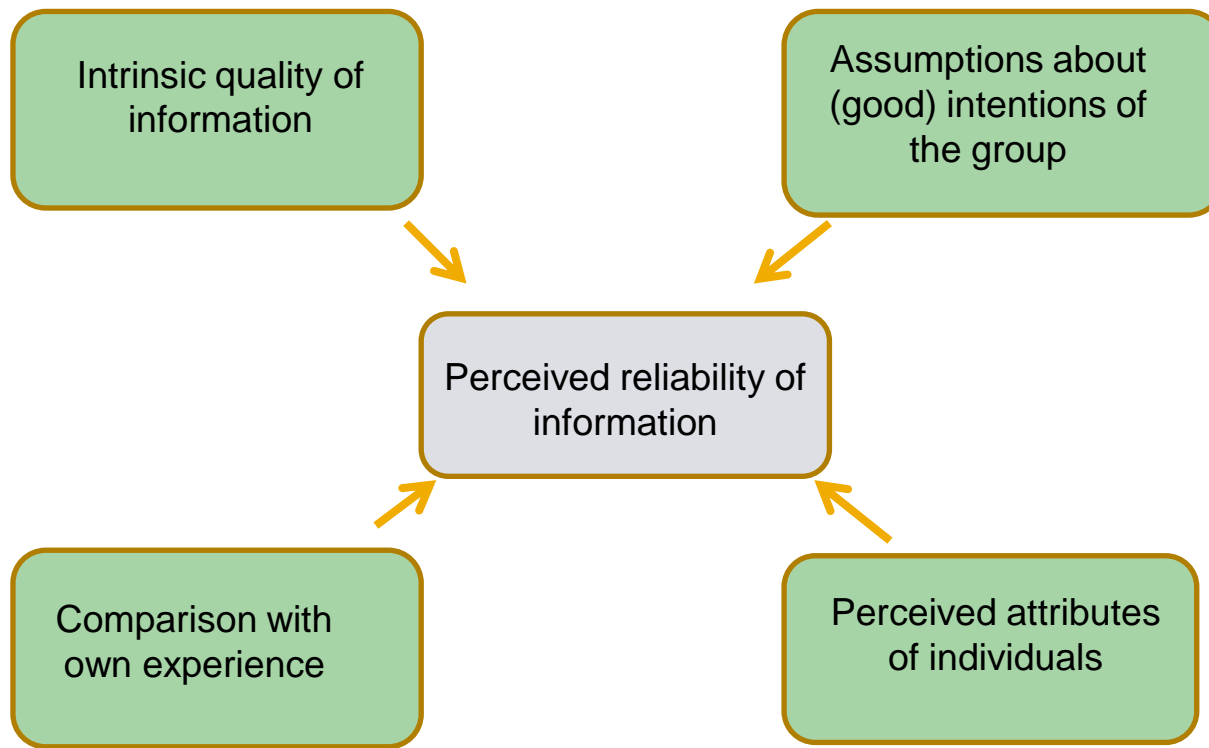
Empathy

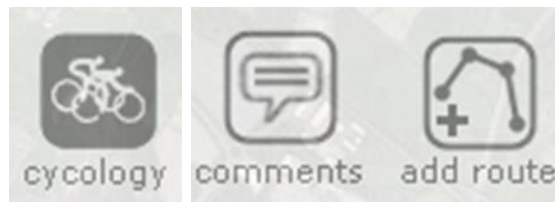
- *“I think that, you know, if you're creating a sense of community, it's not only the information that is getting across, but also the feelings and motivations. You know, "I had a good day, I had a bad day". And those sort of shared experiences that make a sense of community. If it's just sort of "I go from point A to point B this way ", it's not nearly as..., it doesn't touch you as much.”*



Findings

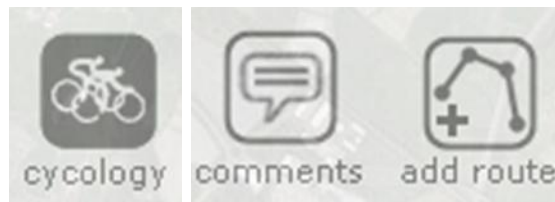
■ Trust in Cycology information





Findings

- **Influence of “social information” on attitudes and behaviour**
 - *"Participation in this project made me feel part of the cycling community which was quite nice. When I felt bad about it, e.g. in rubbish weather, I knew there were others who had gone through the same, which encouraged me to keep cycling...."*



Conclusions

- Information-sharing can perform a community-building role, involving high levels of trust, as well as a more obvious functional role in diffusing practical local knowledge.
- Community-building and trust can help to reinforce (or change) pro-cycling attitudes, intentions and behaviours through a process of social influence.
- “Social information” can complement more conventional forms of cycling information (e.g. maps, route planners), and may be a means of enhancing such information.

- How can we stimulate positive and inclusive “cycling communities” which encourage beginners and might help to attract people to cycling through processes of social influence?
- Small-scale, low-cost initiatives such as *Cycology*, which harness current developments in social media, may have a role to play in achieving this (e.g. within workplace travel plans).
- This area may warrant further research and validation within “natural” settings, involving more people, a longer time period, and with a greater focus on those who are not yet cycling.