



SCHEME: People taking part in the The Bambisanani 'Cycling to Success' project.

Helping young people cycle 'to success'

CYCLING

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OTLEY CYCLING star Lizzie Deignan has praised a cycling project backed by two Leeds universities in one of South Africa's most remote and deprived areas.

In the last five years student volunteers and staff from the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University have provided cycle riding and maintenance lessons to around 120 children in the KwaZulu-Natal region

KwaZulu-Natal is a remote area where children routinely walk two hours to and from school each day.

The Bambisanani 'Cycling to Success' initiative was launched by the Bambisanani Partnership charity, which was founded 15 years ago by David Geldart at St Mary's School, Menston

Six years ago, Andrew Lockwood, from the University of Leeds, visited South Africa with

Bambisanani volunteers from St Mary's School.

The visit led to the university becoming an integral part of the charity and the development of a successful cycling project.

The programme has not only provided bikes but also training from student volunteers and staff from the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University, who teach children how to ride bikes safely and maintain them.

A central 'Bike Hub' has been established at Mnyakanya School where the bikes and equipment are kept and the training takes place.

Mrs Pk Zondi, Bambisanani Coordinator at Mnyakanya High School said: "Cycling was not that familiar in our community until this initiative was introduced."

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REACTION

Cycling star praises scheme

SINCE 2016, 70 used bikes have been refurbished and shipped to Mnyakanya High School with the support of University of Leeds and the Cardinal Maritime Shipping Company.

And 80 new bikes have been bought and shipped after fundraising. Lizzie Deignan said: "I am inspired and excited to see the work being done by 'Cycling to Success'."

"In my case success is measured in medals and titles but in reality the most simple and brilliant success that the bicycle can give its rider is the victory of freedom. I am delighted that the opportunity to achieve freedom is being donated by the work of 'Cycling to Success'. It is such a valuable and effective way to broaden horizons."