

**Group Report**

**What impacts does ICE Cycles have on the Inner City East community of Christchurch?**

**How can opportunities and challenges associated with the operating model of ICE Cycles be addressed to ensure longevity?**

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The research explores the impacts of ICE Cycles on the Inner-City East community. Further, the research works to explore the challenges and opportunities ICE Cycles may want to consider and act on going forward.

An exploratory case study was used and a mixed methods approach utilised. The theory underpinning the research is from Bertotti et al.'s (2012) theoretical framework of Social Capital. Seven ICE Cycles volunteers were interviewed and a further eight participated in a short survey. Two other 'boundary spanning

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

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### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is currently only a small body of research on CBWs, so this review has been expanded to assess the community impact of social enterprises, focusing on non-profit, community-led organizations like ICE Cycles. This literature shows that social enterprises can positively contribute to both the personal development of residents and the cohesiveness of the community.

Through involvement in a social enterprise, individuals are able to develop relationships with other residents and expand their connections in the wider community, thus helping to combat social exclusion and improve their individual wellbeing (Teasdale, 2010). Active involvement helps individuals to grow and develop their social and practical skill set, offering work and education opportunities that may have been previously unavailable (Bertotti et al, 2012). An inner community is often formed around the social enterprise itself, comprising of a core group of people directly involved in the organization, such as volunteers, but also including people whom Farmer et al (2016) terms ‘boundary-spanning’ participants, such as customers or visitors. Both direct and boundary-spanning involvement contributes to participants personal development and social integration, with many expressing strengthened notions of belonging and security in their community (Farmer et al, 2016). However, the greatest impact is often experienced by the volunteers (Bertotti et al, 2012). This is aligned with Morrow-Howell et al (2014) study, showing that volunteering can lead to an increase in productive and social engagement, giving participants a strong sense of belonging and purpose.

Social enterprises can serve as a catalyst for local and regional development, by enhancing community solidarity and building community capacity (Kim & Lim, 2017). Capacity building is of significant importance for underserved, lower socioeconomic communities as it gives residents the tools and skillset to satisfy their own needs, making them more resilient against the disadvantages of poverty (Lovell et al, 2015). This is particularly true for CBW’s located in transport-deprived neighbourhoods, such as the ICE, as they provide residents with the means to transport themselves, leading to an increased sense of freedom and empowerment (Warren, 2019) and providing access to work, education and social opportunities previously out of reach (Kim &



and held informally to allow volunteers to feel increasingly comfortable, subsequently enabling more authentic and meaningful responses to be elicited (Farmer et al., 2016). Questions were directed at extracting responses relating to if and how ICE Cycles had impacted on their lives, e.g. mental and physical well-being, and skill development. Caution was taken to ensure questions were open and not leading in anyway. In total, seven interviews were conducted.

Due to time constraints on interviewing, surveys were also utilised to deepen our understanding of the impacts ICE Cycles cultivates and to broaden research reach (Jenner, 2016). Surveys were of a quantitative and qualitative nature and were aimed at gaining further insight into the general impacts ICE Cycles has had on their lives. Surveys were handed out in hard copy to all volunteers present at a week's worth of workshops and eight were returned.

In order to assess the flow on impacts of ICE Cycles on the wider Inner-City East Community, interviews were also conducted with two boundary spanning community members. Such

respondents of the survey were followed up with further questioning via email due to their enterprise's relevance to CBWs. Questions were tailored to deepen our understanding of survey responses surrounding their personal challenges and what factors they saw as contributing to their current success and future longevity. Data collected through both primary and secondary research was subsequently analysed thematically, with the intention of identifying key themes or patterns of success or challenges cultivated by the different types of operating decisions.

## **5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***5.1 Individual Impact***

The results show that ICE Cycles has a diverse impact on individuals within the volunteer community. Patterns identified from survey and interview responses revolved around physical, social and mental well-being benefits attributed to volunteer's involvement with ICE Cycles. Practical skill improvement was also a key pattern identified from the data.

#### ***Physical Well-Being Impacts***

All eight of the survey respondents reported improvements in their physical health. It was uncovered during face-to-face interviews that these improvements primarily stem from being more active by commuting to different places in their daily lives via bicycle. Observational notes made during participant observation periods also showed that all volunteers travelled to workshops on their bikes and continued to be on their feet and active during workshops. One volunteer interviewee reported that the weekly community lunch and shared dinners after workshops has provided them with a better diet and increased their knowledge of alternative meal options, further contributing to their improved physical health.

#### ***Social Well-Being Impacts***

A key philosophy of ICE Cycles is rooted in their promotion of positive social energy and intolerance of negativity. This is reflected in the volunteer survey responses which showed seven of the eight respondents experiencing increased levels of confidence and happiness. A common



theme identified from the volunteer interviews also supports this, with four of the interviewees acknowledging ICE Cycles as a place where they feel valued, safe and like they belong.

***Mental Well-Being Impacts***

Mental well-being and stability were a pattern identified in all of the face-to-face interviews. All







community to support and sustain ICE Cycles, which in turn supports these residents, without relying on external actors.

Another common strategy for generating funds is through the sale of refurbished bikes and parts

social capital. Having a consistent space of their own would strengthen the inner relationships of the ICE Cycles community, thus bolstering their bonding social capital. Through volunteer interviews, it was revealed that volunteers feel comfortable and enjoy coming down to the current ICE Cycles locations just to hang out, without feeling pressured to work. It is expected that this would only be heightened with a permanent location, as exemplified by the Malmö Bike Kitchen, who found that their transition into a permanent space had unexpected social impacts, with the CBW becoming a social meeting place for city residents of different backgrounds and nationalities to come together (Bradley, 2018), which showcases the possibilities for bridging social capital to also be enhanced. A permanent location would also allow for more frequent and consistent workshops and contact hours, a desire highlighted in our volunteer surveys, and provide the opportunity to host educational workshops and programmes.

An example of a successful programme other CBWs with permanent locations had utilised to enhance their community impact was the Earn-A-Bike programme (EAB), where participants learn to dismantle, build and maintain a bicycle, gaining valuable skills, self-confidence, social opportunities, and then get to keep their refurbished bike. These EAB programmes can take various forms and can be moulded to suit the particular needs of the community or mission of the CBW (Moreland, 2008; Bliss, 2015; Bertram, 2011). Focusing particularly on the effects of EAB

ICE Cycles volunteers and boundary spanni

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